

# Berean Baptist Head Start

“Improving the Lives of Children and  
Families”



## 2023-2024 Parent Handbook

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*Berean Baptist Head Start  
510 east Lafayette Street  
Marion, Alabama 36756*

Central Office: 334-683-9574  
Central Office Fax: 334-683-4577

Center One: 334-683-4811  
Center Three: 334-683-4443

*To: Head Start Parents/Guardians  
From: Destiny L. Scott, Director  
Date: September 01, 2023*

*It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the Berean Baptist Head Start Family!  
We're sure that you and your child will be pleased with your experiences here.*

*Helping children learn and families grow ensures a strong future for our community.  
Providing access to a high quality early childhood education is important in the future of all children.*

*Berean Baptist Head Start provides the best services in education, health, nutrition, mental health, social services and parent involvement so our children will enter school ready to learn and contribute.*

*Berean Baptist Head start has been here for over 50 years, assisting families with their trials, recognizing the needs of low-income young children and acknowledging the impediments that need to be addressed to help them learn and grow.*

*We hope and expect to have many great things going on in the centers this year.  
We ask our Head Start families for support as we continue to strive to close the achievement gap, combat poverty, and provide our children with the opportunity to thrive.*

*Thank you! 😊*



## **Board of Directors Role**

The Board of Directors have a legal and fiscal responsibility to administer and oversee the Head Start program. They delegate the day to day operations to the director and management team.

## **Board Members**

Mr. Dexter Hinton - Chairman  
Mr. Bennie Hinton  
Ms. Ruby F. King-Knox  
Mr. Robert Turner-Attorney  
Mrs. Johnnie McCalpine-Fiscal  
Dr. Jerildine Melton- Early Childhood Education

## **Program Governance**

A formal structure of program governance provides parents and other community representatives with the authority and opportunity to participate in shared decision-making concerning program design and implementation.

### **Parent Committee**

Parents are offered the opportunity to participate in shared Parent Committee groups. Every parent of an enrolled child is automatically a member of the Parent Committee. Parent Committees provides parents with an opportunity to assist in the development of activities that address their interests and needs, and that support the education and healthy development of their children. It provides parents with an opportunity to advise staff in developing and implementing program policies, activities and services. Through Parent Committees, parents can plan, conduct and participate in informal as well as formal programs and activities. Meeting are held monthly, during the school year. During the meeting, parents are elected to serve on the Policy council.

### **Policy Council**



Opportunities for parents to participate in agency program governance happens through the Policy Council. The Policy Council is established and charged with specific functions outlined in the Head Start Performance Standards in order to ensure that parents have the opportunity to be involved in shared decision-making. The Policy Council provides a method for parents to assume leadership roles in representing the collective interests of all families.

The Policy Council meets monthly. Membership consists of current Head Start parents, and members of the community who share a common interest in the welfare of children and families.

## **Mission Statement**

We prepare children to excel in school and improve parent's ability to support their child's education.

## **Value Statement**

The Berean Baptist Head Start Program value system encompasses integrity, honesty, and objectivity. We recognize each person as an individual of worth, who is willing to learn and is receptive to change. Staff will display respect for co-workers, themselves, the child, the parent and the community.

## **Family Records**



## Release of Confidential Information

Any information you provide to us, or any information that we have concerning your family, will not be discussed or shared with anyone within the program unless it is for the purpose of providing services to your family. No information will be shared with anyone outside the program unless we have a parent's written permission. Parents are allowed to see their family's records, but are not allowed to see other records of families, or to discuss other families with staff or other individuals.

### Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Confidentiality Provisions

#### Primary Rights of Parents under FERPA:

- Rights to inspect and review education records;
- Right to seek to amend education records;
- Rights to have some control over the disclosure of information from education records.

"Parent" is defined as a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. NOTE: FERPA affords full rights to either parent unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, state statutes or legally binding document that specifically revokes these rights.

"Education Records" are records that contain information directly related to a child and are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

## Consent, Authorization, and Release

During the registration process, you will complete the form for consent, authorization and release. The form must be kept current at all times. We recommend that there are at least three responsible adult contacts, at least 18 years of age, for pick up or drop off of your child.

Children will only be released to parent/guardian and persons designated on the consent, authorization and release form. All persons picking up children from the center or from the bus must be on the form.

#### Prior to arrival and after departure:

- **Please hold your child's hand while crossing the street, walking in the parking lot, and walking your child to and from the classroom.**
- **Children must be supervised by an adult at all times. You are responsible for his/her supervision.**



- **Your full attention should be focused on your child. We ask that you limit distractions, such as cell phone usage, so that you can attend to your child and get him/her safely to and from the classroom.**
- **Never leave children unattended in a car for any reason.**

## **Child Release Procedure**

Our primary responsibility as a Head Start program is to provide for the safety of all children entrusted to our care. In light of that responsibility and in consideration of concerns regarding our world today, we adhere to the following procedures.

**Parents are required to contact the program with any emergency contact information changes that occur.** If you are not able to take your child from the bus, or to be on time to pick up your child from the center, someone from your consent, authorization or release form must be available. If we have had no contact from you and no one is in time to receive your child, we will attempt to contact those on the list. If no one can be reached, after two hours the Department of Human Resources or local law enforcement will be contacted.

## **Volunteering in Berean Baptist Head Start**

Volunteerism is an important part of the Head Start experience. Volunteer opportunities exist for parents, individuals, and organizations in the community to become involved in BBHS. Examples of volunteerism are assisting in the classrooms, serving on the Policy Council, assisting with food drives or health fairs, etc. Head Start programs are required to engage parents and the community in volunteerism and BBHS is required to track and document these volunteer hours.

## **Parent/Guardian Volunteers**

The Head Start vision for parent involvement and family engagement is to support parents as their child's first and most important teacher and to provide every parent with opportunities to be involved in all aspects of the program. Children benefit from this involvement, and so do their parents. Children benefit when their parents know about



and support what is happening in their education. Parents who are involved are more likely to continue that participation throughout their child's school years. Parents who are involved gain skills in decision-making, teaching, management, and advocacy.

Other family members, such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, are welcome. Any volunteer who is with the children is a "helper" and is never asked to be responsible for the children or be alone with the children at any time. All regular volunteers before being scheduled in the classrooms will need to complete the volunteer training and complete all necessary requirements.

## Medication Administration

Medication should be given at home before or after school whenever possible. When it is absolutely necessary to administer medication at Head Start, the following procedure **must** be followed:

1. Consent form must be completed and signed by parent, one form for each medication must be provided.
2. Medication must be in original containers, properly labeled with current date.
3. Doctor's note with all directions and information must be presented.
4. Any over-the counter medication, including Tylenol and cough medicine, must have a doctor's note and consent form.

*Please make sure staff members are made aware of ALL MEDICATIONS. Changes in dosages or directions, require a new note from the doctor. An adult must hand any and all medications to Teacher or Assistant. It should **never** be sent with the child or in the child's backpack.*

- Parents must make sure all medications are returned to them on the child's last day of school. Any medication left will be sent to the Central Office for summer break and may be picked up.

## Attendance Policy



To get the most from Berean Baptist Head Start children must attend regularly, but if your child is unable to attend, here are a few pointers:

- ❖ If your child is ill, PLEASE keep him/her at home. Illnesses include but are not limited to vomiting, diarrhea, head lice, and coughing.
- ❖ Whenever your child will be out of school, please contact your child's teacher, Family Advocate, or Family and Community Engagement Specialist to inform us about your child's absence.
- ❖ Upon returning back to BBHS, please bring or send a doctor's statement or parent note with the reason for your child's absence
- ❖ Expect a home visit from the Family and Community Engagement Specialist and/or Family Advocate when your child has reoccurring absentees.



**We understand that some absences are unavoidable, but strive to have your child on time and ready to learn on a daily basis. We want to know how your child is doing, so please keep us up-to date.**

## **Food Allergies, Special Diets, and Religious Considerations**

Parents/guardians must inform the program of any allergies or medical conditions at enrollment, or as the parent becomes aware of them. Any special diet or food allergy requiring food substitutions at the center must be documented in writing by the child's





doctor. For religious reasons, a note will be required from the parent and must be kept in the child's file. A Health/Nutrition Specialist is available to work with parents of any child with special dietary requirements. We strive to ensure that all children in the program are well nourished.

## Meal Service



BBHS participates in and follows the USDA Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Meals are planned as part of the day's learning experience.

The menus for the program are created by a licensed Dietitian, and are designed to be low in sugar, salt and fat. Menus are given to parents at orientation and are posted in the classrooms.

## HEALTH

Health is the most important aspect of a child's success in being school ready. Berean Baptist Head Start ensures that each child have access to a medical and dental home. A physical examination is required once every year for your child. Having access to a medical home ensures that your child will have a permanent health care provider that is aware of all health issues and provides proper treatment for your child when he or she is sick or needs to be immunized.

When children have access to a dental home and oral care visits are made regularly, they tend to eat, speak and focus on learning. A dental examination is required once every year for your child. Berean Baptist Head Start ensures that each child have or establishes a dental home and works with the parents to get treatment for children who are in need. In addition, Berean Baptist Head Start promotes preventive dental care through parent training, dental hygiene products for home use, and tooth brushing once a day in the classroom.



## Mental Health

One of the goals of Head Start is to aide in the development and growth of the *whole* child, we strive to monitor, assess, and provide intervention related to the social, emotional, and behavioral learning needs of participating children. All Head Start children will receive a social emotional screening, completed by their parent or teacher within the first 45 days of entry using the Ages & Stages (SE) tool.

Being mindful of all the various social and emotional factors that can impact development, the Mental Health Specialist & Mental Health Consultant provides both educational opportunities and hands-on consultation with parents and staff to address the needs of each child. We focus on developing healthy relationships with children and their caregivers, creating a supportive, nurturing, safe environment, and using age appropriate social/emotional curriculum to help children develop greater awareness and improved social functioning.

These strategies are typically effective at helping children reach social, emotional, and behavioral milestones, but for those children and families identified through early screening or teacher or parent referrals as needing additional support, more intensive individual and family interventions are available from the Mental Health Consultant, including observations, additional screenings, assessments, and treatment services for child and family.

## NUTRITION

Proper nutrition fuels the body. Children who eat healthy food according to most studies tend to stay mentally focused and physically energized. Berean Baptist Head Start provides a healthy breakfast, lunch and snack each day. Food from home is not allowed in the centers. The agency also teaches children and families about proper nutrition through planned activities in the classroom, newsletters, and workshops.



## Disability Services

Serving children with disabilities is a very important piece of Berean Baptist Head Start's work. BBHS provides opportunities for each child to achieve his/her full potential by tailoring the learning program to meet the child's needs. Ten percent or more, of all children who are enrolled in the program have specific special needs and disabilities.

There may be times when referrals for further evaluation of a child may be indicated. Parents, teachers, and other BBHS staff will work together to determine whether a referral or assessment is needed. BBHS will work with other local agencies or health care providers, as well as families, to best ensure that your child's needs are being met.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding your child's development, please discuss them with your child's teacher or the Education/Disability Specialist.



## **Family Partnership Agreement**

The Family Partnership Agreement is a tool used by BBHS to help families develop and achieve goals. The Family Needs Assessment will be used to identify the strengths, needs,



and interests of a family. The Family Partnership Agreement is completed in collaboration with your Family & Community Engagement Specialist and Family Advocate. Good partnership exists when the families and staff learn from each other. Families are supported as they meet their own goals and as they nurture the development of their children. All information in the Family Partnership Agreement is confidential and will be kept in that manner.

The key to the Head Start approach is its focus on actively engaging parents and the community in all aspects of the program. The partnering process with parents begins at intake and continues throughout their participation in the program. The agreement looks at family strengths, support, needs and resources and contain goals initiated by parents that will help to improve their lives and achieve greater self-sufficiency. The staff members advocate within the community for parents and provide tools to effectively advocate for themselves. The Family & Community Engagement Specialist and Family Advocates work individually with each family to improve their condition and quality of life.

## **Parent Engagement**

Parent Engagement is an integral part of a successful program for you and your child. Recent studies have shown that children are most successful in school when parents are engaged. Home visits build strong, supportive relationships between staff and parents. Head Start offers a series of trainings and professional development opportunities for parents. Workshops, and trainings are offered throughout the year at various locations and are based on interests and needs of the parents. The Family & Community Engagement Specialist will be contacting parents throughout the year to encourage participation in the trainings and workshops that Head Start offers.

## **Fatherhood & Male Involvement**

Head Start believes in the growing awareness of fathers or male figures having an active role in the lives of children. Fathers are a vital source of caring and nurturing, as well as financial support. They are care givers and role models. Fathers set expectations and help children to accomplish goals. Developing these strong relationships is not only important to the children and mothers but also to the men themselves. The BBHS program provides



activities that will give fathers & father figures an opportunity to network with others, enhance their parenting skills, and promote the importance of father/child relationships.

## ***Roles and Responsibilities of Parents***

<b><i>ROLES</i></b>	<b><i>RESPONSIBILITIES</i></b>
PARTICIPANT	Participate in Head Start planning activities, such as orientation, open house, center/classroom committee meetings, educational, recreational, and social events.
LEARNER	Observe in classrooms; Join parent education groups; Read about Head Start and child development; Sign up for literacy, GED, and/or college credit classes; Attend workshops, seminars, conferences, and talks; Attend consumer information talks.
CONTRIBUTOR	Volunteer in various aspects of the program; Contribute ideas and thoughts for the program; Give as much time as possible to your Head Start program.
SUPPORTER	Get other parents to participate; Interpret Head Start in the broader community; Support all staff in their efforts; Help out in centers whenever needed.
EVALUATOR	Participate in annual program evaluation; Identify methods for strengthening program.
PLANNER	Initiate and/or plan activities of interest to parents; Identify goals for Head Start program; Help planning process in policy groups; Participate in refunding process.
DECISION-MAKER	Participate in/attend policy group meetings; Participate in county-wide, citywide, statewide policy group meetings.
PRIME EDUCATOR	Work with your child to reinforce what s/he has learned in Head Start.
CHILD ADVOCATE	Understand your child's needs and meet them; Protect your child from injury and bodily harm; Know and protect your child's rights; Be an advocate for your child and other children in your community.



PAID EMPLOYEE	Apply for openings on Head Start staff; Become qualified if not already qualified; Be an effective, sensitive, responsive staff person.
LEADER	Become involved in your community (school, government, health and human services activities); Learn the political system and how it works; Use any leadership skills you have learned in or outside Head Start

## School Readiness

Head Start strives to increase the school readiness of preschool children. The Head Start approach to school readiness means that children are prepared for school, families are ready to support their children’s learning and schools are ready to educate our children with the necessary skills to make them successful in life.

BBHS considered the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, the Alabama Early Learning Goals, the expectations of the school district and the expectation of families when developing school readiness goals for children.

### *Domains*

### *Outcomes*

<b><i>Approaches to Learning</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>Children develop positive dispositions for learning as they engage with their environment- noticing, trying, wondering and investigating.</i></b></li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Children express themselves through language and creative arts.</i></li> </ul>
<b><i>Social &amp; Emotional Development</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Children develop the skills necessary to successfully function in the community, form respectful and caring relationships, regulate behavior and emotions, develop healthy self-concepts and demonstrate resiliency.</i></li> <li>• <i>Children understand people and how they relate to others and the world around them.</i></li> </ul>
<b><i>Language &amp; Literacy</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Children engage collaboratively in receptive and expressive communication using one or more languages.</i></li> <li>• <i>Children progress in spoken and written communication with the English language.</i></li> <li>• <i>Children gain the early literacy knowledge and skills that come before and lead up to conventional reading and writing.</i></li> </ul>
<b><i>Cognitive</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Children think, reason, problem-solve, make sense of experiences and represent ideas and feelings.</i></li> <li>• <i>Children construct mathematical knowledge and apply solutions to everyday problems related to numbers, geometry and spatial sense, classification and patterns, measurements and comparison.</i></li> <li>• <i>Children engage in scientific processes in order to acquire conceptual knowledge about the natural and physical world.</i></li> </ul>
<b><i>Perceptual, Motor &amp; Physical Development</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Children develop physical well-being, health and motor skills, thus building the foundation for lifelong healthy living.</i></li> </ul>



## **Home Visits**

Home visits provide great opportunities to make connections between the home and program. They offer a chance for parents and staff to get to know each other and for staff to give individualized attention to family strengths, interest and goals. Teachers and Assistants will conduct at least two home visits per year with each family. The staff will work with you on arranging convenient times for these home visits to take place in your home.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are held two times during the year for Head start children. This is the time of year to discuss individual child progress and establish goals for school Readiness. Conferences are for parents to ask questions, inform the teacher of your expectations for your child, and learn to work together to reach educational goals.





# Community Contacts

Department of Human Resources

334-683-5500

## Clinics

Marion Clinic

Dr. Shane Lee

334-683-9085

Marion Rural Health Center

Dr. Jamil Akhtar

334-683-2073

Rural Health Medical Center

Dr. Edgar Brown

334-628-2651

NP-Deborah Mitchell

## Dentists

Dr. David Gann (Marion)

334-683-6997

Dr. Rosalyn Bassett (Demopolis)

334-289-9978

Dr. John Holland (Uniontown)

334-628-2651

## FYI

Alabama Cooperative Extension System

334-683-6888

Selma Career Center

334-872-0471

Marion Police Department

334-683-9071

Uniontown Police Department

334-628-4021

Hale County Hospital

334-624-3024

Vaughn Medical Center

334-418-4100

Druid City Hospital

205-759-7111

UAB Health Systems

800-822-8816

American Red Cross

334-683-9571

