



# Big Dreams & Lil Wonders

C H R I S T I A N   A C A D E M Y

"BUILDING FOUNDATIONS WITHIN OUR CHILDREN"

*SINCE 1999*

## Parent Handbook

11010 Perry Rd. Suite C Houston, TX 77064  
281 - 894 - 6366

11944 Veterans Memorial Dr. Houston, TX 77067  
281 - 895 - 6760

# Big Dreams & Lil Wonders Christian Academy

## Parent Policy & Procedures Handbook

### Welcome

We are honored that you have chosen Big Dreams & Lil Wonders to fulfill your child's developmental needs. We understand that we are with your child a good part of the day and that makes it essential that your child learn more than just academics from us. We promise to teach to the whole child, guiding their social, emotional and cognitive development as well as health and environmental awareness.

This handbook is meant to serve as a guide to our policies and outlines what you can expect from us and what we expect in return. We want to work with you to provide the utmost care for your child. While no one knows your child better than you, it is imperative that we work together. If you have any questions or concerns, please let a Big Dreams staff member know. We thank you for the opportunity to love and teach your child!

### Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday 5:30 am - 6:00 pm  
Closed Saturday and Sunday  
We observe the closure dates of Aldine ISD & Cy-Fair ISD.

### Philosophy & Goals

At Big Dreams and Lil Wonders, our goal is to produce happy, intelligent, and well-adjusted children. Here you will find a nurturing, educational environment for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years.

Assessing the needs of our families and making it our goal to provide services that benefit them. Our daycare center provides heart healthy meals for breakfast, lunch, snack and supper. We even have a small garden teaching kids to eat what they grow. Our school focuses on preparing students to be successful by giving them a jump-start socially, emotionally and academically. It is our belief that if a child's foundation is solid, the sky's the limit.

### Policy Updates

Any policy changes will be communicated by memo to all parents. **Our parent handbook will be updated with all new policy changes annually.** We will also instruct you via computer generated message and, on the message board, located in the front foyer area. Parents will be updated on new policies via memo and computer messages on Procure.

### Minimum Standards / Licensing Info

Texas Health and Human Service Commission reports and booklet is available at the front desk for your review. You may review a copy of our most recent inspection report and a copy of minimum standards online.

If you have any additional licensing questions, please contact the local office at 713-287-3238. Child Abuse Hotline # is 1-800-252-5400. Email [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us).

### Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect

Parents should be aware that licensed daycare centers staff and administration is required, under penalty of law, to report all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect. All caregivers and staff undergo training on how to detect child abuse, report child abuse and protect children from abuse. Such cases will be referred to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services immediately. The child abuse hotline number is 1-800-252-5400.

## **Gang Free Zones**

Under the Texas Penal code any area within 1000 feet of childcare centers is considered a gang free zone. Poster for gang free done on certificate wall and window updates.

## **Community Resources**

The Community resources bins will be in the reception area. They will be filled with information about things that are happening in the community that can enhance the lives of the children and their family to include education, nutrition, breastfeeding and entertainment.

## **Communication Systems**

A **Parent Board** will be located at the front desk for communicating important messages and updates to parents.

Big Dreams & Lil Wonders utilizes Procure Solutions to help educators to simplify operations and create meaningful connections with families, so they can focus on what matters most – the children in their care. They have an easy-to-use child care mobile app that allows real-time updates from the classroom to enhance the parent and staff experience.

Procure includes :

- Contactless Sign-In/Out : Parents can sign students in-out contactless using QR code or Curbside GeoLocation.
- Billing : Make tuition payments online via the mobile app.
- Family Communication: Share child care activities and daily reports, Streamline two-way family communications, Share photos and videos, Record and share student milestones

## **Parent Interactions & School Visits**

Parents are invited to become involved in all activities. You are also welcome to visit the center at any time. If you desire to visit the classroom, please check in at the front desk with your State Issued Identification to include name and photo. If you are interested in volunteering, we will have to complete a Criminal Background Check in accordance with State regulations. Please let the front offices know that you would like to volunteer and leave your name and phone number.

We have annual Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter events and ask all parents to help volunteer for it to be fun and successful for the children.

Please use the Procure Connect to contact the office for any concerns or updates.

## **Parent Conference**

Parent conferences are offered 3 times per year to keep parents informed of your child's progress. Report cards will be sent home at the end of December and the end of the school year in May. Parent's conferences will be held late September after the initial assessment, December and in April. Parents will be given the opportunity to sign-up during the designated week.

Parents you may request to speak with the Director or schedule a time to discuss any concerns you may have regarding your child/children at any time. Make your request at the front desk.

## **Parent Feedback**

We encourage and take all parent feedback into consideration when revising and creating policies and operations to better serve our families. A **suggestion box** is in the front area for communicating and receiving messages from parents. We also do an **annual satisfaction survey**, to make sure the needs of all our parents and students are being met.

## **Enrollment**

Big Dreams and Lil Wonders Christian Academy is open to children ages 6 weeks to 12 years old. Enrollment is offered to all children without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or religion. Parents must submit all necessary enrollment forms, including the "Enrollment Agreement" prior to attendance. Complete and accurate enrollment information must be always maintained.

## **Change of Information**

**Parents must inform the office of all changes in work and/or home phone numbers, addresses and emergency information. Update forms will be available in the front office for completion at any time and can be placed in the suggestion box upon completion.**

## **Arrivals and Departures**

Use the Drop-Off/Pick-up entrance with your personal code arriving and departing with children at Big Dreams & Lil Wonders.

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when being dropped off. Please be very brief during drop off times because the longer you stay the harder it gets. A smile, good-bye kiss, and reassuring words that you will be back are all that is needed. In our experience, children are always quick to get involved in play activities as soon as their parents are gone.

No drop-offs during the designated daily nap time will be accepted. If you must pick up your child during nap time it must be made brief and staff must be told beforehand so they can prepare the child for pick up without interrupting the other children's nap.

## **Release of Children**

Your child will not be released to anyone that is not listed on the enrollment form authorized by your signature. People authorized to pick up children will be required to sign the in/out sheet and present their driver's license for identification. If a person other than those listed on the enrollment form is to pick up your child, we **MUST** have authorization from the parent.

## **Financial Arrangements**

There is a non-refundable Enrollment Fee of \$100.00 which is payable upon submission of an application and on an annual basis thereafter. This fee covers the cost of insurance, materials and admission fees for the full academic year, August through July.

We accept money orders, and debit/credit cards.

Tuition is to be paid **Weekly, Monthly, or Bi-Monthly (1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>)** a late fee of \$25.00 will be applied if tuition is paid after the date of agreed payment. After three (3) days of non-payment we reserve the right to deny admission to class.

We offer extended care at the rate of \$10 per hour after 12 hours of care not to exceed 14 hours per day. Drop-in care is provided at the rate of \$10 per hour with a 5 hour minimum. Payment must be paid at time of drop off. Multiple child discounts will be considered for 3 or more children.

A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed when a student is picked up after 12 hours of care.

## **Refund Policy**

Refunds are permitted for overpayment, the funds will be issued back to the individual via check or applied as a credit. If there is a need for a refund other than overpayment it must be discussed with the director.

No refunds will be given for days when children do not attend due to illness or other reasons.

## **Attendance**

Tuition is due regardless of attendance. No deductions will be given if the child is ill or absent for any reason, including holidays, bad weather days, or other acts of God. This will reserve your child's place at the center.

Please contact us when your child will be absent. NCI will also be notified if your child has (5) consecutive absences.

**\*All children must be signed in and out each day with the appropriate time and parent signature.**

## **Vacation /Absentees**

Each student has two weeks of free vacation. Once your two weeks have been utilized you are responsible for paying ½ of their weekly tuition fees to ensure space availability. If you do not pay a re-registration fee will be required if your space is still available.

## **School Closings and Holidays**

In the event of bad weather conditions or other emergencies that may cause the closing of the center please **call** before transporting your child.

**Please watch Channel 11 News for the following ISD Closure Notification (Aldine, Cypress, Spring & Klein). If your designated ISD has not issued a school closure notification, please check Procure Connect for more information.**

**\*We will follow Aldine & Cypress ISD school closure schedule in the event of inclement weather.**

**The center will be closed on the following days:**

- Martin Luther King Holiday
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- July 4<sup>th</sup>
- Teacher In-service Day – 1<sup>st</sup> Weekend in August
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Christmas Weekend (to be announced)
- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- New Year's Weekend (to be announced)

## **Health and Immunizations Records**

State licensing standards require medical and immunization information to be on file for each child enrolled.

**Your child will be excluded from attendance at Big Dreams if this information has not been submitted, is not current or is incomplete.**

Whenever your child receives an immunization, it is very important for you to give us a copy of its documentation from your child's health care provider in order to keep your child's records up-to-date.

State regulations also require children who are four and five years-old to have vision and hearing screenings. Big Dreams will provide testing in September. If your student is absent or enrolls after designated testing month, please arrange to have these screenings performed at your child's pediatrician's office and provide us with the results so we can report them to the proper state agency as required.

Shot records not required if your child is enrolled in Public School.

## **Hearing & Vision Screening**

Vision and Hearing Screening are required by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to identify children with vision and hearing disorders who attend any public, private, parochial, denominational school or a Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) licensed child care center and licensed child care home in Texas.

Hearing & Vision Screenings must be conducted every 120 days for children that are 4 years of age. Effective January 1, 2024 Big Dreams & Lil Wonders Christian Academy will perform routine Hearing and Vision Screenings for preschoolers in January, May & September.

For more information visit, <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/vision-hearing-screening>.

## **Accommodating Families and Children**

The children at our center come from all different walks of life, so it's important for our daycare center to find ways to incorporate and promote diversity, inclusion, and equity. By representing different religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and family units, reinforcing respect and acceptance for these differences through our curriculum, staff and daycare surroundings.

We act in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other applicable federal, state or local laws pertaining to the provision of services to children with disabilities. Our goal is to meet the individual needs of the child within the structure of our program, while maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all the children and staff. We will make reasonable accommodations to afford children with disabilities full and equal enjoyment of our programs and services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs.

Additional services available are Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECI), a statewide program within the Texas Health and Human Services Commission for families with children from birth up to age 3, with developmental delays, disabilities or certain medical diagnoses that may impact development. ECI services support families as they learn how to help their children grow and learn.

For more information please visit <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services-eci>.

## **Illness and Medication**

We want to protect your child and everyone from infections and diseases. We require that all children enrolled have certain standard immunizations as required by the Texas Minimum Standards.

Children must be free of fever, vomiting, diarrhea and other apparent symptoms of illness before being admitted. You will be notified and required to pick up your child if he/she has:

- An armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees
- Several loose bowel movements (max. 3)
- Vomits
- Exhibits other signs of illness

A one hour time limit will be effective when a "Sick Child Pick Up" call is made. After one hour, a late fee of \$10.00 per hour will be assessed.

Medications will be administered according to Texas Minimum Standards.

- **Medicine will be given and breathing treatments will be administered at 12:00 noon only.**
- Medication forms must be completed and signed by the parents prior to administering medication. (*forms available at front desk*)

All medications must be:

- Clearly labeled with the child's name
- In the original container

## **Emergency/ Accident Procedures**

Emergency situations can never be anticipated, therefore, current emergency information must be on file in the office. In case of serious accidental injury, we will contact the parent immediately. In case the parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contact person listed on the admission application.

First aid will be administered in the case of minor injuries (i.e. scraped knee).

All such accidents will be reported on the Accident Report Form and will be sent home with the child. Parents will be notified by telephone.

If your child becomes critically ill or has an injury that requires immediate attention of a Physician, Big Dreams will:

1. Contact emergency medical services to take the child to the nearest emergency room.
2. Give the child first-aid treatment.
3. Contact the physician identified in the child's record.
4. Contact the child's parent; and
5. Ensure the supervision of other children in the group.

## **CACFP Participation**

We are proud participants of The Texas Department of Agriculture Child Care Food Program. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating child care centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers. CACFP also provides reimbursements for meals served to children and youth participating in afterschool care programs, children residing in emergency shelters, and adults over the age of 60 or living with a disability and enrolled in daycare facilities. CACFP contributes to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children and adults in the United States.

## **Nutrition**

We prepare a balanced meal meeting USDA requirements for (breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack) daily. Big Dreams & Lil Wonders will ensure that all children are served nutritious healthy meals and snacks that consist of Fruits, Grains, Vegetables, Proteins and Dairy daily. School age children will be served breakfast before they leave for school and a snack and dinner upon their arrival from school.

Monthly meal and snack menus will be prepared by our cooks and posted on the parent communication board. We will also provide copies for parents to take home.

Our Cooks and Staff that handle food have been trained and certified by Harris County Environmental Services. They will ensure that all food is cooked and stored at proper temperatures. **Food and Liquids will not be served hotter than 110 degrees F and will be kept out of reach of all children.**

They are also trained and educated on food allergies and will take all precautions to ensure their child is protected. Parents must submit a medical statement from the child's Doctor listing his/her allergies to food.

All food that is brought into the center and shared with other children **HAS TO BE COMMERCIALY PREPARED OR IN A KITCHEN THAT HAS BEEN APPROVED AND INSPECTED BY THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH. (NO HOME COOKED MEALS)**

We will provide Infants with "Parents Choice" milk formula, if any other brand is required, parents will provide their personal choice of formula. Baby food stages 1, 2, and 3 will be provided.

**\*Please have bottles prepared and labeled with the child's name.**

**\*Please notify the Director for any food allergies your child may have.**

We have resource information on our Community Board to help educate and encourage all families to create healthy eating habits, menu samples, recipes, and allergic reactions to food.

## **Home Lunch Practices**

**All food brought from home will be refrigerated immediately to ensure safety.** Please place the child's name on all lunches that are brought from home.

Big Dreams & Lil Wonders participates in the Texas Department of Agriculture to ensure that all meals meet the USDA requirement which consists of fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins and dairy daily. We have resource information on our Community Board to help educate and encourage all families to create healthy eating habits, menu samples, recipes, and allergic reactions to food.

Children who bring their lunch will still be offered milk, fruit and vegetables.

## **Breastfeeding**

Human Milk is the best source of milk for Infants. We will provide parents a comfortable place with a seat, pillow, step stool and water for hydration within the center. To allow any mother to breastfeed her child/children.

We will provide parents with breastfeeding education and support resources in the community upon request. La Leche League USA (website: [www.llusa.org](http://www.llusa.org)) is an organization that provides local meetings, support groups, and educational classes.

(See: Parent and Community Resource Wall)



## **Safe Sleep**

All staff, will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome:

- Always put infants to sleep on their backs unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception form 2710 signed by the infant's health care professional.
- Only one infant per crib to sleep
- Place the infant on a firm mattress in a crib that meets CPSC. Beds must be free of any loose objects (ex. blankets, pillows, or toys) not allowed in infants beds.
- Do not use sleep positioning devices.
- Infant may use pacifier without any attachments
- Infants must be removed from restrictive devices.
- Our facility is smoke-free.
- Actively observe sleeping infants by sight or sound.
- If an infant can roll back and forth from front to back, place the infant on the infant's back for sleep and allow the infant to assume a preferred sleep position.
- Do not swaddle an infant for sleep or rest unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception form 2710 signed by the infant's health care professional.
- Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times per day

## **Home Supplies**

Each child, regardless of age, needs one full set of extra clothing including underwear and socks to leave at the center at all times. Please label everything clearly with your child's name and place in a gallon size ziploc baggie. In the event the clothing is needed, solid clothing will be sent home in the baggie and a clean change of clothes need to be brought back the next day of care.

For infants parents need to provide formula, diapers, wipes, diaper ointments, bottles and cups all clearly labeled.

## **Personal Belongings**

It is your responsibility to make sure everything your child brings or wears to school has his/her name clearly written on it in permanent marker.

All children love to bring personal items to school with them, but please understand we have plenty of toys and materials. If your child brings an item to school, it may be lost or damaged. The risk is yours and Big Dreams & Lil Wonders cannot be responsible for personal belongings.

All items brought to school should fit in your child's backpack. Students are not allowed to bring any weapons or replicas of a weapon or any item that may encourage overly aggressive play.

## **Animals**

Animals are **NOT** allowed at the center.

## **Dress Code**

During the School year (August- May) students in our Pre-K class wear uniform blue shirts with khaki bottoms. We have spirit shirts that are worn on Friday and for field trips.

Children should arrive at school clean and bathed. They should be dressed in weather appropriate clothes that fit properly, socks and closed in shoes. Children cannot be dropped off without proper attire.

## **Curriculum**

Big Dreams & Lil Wonders utilizes Teaching Strategies for our Infant/Toddlers 1 & 2 and Frog Street Curriculum for Pre-K.

Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers & Twos incorporates meaningful learning activities into daily routines and provides intentional support for their caregivers. Their curriculum is research-based and top-rated to support caregivers and families.

- engages families as children make this transition from home to school,
- supports caregivers as they build children's foundation for school readiness

This resource is designed specifically to support the unique demands of each day in an infants, toddlers, and twos program. Teachers and caregivers can provide children with the opportunity to develop secure attachments through developmentally appropriate resources that allow them to gain confidence as learners.

The Frog Street Pre-K curriculum is a comprehensive, dual-language program designed to meet the needs of diverse learners while supporting developmental learning domains. Key learning domains are woven into every aspect of Frog Street's curriculum for pre-k, and weekly instructional plans are easy to follow and implement with fidelity.

**Frog Street Teacher Portal**, offers engaging online resources to support instruction, including teacher guides, literature, lesson plans, family letters, listening library, digital images, music, and more.

**AIM Observational Assessment**, provides teachers with an authentic assessment process to collect evidence and data in order to show progress and make developmentally-appropriate instructional decisions.

## **Water Play Activities**

During the summer we will offer light water play, Light water play consisting of sprinkler play, slip and slides etc. On these days you will be responsible for providing a swimsuit and towel for your child.

## **Physical Activity**

All children are required to have outdoor play for a minimum of 60 minutes. This is a special time of the day to release energy and simply enjoy the physical rewards of active play. It develops gross motor skills to build muscular strength, increase endurance, and helps to decrease their chances of becoming overweight or developing other health related diseases. We actively monitor temperatures for the day and keep children indoors when it's too hot or cold. On days of inclement weather, we will have activities inside that will allow the children to have physical activity.

Please dress your child appropriate to the weather. During cold months make sure your child brings a coat or jacket to wear when he/she will use the playground.

## **Screen Time / TV Policies**

Big Dreams & Lil Wonders cares about the health and well being of the children in our care. We do not rely on television, movies or computers to fill space in our daily schedules. Our goal is to build curriculum and daily routines that promote physically active play, cognitive and social development. Screen time is only used during morning arrival group time and evening departure group time and has the following restrictions:

- Screen Time does not exceed 1 hour per day
- Children under the age of two or children who attend the center for three or less hours will not be offered screen time.
- Use of screen time for instructional or physical activity purposes will be related to the lesson plan and will not exceed 30 minutes per week.
- School Age children are allowed to use screen time to assist or complete school assignments while being closely monitored by their teacher.
- This includes computers, movies, video games, tablets, smart phones, active video games, etc.
- All attempts should be made to avoid exposing children to marketing and advertising.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are not only fun, but educational for your child. Please be assured that safety is our main concern while on a field trip. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to accompany and chaperone our groups. Children enjoy having mommy or daddy or grandma coming with us!

During the summer the field trips are scheduled a month at a time. Monthly schedules will be available for parents at the front desk.

- Field trip fees need to be paid prior to the field trip.
- Parents must sign field trip permission for students to attend scheduled field trips.
- Students must wear Big Dreams & Lil Wonders field trip shirts to participate.
- All field trips will be posted on the message board indicating who is going on the trip, where the trip is to, what time the van will be leaving and returning.

## **Transportation**

Transportation will be provided to area schools and field trips only. All children must meet height and weight requirements for booster seat and seat belts while riding on the van. Children under 5 will be required to be in a car seat (parents need to provide a seat for transporting).

## **Discipline and Guidance**

Big Dreams and Lil Wonders will use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self direction to guide the child toward acceptable behavior according to the child's age and development.

We strive to work hand in hand with the parents to foster an atmosphere of courtesy, respect for oneself, others and our environment. Our goal is to build a relationship with our parents, where we are always having open dialogue about the students we care for.

If we notice issues we will communicate our concerns to the parent/guardian immediately. If the challenging behavior continues a parent conference will be requested to establish a behavior modification plan. If we determine that we are unable to meet the needs of your child we will be forced to terminate care, for the safety and wellbeing of all.

## **Voluntary Withdrawal / Termination**

A **two weeks'** notice must be given if you withdraw your child, the parent must provide written notice for the child's file and final payment must meet all financial obligations incurred to date.

If the rules and policies set forth are not followed, we reserve the right to terminate the daycare contract agreement at any time. In such an event, we will be paid in full through the end of the week in which such termination occurs.

Occasionally, a child will experience some difficulty in adapting to the daycare's environment or abiding by the daycare rules of behavior. A conference will be scheduled if your child should experience some difficulty. We will work closely with you to see if the problem can be resolved. If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive to the group, we reserve the right to ask you to withdraw your child from daycare.

Furthermore, child care arrangements will be terminated immediately for any of the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to comply with the policies set forth in the parent handbook.
- Destructive or hurtful behavior of a child that persists even with parent cooperation in stopping the behavior.
- Non-payment of childcare or late fees and/or recurring late payment of fees.
- Repeated failure to pick up the child at scheduled times.

## **Staff Information**

All Big Dreams Lil Wonders programs are staffed by individuals who meet, or exceed, the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.

All staff is subject to:

- Criminal Background Checks
- FBI Background Check
- Education and work experience verification
- Random drug-testing
- CPR/First Aid Certification
- Training – We are committed to ensuring that staff are competent and skillful. All staff are required to attend in-service training and workshops.

**Our staff is not required to have vaccines for preventable diseases on file.**