

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children aged eight weeks to 4 years. Our focus is to create an encouraging, educational experience while promoting social, emotional, physical and cognitive development in a healthy environment. We are committed to the families that we serve and strive to offer every child a “brighter beginning” for a successful future.

Organizational Chart:

Owners/Directors: Krystle Evans and Kristi Henderson

Assistant Director/Director Designee

Lead Classroom Teachers

Classroom Teacher Assistants

Our Philosophy:

We believe that all children are precious gifts from God. We believe that children should be nurtured and educated in a loving, safe, and caring environment. We know that learning begins at birth and all children deserve the opportunity to grow and learn at their own pace. We firmly believe that it is the responsibility of the adults in a child’s life to work together to promote every child’s development, safety, and well-being. It is our goal to instill a life-long love for learning so that every child will have a “Brighter Beginning”!

We believe that Children:

- Learn through play and should spend the majority of their day involved in play-based learning.
- Should have access to “hands-on” learning activities daily including center-based activities.
- Should learn to be respectful and cooperate with others.
- Should play outside daily with a variety of fun activities.
- Look forward to attending school daily and feel safe and secure in our center.

We believe that Teachers:

- Should build positive relationships with parents, children and fellow teachers.
- Should be caring and nurturing and provide positive interactions with all children in their care.
- Should understand that not all children grow and learn at the same pace, and should show willingness to “meet each child where they are” and provide learning activities that encourage this.
- Should communicate with parents daily.
- Should be respected by students and parents.

Services Offered:

-We offer full-time childcare Monday – Friday from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. for children ages 8 weeks (after second set of immunizations) – 4 years old.

-We offer Early Bird Childcare Monday – Friday beginning at 6:30 a.m. on an as needed basis. (This service must be pre-paid.)

-We offer drop-ins if enrollment permits.

Enrollment:

Before enrollment can be approved, the following information, forms, and fees are required:

Completely filled out Child Enrollment Forms signed by parent/guardian.

- Immunization Compliance Record Form 121
- Copy of original Birth Certificate
- Annual Registration Fee - \$100 (NON-REFUNDABLE)
- Tuition for the first week

The MS Department of Health, requires Immunization Record Form 121 to be kept current. Parents or guardians are also expected to keep accounts balances up to date. Failure to comply with either may result in enrollment termination.

Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center *is licensed by the MS State Department of Health and meets all regulations governing childcare facilities. The majority of our staff have been certified in CPR and First Aid through the American Red Cross. ALL teachers and staff members participate in required continuing education courses each year. ALL staff and volunteers have background checks through the Child Abuse/Neglect Central Registry and a fingerprint check completed by the FBI before starting employment or volunteering in our center.

Payment Policies:

All tuition payments will be made through the My Brightwheel App, which can be downloaded from the iTunes App Store or Google Play. Cash payments will also be accepted, EXACT amount only, we will not provide change. You can make those payments on your phone or when you come to sign in/out your child on the iPad located at the front entrance.

Tuition payments are due every Monday morning and a late fee will be applied if payment is not paid by 6:00 Monday evening. There will be a \$10 late fee added to your tuition payment for each day the payment is late (including that Monday). Payments may be made with Visa or Mastercard credit and debit cards, ACH payments are preferred and can be set up for weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly drafts. After **6 consecutive months** of enrollment, each child receives ONE FREE WEEK of tuition per calendar year to be used for vacations, illness, or other reasons. A two-week notice is required to use your free week. (We are closed the week of Christmas, this week will automatically be free.)

Childcare services may be terminated immediately for accounts that are 2 weeks past due. (Please speak with directors regarding past due accounts.) If termination occurs and payment is not received within 30 days, your account will be turned over to a collection agency for payment plus additional collection related fees.

Parents are responsible for paying the processing fees on the My Brightwheel App.

Processing fees: Credit Card is 2.9% per payment
 ACH is 60 cents per payment

Declined credit card and ACH payments will incur a \$15 service charge.

All statements and receipts will be delivered through the My Brightwheel App. If you pay in cash (exact change only) you will still get a receipt through the My Brightwheel App.

If you withdraw your child from the center, the amount is still owed through the last date of your child’s attendance.

If your enrolled child has an outstanding balance, that balance must be paid before you can enroll any other siblings.

Fees and Tuition:

Registration Fee, per child (Due at enrollement and every August 1st.)	\$100 (non-refundable)
Late Pick-up (after 6:00 p.m.) per child	\$5 first five minutes \$1per minute after
Late Pick-up (after 3 times, per child)	\$10 per minute
Early Bird Service, per child	\$25 weekly (non-refundable)
Drop-Ins	\$40 per day

Age (By Sept. 1)	Weekly Cost (per Child)
Infants up to 12 months	\$150
Toddlers	\$145
Two Year Olds	\$140
Three and Four Year Olds	\$140
Daily Drop-Ins	\$40 per day

Sibling Discount- \$10 for the first child, \$5 for each child thereafter.

Tuition may be paid on a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly basis. Please note, each time tuition is paid through My Brightwheel, a processing fee will apply.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT MUST BE SIGNED AND TURNED IN WITH REGISTRATION PACKET.

A yearly registration fee of \$100 will be charged for each full-time child enrolled for the year (August-July). This fee will be automatically added to your account on July 1st and will be due on July 15th of each year. This fee is NON-REFUNDABLE.

Hours of Operation:

Monday – Friday from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Pickup time is before 6 p.m. It is the PARENT’S responsibility to ensure that their child/children are picked up on time. If the parent (or designated person) fails to pick up the child by 6 p.m., there will be a charge of \$5 for the first minute, and \$1 for every minute thereafter. After 15 minutes if the parent or emergency contacts can not be reached, we will have no choice but to contact the Lamar County Sheriffs Dept. and/or the Lamar County Dept. of Human Services.

Facility/Holiday Closures: {August-July}

Labor Day – CLOSED

Thanksgiving – Close at 3 p.m. the Wednesday before, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday.

Christmas – We are CLOSED the entire week leading up to Christmas, if the holiday falls on the weekend, we will notify you of the days we will be closed. (The week of Christmas is a FREE week, you will not be charged.)

New Years – We will close 3 p.m. on New Years Eve and CLOSED on New Years Day.

Martin Luther King Jr. - CLOSED

Easter – CLOSED Good Friday

Memorial Day – CLOSED

4th of July - CLOSED

Removal/Withdrawal Policy:

Removal from Center by Director(s)

To insure the highest quality of care and the safest learning environment possible, BBCDC reserves the right to remove any child from our center. Please see Discipline Policy and Biting Policy for details on removal and suspensions.

The Director(s) may request that your child be removed from the roll/center due to the following:

- uncontrolled behavior of student that has not improved after three parent/teacher and director conferences.
- biting issues that cannot be controlled
- child has been picked up late more than 3 times.
- outstanding balance not updated after two weeks.

Withdrawal from Center by Parent:

Parents wishing to remove their child(ren) from BBCDC must notify the center in writing **two weeks in advance** that their child will be withdrawing. **Failure to provide a two-week written notice will result in a charge of 2 weeks tuition from the last date of attendance.**

Waiting List/Guaranteed Spots:

If you wish to have your child placed on our waiting list, please complete an enrollment application. A \$25 fee (per child) will be due at the time of placement. The fee will go towards the \$100 registration fee if the child attends the center. If the child does not begin enrollment, the \$25 will be refunded.

We have a limited number of openings at our facility, if a parent wants a GUARANTEED spot at our facility, it will be necessary to pay the full, non-refundable registration fee of \$100, and \$50 per week tuition for EACH WEEK until your child is able to attend.

Vacancies will be filled as they occur during the year, names on the waiting list will be called in order. The first name on the waiting list will be called, emailed, and texted to notify them of the opening, if there is no response within 48 hours then the next name on the list will be contacted, and so on until the spot is filled.

We will do our absolute best to accommodate every family's needs, depending on our enrollment numbers and capacity. Please speak with the owner/directors with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Arrival and Departure Policy:

Do not leave your child(ren) unattended in your vehicle. (Not even to run inside for just a minute.) Leaving your child unattended in a vehicle is against the law, and a violation we are required to report. Also, for the safety of everyone, please do not leave your vehicle's engine running while inside the center. No child will be allowed into the center before 7 o'clock a.m. and must be picked up by 6 o'clock p.m. An Early Bird Service is available for an additional \$5 per day. A late fee of \$5 for the first minute and \$1.00 per minute thereafter will be assessed for each minute a parent is late in picking up their child. All efforts will be made to contact you or someone on your Emergency Contact List, if no one can be reached, we will contact the Lamar County Sheriffs Dept. and the Lamar County Dept. Of Human Services.

Breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. each morning. If you would like for your child to eat breakfast, they must arrive by 8:30. Due to staffing, food preparation and curriculum schedules, ALL children must be dropped off by 9 o'clock a.m. each morning. This is to keep disruptions at a minimal and give each child the opportunity to participate in learning activities. **Children arriving after 8:30 a.m. will not be able to eat breakfast unless prior approval has been received from the director. Please notify us by 9:30 a.m. if your child will be absent for the day.** Please inform us on the days your child will be dropped off late for doctor's appointments, dentist visits, etc. Consistency with daily routines in young children is important to help with their sense of security and knowing what to expect most days.

The sign in/out will be done on the iPad located in the foyer. Check in and check out will be done through My Brightwheel using a pin code provided by the parent or guardian.

Once you enter the building, parents or guardians (or authorized pick up/drop off persons) are responsible for the care of their children until they are turned over to the classroom teacher or staff member. And parents or guardians (or authorized persons) assume responsibility for their children upon removal from their classrooms. Each child should be walked to and from their classroom.

Only those persons listed on the registration application will be allowed to remove a child from our care. If your child is being picked up by someone that is not listed on the pick-up list, **the parent will need to notify the center by phone as well as by email (brighterbeginningscdc@gmail.com) stating who will be picking the child up (first and last name) and a copy of their Driver's License. If this information is not reported we will not release your child. Please remember to provide your access code to the pickup person.**

Parents and visitors will only be allowed to enter through the front entrance using their code on the keypad located outside the door. The back door is for staff and emergency exiting only.

Late Pick-up:

Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center will lock our doors promptly at 6:00 p.m. After 6:00 p.m. late fees will begin to incur at \$5.00 for the first five minutes and \$1 per minute after that. Once your child has been picked up late more than 3 times, the late fee will then be \$10 per minute. All efforts will be made to contact you or someone on your Emergency Contact List, if no one can be reached, after 6:15 p.m., we will contact the Lamar County Sheriffs Dept. and/or the Lamar County Dept. Of Human Services.

Meals and Snacks:

INFANTS: Please bring prepared bottles or sippy cups and/or necessary food labeled with your child's name and the date. PLEASE REMEMBER that bottles and sippy cups will be rinsed only, these items must be taken home daily to properly clean and sanitize. These items will be placed in the classroom refrigerator as needed, we will use a bottle warmer to warm bottles for infants who require it. Infants requiring cereal to be added to their formula must provide a note from their pediatrician.

Brighter Beginnings will offer breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon and evening snack each day. The menu will include healthy food choices that are approved by MS Department of Health.

If your child has a food allergy, please provide us with an allergy form from their pediatrician.

Menus will be rotated every two to three weeks and will be posted at the parent info center and on our website.

Per MS Department of Health Regulations, outside food for children may not be brought into center, except in cases of extreme allergies. Outside food is only allowed for birthday celebrations or other school parties. We will only accept store bought food.

KidVision Camera Access:

We have cameras in every classroom, the hallway, and playground. You will have access only to your child's classroom and playground. You will be given a log-in and password to use when you visit the KidVision website online. For any questions regarding this technology, or with setting up your account, please speak with the director. This service is included in your weekly tuition.

EMERGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Inclement Weather: In the event of a serious weather occurrence, we will follow the guidance of the MS Emergency Management Agency and the decisions of the Lamar County School District. Although we understand how difficult it may be to make arrangements for your child/children when bad weather happens, we will attempt to remain open if possible; however, we must think about the overall safety of our staff and the children in our care. All inclement weather communication will be done through My Brightwheel, the private parent Facebook page, and text messaging. **Please keep all contact information up to date with the center director(s) and your child's classroom teacher.**

In the event of any dangerous situation, including but not limited to, fire, dealing with violent individuals, individuals entering the facility with weapons, bomb threats, or conditions posing immediate threat the children, our Directors will evaluate the situation and another staff member will immediately call 911 and/or law enforcement officials immediately. Children will either be a.) safely and orderly evacuated and relocated to the relocation sites mentioned below or b.) all hallways and playgrounds will be cleared of students and staff and will be told to remain in classrooms on the floor sitting against the walls. Staff shall communicate with directors as needed. Both exterior doors may remain unlocked during the day and the back exit door may be opened by pushing the panic bar. At all times, visitors and parents must enter through the front door. A magnetic lock is placed on the front entrance door and a code is required to enter the building. Codes are given to each family during registration.

Every year, each staff member will be certified in First Aid and CPR. We will follow the American Red Cross guidelines for dealing with emergencies. Each classroom is equipped with an American Red Cross First Aid kit and will be fully stocked. Parents will be notified immediately in the event of an emergency.

In a major medical emergency situation, we will call 911 to obtain prompt services. We reserve the right to transport an injured or sick child to Merit Health Wesley, or call 911 for immediate assistance. **If for any reason, you do NOT want your child to receive immediate medical assistance, you MUST give the center a written letter of refusal upon registration. Although this may be the case, we may make individual decisions based on the severity of the illness or injury.**

WE MUST have a current emergency phone number on file at all times.

Emergency Evacuation:

Each classroom contains a copy of the evacuation plan for the center. There are two exit doors and the building meets all fire and safety requirements.

In the case of damage/disaster to the center, your child will be moved to one of our relocation sites. Parents or guardians will be notified through the My Brightwheel App or by phone as soon as possible and given instructions for immediate pick up. Our relocation sites are, the parking lot of Turtle Creek Mall, Dillard's entrance across from Office Depot, and the Hattiesburg Police Substation located at 104 Lamar Blvd (the street that runs directly beside Petro Automotive Group).

Children will be transported via directors and employee's vehicles. The Northeast Lamar County Volunteer Fire Department may be called to assist with evacuations if needed.

Suspected Child Abuse:

We are required by law to report any suspected child abuse/neglect to the MS Dept. of Health and/or proper authorities that we have evidence or knowledge of.

Weapons:

Weapons are Strictly prohibited on all the grounds inside and outside in the facility.

Smoking, Alcohol, and Other Drug Use:

The use of tobacco products in any form, alcohol, and illegal drugs and prohibited on the premises. This includes cigarettes, cigars, and vaping paraphernalia.

It is our policy to not release any child to any person who is or seems to be intoxicated or impaired. If any person tries to remove a child from our care and they are impaired, we will call an emergency contact to pick up the child. If the intoxicated person leaves the center with the child, the Lamar County Sheriff's Department or 911 will be contacted.

OTHER POLICIES:

Insurance: Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center does provide liability insurance for its property, staff, and students.

Transportation: Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center does NOT transport any students unless in the event of an extreme emergency.

General Information:

Daily Classroom Reports and Communication:

Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center will communicate with families through the My Brightwheel App. Each child will have their own profile, and student daily reports will be completed through the app.

Parents will be able to get their child's daily classroom report (food, diaper change/potty, nap, pictures of your child only, etc.) and notes from the teacher through the App.

Parents will also be able to communicate with their child's teacher and directors through the My Brightwheel App.

Personal Belongings:

Each child's personal belongings will be kept in a cubby or hook labeled with his or her name. Please label **every item with your child's name that they will bring into the center.**

*small backpacks only, labeled with name

*no toys from outside the center, unless requested by teacher for special day or activity.

*NO gum, hard candy, coins, rings, necklaces, bracelets, watches, other small jewelry or small items that can be a choking hazard will be allowed in the center.

Personal Information: We do NOT release any personal information of our families to any outside persons or organizations. We will cooperate fully with any investigations by any police or sheriff departments, the FBI, and the MS Department of Health, we are required by law to give any personal information is requested during an investigation.

Dress Code: Children should dress in appropriate clothing for learning and play, as well as **closed toe shoes with no shoe laces, Velcro is preferred.**

*No overalls (ages 3 and up) because the straps can fall in the toilet.

*Shorts or bloomers must be worn under dresses or skirts.

Parental Access: We always welcome and encourage parents, guardians and grandparents into our center. We just ask that you please not visit between the hours of 12 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. so as not to disrupt nap time. We also ask that your visits not disrupt the normal daily activities of the children.

School Shirts: Brighter Beginning Child Development Center has T-shirts available for purchase for students and their families, please see directors for pricing info.

Sun Safe:

Sun safe practices will be used during outdoor activities scheduled between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. during the period April 1 to September 15. Sunscreen spray must be used and must be provided by the parents. Insect repellent may also be used if provided by the parents. Please consult your child's pediatrician for information about the proper SPF for your child's skin tone. Please label your child's sunscreen and insect repellent.

Birthday Parties:

If you wish to send/bring a special snack for your child's birthday, please let your child's teacher know 1 day in advanced. Due to the fact that we service small children, we suggest store purchased mini cupcakes or small cookie per child. We would also like to suggest 100% juice boxes. This is the only time outside foods will be allowed in the center. All parties will only be allowed during your child's snack time.

Holiday Parties/Celebrations:

Brighter Beginnings CDC will celebrate the following holidays: Valentines Day, Easter, Halloween (Fall Party), and Christmas.

Photo/Media Usage:

Throughout your child's day, your child's teacher may take pictures of your child doing learning/fun activities. These photos will only be taken of your child using the classroom iPad and uploaded on your child's profile on the My Brightwheel App for the parent to view. Permission to Photograph Form will need to be signed by a parent or guardian before pictures can be taken of your child.

Our center also has a website and pictures/videos of your child may be needed to post our learning/fun activities that are done at Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center. Permission to post on our Websites will need to be signed by a parent or guardian before we use pictures and/or videos of your child. If you do NOT wish for your child to be photographed, please inform us.

Medication Policies and Procedures:

We ask that parents administer medications to their own children. If a parent or guardian wishes for Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center to administer medication to their child, they must completely fill out an entry in the Daily Medication Log Book giving permission for the medication to be given. Complete dosage instructions must be included along with the name of the medication, the time to give the medication, date, and parent signature. All medications must be labeled with your child's name and prescription medication should be in its original bottle with the child's and the prescribing doctor's name and phone number. We will NOT administer any expired medication.

Illness/Exclusion of Sick Children:

Illness: A child who arrives at the center noticeably ill and exhibiting any signs of illness that is outlined in the MSDH Rules and Regulations handbook, they will not be admitted for the day. If your child becomes ill while at the center, exhibiting any signs of illness that is outlined in the MSDH Rules and Regulations handbook, the parent or guardian will be contacted. If no one can be reached, we will call your emergency contact. We will separate sick children from others while they wait to be picked up by parent or another authorized person. If a child requires one on one care and no one can be reached, late pick up fees will apply. The child must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning the center.

See below for the list of exclusion criteria as stated in the MSDH Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities.

Small children can become ill quickly. The child care provider should observe each child's health throughout the time the child is in their care. If the child care provider observes signs and symptoms of illness that would require removal from the facility, he/she should contact the parents/guardians to have the child picked up and continue to observe the child for other signs and symptoms. **If the child is not responding to you, is having trouble breathing, or is having a seizure or convulsion, call 911.**

The following conditions require exclusion from BBCDC:

Fever: Defined as 100 *F or higher taken under the arm, 101*F taken rectally. For children 4 months or younger, the lower rectal temperature of 101*F is considered a fever threshold.

Children must be FEVER FREE for 24 HOURS before returning to the center.

Diarrhea: Frequent (3 or more episodes in a 24-hour period) runny, watery, or bloody stools. **According to the CDC recommendations, a child who is not toilet trained and has diarrhea should be excluded from child care settings regardless of the cause.**

Children must be DIARRHEA FREE for 24 HOURS before returning to the center.

Vomiting: Two or more times in a 24 hour period.

Rash: Body rash with a fever.

Sore throat: Sore throat with fever and swollen glands

Severe coughing: The child gets red or blue in the face or makes high-pitched whooping sound after coughing.

Eye discharged: Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye

Jaundice: Yellow eyes and skin

Irritability: Continuous irritability and crying

Children who have symptoms consistent with Fifth's Disease, Hands, Foot & Mouth Disease, Chicken Pox, Scabies, Lice, Ring Worm, Impetigo, Measle, Meningitis, Mumps, Pinworms, Pink Eye, E. Coli, Flu, Coronavirus, etc., will require a Doctor's written authorization stating that your child is clear to return to school.

Parent Code of Conduct:

Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center expects all parents to observe a certain standard of conduct while at the center and on its grounds. While we encourage proper discipline of children and proper discussion of any issues or concerns, the following is unacceptable conduct:

- Refusal to follow the policies and procedures designated by BBCDC to protect the safety and security of everyone at the facility.
- Threatening language, cursing, or threatening gesture towards our staff, other parents, or any child.
- Physical or verbal punishment of any children.
- Quarreling with other parents, our staff, or any children.

Brighter Beginnings Child Development Center reserves the right to remove any child from our center because of the inappropriate actions and conduct of that child's parents or guardians.

