

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Bonnie Academy provides a safe and nurturing environment, which promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive and creative development of young children. We believe that a developmentally appropriate program should be provided for all children. A developmental program is one in which the curriculum is geared to the age appropriateness of children as well as individual maturational difference. Learning in young children is a result of interaction between the child's thoughts and experiences with his or her environment. Our program's aim is to provide for the whole child.

We believe that the role of our teachers is to facilitate the optimum social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of each child by being aware of the various stages of development and providing the appropriate learning experiences. At Bonnie Academy, play is recognized as the natural vehicle by which a child learns. It is through play that the child exercises curiosity and imagination, learns to concentrate, tries new ideas and practices grown-up behavior. The value of play cannot be overstated. Children must also be allowed to move about in an environment, which offers a variety of attractive, stimulating and interesting activities. Giving ample opportunity to make choices benefits children by enhancing self-esteem, encouraging independence and developing a sense of responsibility for his or her own actions.

Creativity is seen as an attitude or way of thinking about one's environment, which comes easily to the young child. We believe that it is the nurturing adult to enhance and refine creativity within each child by showing respect for their ideas, encouraging self-initiated learning, respecting individual difference, fostering curiosity, providing a variety of media through which creativity can be expressed, modeling creative behavior, and reducing the pressure of evaluation and competition.

A child's experience at Bonnie Academy is seen as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, the family. In order to provide for the optimal development, we are convinced that it is essential to work with parents to meet each child's needs. In order to strengthen the child's relationship within his or her family, we provide a warm and caring atmosphere, which fosters within the child a sense of security, self-confidence and individual worth.

## **CURRICULUM**

Our planned classrooms help the children to develop. They invite them to learn. Using the center approach, the children move around freely and learn by doing. As they change activities, they meet different groups of children. They learn to work and talk with others. They meet problems and solve them. They grow in confidence and self-respect.

Our curriculum is designed to accommodate maturational differences in children through the use of centers. Centers enable children to make choices and learn through active exploration of the materials available combined with interaction with their peers and adults. Centers provide experiences with such cognitive skills as differentiation, classification, seriation and other basic thought processes. Experiences are of concepts, creativity and socio-dramatic play. We provide small and large group activities so that children learn to develop social skills like waiting for one's turn, sharing, listening to others, and verbalizing their feelings and knowledge of the world around them. Time is also provided for large motor skills, group times, music and stories.

## **CENTERS**

### **DRAMATIC PLAY**

The dramatic play center provides the necessary equipment for role playing. It helps stimulate the imagination and aids in the development of language skills. It also plays an important role in the development of empathy.

### **ART**

The art center is a place where children can express themselves using a variety of media. The young child's main concern is the process of their art not the product. They are free to explore their creativity at their own level of learning.

### **LIBRARY**

Children learn the value of reading through many happy experiences with books. They find that books give them pleasure and information. Their language grows. They begin to tell stories themselves—sometimes using the flannel board or puppets. They learn that pictures have meaning and that they are able to use pictures to help them tell a story. Through these activities, the children are getting ready to read for themselves.

### **SCIENCE**

The more the young child knows and understands about his world, the more independent and confident he can become. The classroom plan encourages the child to ask questions, to look for answers, to be aware of what is going on around him. The science table shows him that his interests are important to others. Experiments, pets and growing plants give him new experiences to think about the new words to try out.

## **SENSORY**

Play experiences with sensory materials are important for the young child. A child needs to feel that he can control and manage his world. Pouring water and shaping sand help him to have this feeling. Using different mediums, the child experiments without fear of making mistakes. Examples of sensory mediums are cornmeal, water, sand, playdough, etc.

## **TABLE ACTIVITIES (MANIPULATIVES)**

Table activities and manipulatives allow a child to test himself at problem solving. Matching games let him test his growing ability to see that certain things go together. Puzzles and pegboards give the child practice in coordinating his hand and eye movements. Number games help the child learn what numbers really stand for by giving him objects to count and handle.

## **BLOCK BUILDING**

The block building center is a place where children learn scientific concepts firsthand. Generalizations about balance, gravity and space are understood long before their names enter the child's vocabulary. Even more importantly, block building furthers the growth of scientific thinking involving inquiry, invention, and discovery.

## **PREPARING FOR SCHOOL**

### **SEPARATION**

The transition from home to school is a major one for both you and your child. As a parent, you want to help your child enter the outside world as confidently and happily as possible. Many children worry about being separated from their parents when school begins. Often they're afraid that you won't come back or be at home after school. It's important that you build your credibility by always being there when you say you will. Brief visits by the child to relatives, neighbors, private instructions, or religious school give both you and the child practice in separating and reuniting.

Before the first day of school, take time to show the child the building and grounds in a relaxed way. You might visit the playground or walk around inside slowly looking at things of interest to your child. Have the child meet his teacher in advance as well.

All children experience a degree of separation anxiety as they come and go from the security of home and the family they love and trust, and it's quite healthy for them to do so. Still, we try to think of ways to comfort them while they're in school. A locket with a picture of you can be especially reassuring for little ones who may be seeing a lot of new faces for the first time. You might also want to bring in a larger picture of the family that can be taped inside their cubby. A favorite piece of jewelry or a piece of clothing or blanket might be just what is needed to brighten their day.

If your child is unusually shy or perhaps has just gone through a health or family problem, meet with the teacher or director shortly before school starts. Explain the situation fully and frankly. You and the teacher can agree on an advance strategy or attention needed to help the child make the transition easier.

### **SIGN-IN / OUT**

All children must be signed IN and OUT every day on the class roster. This is done for the safety of all children, so please don't forget! No child will be released unless signed out by the authorized person.

### **CLOTHING**

It is important to consider what the child will be doing at school when dressing him. Remember that children will be climbing, painting, lying on the rug, and children should be able to dress themselves when toileting. We emphasize having good experiences with material, rather than keeping clean. Clothing should be comfortable, sturdy, and washable so that maximum freedom with material and equipment is obtained. Shoes should have closed toes. Put your child's name in clothing such as sweaters, coats, etc. and bring in an extra set of clothing in case it is needed in an accident.

## **NAPS**

If your child naps, please send a sheet and a blanket labeled with your child's name. It will be returned, at the end of each week, to your child's cubby for home laundering. Please be sure to return promptly on Monday.

## **DISCIPLINE**

We favor a positive approach to discipline which guides children's behavior in order to foster good human relationships. We find that behavior problems can be avoided by planning an environment that is stimulating for children and conducive to the development of positive self-image. At no time will threats, physical punishment or belittlement be used. We stress the importance of establishing positive relationships between teachers and children. The following are some of the techniques used to avoid and / or deal with problem behavior:

1. Know the children – their general characteristics at this stage – home environment – needs and interests.
2. Set reasonable limits and standards that the child can understand.
3. Help children to understand and adjust to the established routine.
4. Help children become a part of the group.
5. Provide choices whenever possible.
6. Use simple directions.
7. Give advance notice before changing activities.
8. Listen to children – try to find the cause of unacceptable behavior – help children to express their feelings – be prepared to accept the feelings expressed.
9. Redirect the child to an appropriate activity.
10. If necessary, remove the child from the situation.
11. If necessary arrange a parent –teacher meeting to discuss the behavior.
12. If all of the above resolutions fail and no resolution is found the child will be terminated from the program. Additionally, the parent will be advised to find the most appropriate environment for the child.

## NUTRITION

We have two snacks per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Morning snack is part of the morning center time. Children often help prepare their snack and help themselves to milk or juice. We provide a variety of healthy food (example: fresh fruit, crackers, vegetables, cheese toast, soup, yogurt, and cereal). Most of our snack food is whole grain and sugar-free. We also try to purchase organic foods as much as possible. We believe in providing nutritious snacks, this way the child is taught early in life about good eating habits. Students bring their own lunches and drinks. **Lunch can also be purchased at Bonnie Academy for \$3.00 per day.** Lunchtime is a good time for students to relax and visit each other. Good manners and cleaning up after eating are practiced.

You are welcome to bring a special treat for your child's birthday to share with the class at snack time. Please remember our policy of serving healthy low or no sugar snacks. Some possibilities are strawberries, watermelon, banana or carrot cupcakes, muffins or cheese & crackers. Contact your child's teacher to sign up or for help if you have any questions.

## HEALTH and SAFETY

We are only prepared to care for children who are well. All children entering preschool are required to have a pre-entrance physical examination.

Your child should **stay at home** if he has any of the following:

A bad cold.

1. A fever of 100 axillary.
2. Red throat or earache.
3. Swollen neck glands.
4. Unexplained rash or skin eruption.
5. Tonsillitis or any communicable disease.
6. If he acts listless, drowsy, headachy, has a flushed face, lack of appetite, or shows any behavior that is noticeably out of the ordinary.
7. Green discharge from the nose.

In case of serious **illness or accident** occurring at school, the following procedure will be observed:

- Call 911
- Parent called immediately. (please keep your phone numbers current)
- If parent cannot be reached, the Director will decide the next step according to the circumstances and seriousness of the situation. She may do all or any of the following:

- a. Contact person(s) listed by parent to call in an emergency
- b. Call doctor listed by parent or paramedic if appropriate
- c. Take child to the emergency hospital

For minor injuries the school has the form (**Minor Accident Report**) that gives the description of the injury and treatment received by the child. Parents should receive and sign the form the same day that the accident occurs.

It is important to remember that the school needs to have the T.B. clearance before admitting children to school. In addition to this the school needs to have a copy of updated Immunization Record Card. If you have any reason not to immunize your child the school needs to have a written note from your child's physician's office explaining why the child is not immunized.

If your child needs to take **medication** during school hours please contact the teacher or office to fill out a form that will give the school permission to administer medication. All medication must arrive at school in its original container, clearly marked with child's name, doctor's name, medication name, and dosage. Medication may not stay in child's lunchbox but must be stored in the school office away from children's reach. .

There are first aid supplies, a cot and an isolation room ready at all times at school.

## Toilet Training

Bonnie Academy staff is ready to train any child who is developmentally ready for toilet training. The staff is ready to help children by using specific techniques developed by leading Child Development experts. An example of the technique would be asking and helping the child to use the toilets at a certain time frame. For our young enrollees (18 months to 36months) we will ask parents to provide us with diapers and wet napkins. All children who need diaper rash ointments to be administered we would ask the parents to provide us with signed Medication Administration Form available in every classroom and the office. No other device such as potties or toilet boosters will be accepted by the school to be used in classrooms or restrooms.

## THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Parents, grandparents, and other adult family members are encouraged to volunteer one day a month in the classroom. They may spend one hour or the entire morning. They will have a chance to observe the children and assist in an activity.

1. Upon arriving for volunteer work, notify the teacher that you are ready to begin your volunteer time.
2. Smoking is not permitted at school.

3. Please keep adult-adult conversations to a minimum.
4. Personal observations or opinions about a child should **only** be discussed with the **teachers**.
5. Notify the teacher when you are leaving an area, indoors or outside, even if it is temporary.
6. Notify the teacher if a child is injured or has an accident.
7. Vocabulary used should be appropriate for the age group. Be positive. Explanations should be precise and easy to follow. If a child has difficulty following them, repeat them in other words, giving only one direction at a time.
8. Your children respond quickly to voice tones. Harsh tones may scare or inhibit a child. A pleasant, non-demanding tone encourages children to communicate and relax.
9. Expectations should be reasonable and age appropriate.
10. If questions arise such as how to do something or handle a situation, don't hesitate to bring your concerns to the teacher.
11. Periodically, plan to meet with the director to discuss your volunteer experience. Feel free to initiate a meeting at anytime. Every effort will be made to make your volunteer experience a positive, growth-promoting one.
12. Volunteer cannot be used in teacher /child ratios.
13. Volunteers must always be under a direct supervision of a teacher – cannot be left alone with children.

## **CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION HINTS**

Using words in guiding children can be helpful or confusing, according to our choices of phrases. Many children develop protective “deafness” against adult directions because they hear too many of them.

In helping young children learn through verbal directions one must first get the child's attention. Then use clear, short meaningful phrases that are expectant and encouraging. Directions are positive rather than negative in form, and they are always specific. One should give just what verbal help is most needed by the child.

A Preschool Teacher will usually say this:

“You may hold your glass.”

Instead of saying this:

“Oh, aren't you going

“You need to turn off the faucet”

“Yes, you may go waling after nap time”

“We stay inside the fence.”

“Hold the pitcher steady and walk slowly.”

“Hold on tightly when you climb.”

to drink your water?”

“Don’t turn on so much water.”

“No, you can’t go walking until after you rest.”

“Don’t go out into the street.”

“Be careful. You are going to spill that.”

“Be careful so you won’t fall.”

## **ABOUT CHILDREN'S ART**

### **DO'S**

- Do regard the child's art as a record of his personality.
- Do realize that during the time the child works, he acquires important experiences for his growth.
- Do make the child sensitive in his relationship to his environment.
- Do appreciate it if the child has succeeded in expressing his experience.
- Do realize the wrong proportions most often express an experience.
- Do learn that your child's feeling toward his art is different from yours.
- Do appreciate your child's art on it's own merit.
- Do provide your child with some space so he can work.
- Do encourage your child to respect another's expression.
- Do encourage the type of competition that grows out of the child's urge to express himself.
- If you work with your child creatively, encourage tolerance and respect for each other's work.
- Do let the child develop his own techniques by experimentation.

### **DON'TS**

- Don't correct or help the child in his work by imposing your personality.
- Don't regard the final product as significant.
- Don't expose the child to coloring books or patterns, which make him insensitive.
- Don't appreciate the child's work indiscriminately.
- Don't correct wrong proportions.
- Don't expect your child's art always to be pleasing.
- Don't prefer one child's work to that of another.
- Don't restrict your child's work by not having space.

Don't compare your child's art.

Don't encourage contests, which use prizes and rewards as stimulation.

Don't impose your standard upon the child's standard when you work with him.

Don't show the child "how to paint."

\*\*\*From Your Child and His Art by Lowenfeld

## **INSPECTION AUTHORITY OF DSS COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING**

Bonnie Academy is licensed by Department of Social Services of the State of California. The nearest licensing office address is the following:

Department of Social Services  
Community Care Licensing Division  
1000 Corporate Center Dr., Suite 200-B  
Monterey Park, CA 91754

Please feel free to contact the office if you have any complaints or concerns about Bonnie Academy.

According to the rules and regulations listed in Manual of Policies and Procedures (Title 22 Division 12 Chapter 1) the department has the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or child care center records, **without prior consent**.

The Department has the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect or inappropriate placement.