

Welcome

Welcome to Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool. Somerset believes in creating a warm, safe and exciting environment where children can discover their independence, awareness of the world around them and develop important skills for early childhood growth and development.

Somerset takes special pride in their preschool staff. Our teachers are carefully selected and screened to provide the best possible care and education for your students. Somerset seeks individuals who love working with children and families who value working as a team. Their commitment to young children and our early childhood center is commendable. Somerset appreciates that parents have a choice when selecting their students' educational program. Each year our staff look forward to the many adventures your child embarks on while enrolled in the preschool program. Thank you for choosing Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool, and entrusting us with your most precious gift, your child.

Philosophy & Goals

Somerset Academy, Inc. promotes a transformation culture that maximizes student achievement and the development of accountable, global learners in a safe and enriching environment that fosters a high-quality education.

S- Set high expectations

O-Objective

M-Meaningful curriculum

E-Effective

R-Resourceful and responsible life-long learners

S-Scholars who achieve proficiency and beyond

E-Evaluate continuously and use data to drive curriculum

T-Instructors who are highly qualified

The school's philosophy is centered around the idea that children learn best through playing in a nurturing and supportive environment. Somerset Preschool recognizes that each child learns best within a social environment, that supports everyone's unique development.

With the leading provider for education solutions for preschool through 12th grade, McGraw Hill has developed *World of Wonders*, a Florida Department of Education approved early childhood curriculum that will help the preschool staff provide a strong foundation for early literacy and developmentally appropriate instruction.

Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool is designed to meet the needs of all children enrolled in the preschool program by providing differentiated instruction for those students ages 3-5. Preschool students are provided with instruction that builds a strong foundation for success in kindergarten through letter focus, oral language & listening comprehension, development of social-emotional skills, math, science, social studies and music in every unit. Students are encouraged to create, explore and refine their fine and gross motor skills while the preschool teacher contributes to their growth, creating self-motivated, independent learners.

Preschool Hours of Operation

Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool is open from 7:00AM-6:00PM (Full time enrollment including aftercare), Monday through Friday, during the academic school year. The preschool academic day ends at 2:30PM. Kindly refer to the attached preschool calendar for closed holidays and teacher workdays.

Apart from a doctor's note, showing an excuse tardy, preschool students are not permitted to enter class after 9:00AM, as this becomes a disruption to the learning environment.

Tuition & Policy Agreement

Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool strives to provide open communication between parents and school staff about respective responsibilities essential to fulfilling the student's development needs. The following agreement and policy statement should be read in conjunction with this handbook and returned to us to complete enrollment. **All registration and tuition fees are non-refundable. In the event of school closure, due to unforeseen circumstances, tuition will not be refunded.**

Registration Fee:

A **one-time** \$85.00 non-refundable registration fee per student is required upon enrollment of the child.

Tuition:

Preschool Program (3-4 years)- \$850.00 per month including aftercare

Prekindergarten Program (4-5 years, turning 4 on or before September 1st)- \$700.00 per month including aftercare

Additional Fees:

Late pickup: After 6:00PM, a \$1.00 per minute fee will be assessed and due at the time of parent arrival. If you are late picking up your student two or more times within a one-month period, Somerset Academy Bethany reserves the right to dismiss your student from the preschool program.

Late payment: A \$25.00 late fee will be assessed on the 1st of the month if tuition payment is 5 days past due. All tuition payments are due on the 25th of the month, prior to the month of service.

ACH Declined: A \$35.00 ACH fee will be assessed immediately following an insufficient funds notification.

Credit card payments: A \$3.50 processing fee will be assessed for each credit card payment made through ProCare (the preschool software system)

Forms of Payment:

Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool accepts checks and credit cards. A payment schedule is provided at time of registration. If parents need an additional form of payment, arrangements can be made. Please reach out to the finance department to discuss other options.

Arrival & Departure Routine

Somerset Preschool students must be accompanied by a parent or authorized adult during morning drop-off. Authorized adults must present ID and/or car tag information at pick-up and drop-off when deemed necessary. All preschool students are encouraged to walk independently to class after drop-off. Upon entering the classroom students will wash their hands, put their belongings away and be ready to start their day.

Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool will only dismiss a student to a parent or authorized adult through the front office. Dismissal times can be busy, and we kindly ask that parents make themselves available to receive their child at the end of the day. The front office is closed from 2:00 PM-3:00 PM, daily. Students will not be permitted to

be signed out after 2:00 P.M., as the school prepares for dismissal.

If someone other than a parent or guardian is scheduled to pick up the student, please notify the school office in advance. The pick-up person will need to provide ID for safety verification purposes.

Discipline Policy

Somerset Academy Bethany supports children in developing independence, responsibility, and emotional intelligence. With a safe space in our classrooms, students will have the opportunity to regulate their emotions to develop a strong sense of self, respect for others, and appropriate means of expressing their wants and needs.

Behavior management begins with a structured environment that provides consistency of routine. Positive reinforcement, redirection, time to reflect, problem solving and well as an emphasis on parent-teacher collaboration to address challenging behaviors are protocols followed by our preschool teachers.

If behavior persists, an incident report, parent-teacher conference and dismissal may be deemed necessary. Suspension from the program and/or dismissal may be a result of continued aggressive and inappropriate behaviors. This includes possessing a threat or safety risk to themselves or staff, or other children in the program. Dismissal decisions are made by the Preschool Director and School Administration.

Lunch & Snacks

The health and safety of all students and staff here at Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool is a priority. Our school is committed to being a nut and seafood free environment. We kindly ask that parents provide lunch and snacks that are free of nuts, seafood and any ingredients that may pose a risk to other children. We encourage a healthy, balanced and nutritious lunch. Suggested lunch options consist of a meal and snacks rich in wholegrains, proteins, fruits, vegetables and dairy. Food provided should be easy to manage by the student to foster independence during snack and lunch times. Snack time is scheduled daily in the morning and afternoon.

Lunch and Snack requirements include:

- One split proof water bottle labeled with student's name and last initial

- One traditional lunch box with handle, labeled with student's name and last initial
- A well-balanced lunch
- Morning and afternoon snack
- Plastic utensils, as needed

Birthdays are very important to children. We are happy to share a store-bought treat to celebrate your student's birthday with their classmates. Please keep it simple. We kindly ask that you coordinate or allow for suggestions from the preschool teachers. All store bought items must display the ingredients and nutrition facts. Birthdays are celebrated the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month.

Preschool Uniform Policy

Please review the Preschool Dress Code below, which applies to all students enrolled in our preschool program.

Prekindergarten Dress Code Policy: (Ages 4-5)

Uniform Tops: Purchased from our uniform company, uniform shirts with the Lightning Bolt logo (mandatory) Either burgundy or grey is acceptable on any day.

Uniform Bottoms: Black or khaki shorts, pants, or skorts Bottoms do not have to be purchased from school uniform vendor

Please note: Leggings, jeggings, or tight-fitting pants/shorts are not permitted

Outerwear (Jackets & Hoodies) Only school uniform jackets or hoodies are permitted in the classroom.

Comfortable sneakers are required daily.

The following footwear is not permitted:

Crocs, Heels, Open-toed shoes, Backless shoes, etc.

Preschool Program Dress Code Policy: (Ages 3-4)

Uniform Tops: Burgundy or Grey collared shirt or T-shirt. Either burgundy or grey is acceptable on any day.

Uniform Bottoms: Black or khaki shorts, pants, or skorts

Outerwear (Jackets & Hoodies)

Only school uniform vendor jackets or hoodies are permitted in the classroom

Comfortable sneakers are required daily.

The following footwear is not permitted: Crocs, Heels, Open-toed shoes, Backless shoes, etc.

Please avoid sending your students in clothing with belts.

Rest Time

There will be quiet time each afternoon for all preschool students. Somerset Bethany Preschool Academy will provide a sleep cot (sanitized daily) and fitted sheet (washed by school personnel every week, as they are property of SAB). We require that preschool parents provide a small blanket for their child that can fit inside their backpack. Space is limited. No pillows are allowed. Students' blankets should be taken home and laundered every Friday, or as needed.

Toys

Toys from home are not permitted unless it is requested for a specific class activity. Otherwise, toys are to remain at home. We are not responsible for lost items; therefore we ask that you cooperate in helping us maintain a "no toys from home" policy. Books are always welcome.

Virtual Field Trips and Family Engagement

Nature walks and virtual field trips are considered an integral part of the preschool program. Virtual field trips through the PBS Pre-K KidVision Program provide students with engaging and educational experiences allowing students to explore different places within a community.

Parent involvement and communication are essential to excellence in the early childhood education program here at Somerset Academy Bethany. There are several ways for parents to engage, such as through class donations and volunteering for special events. (Volunteer background screening is mandatory). The school invites parents to share their skills, hobbies, and cultural traditions to help enrich our school family, and to expose the students to new ideas and experiences.

Communication

The preschool teachers and staff at Somerset Academy Bethany are committed to keeping parents informed about the students' academic progress, physical and social emotional development. A variety of communication methods are welcomed and include:

- Procare (Preschool Software) Daily Updates, to include notes or messages
- Verbal Communication through scheduled Parent-Teacher conferences
- Emails or written notes from home
- Weekly Academic Focus calendar posted weekly on the Somerset Academy Bethany website under the "preschool" tab
- Social Media outlets via messenger
- Remind App downloaded on your personal electronic device

Health and Illness

The health of all students attending Somerset Academy Bethany is vital to everyone. State regulations require us to obtain medical records within 30 days of enrollment. These records include a statement of good physical health, and immunization form. Students with a printed record of immunization exemption from the Florida Department of Health must provide the school with this information within 30 days of enrollment. These forms can be obtained from your child's pediatrician.

For the protection of all children enrolled in the preschool program, please plan for alternative care when your child is sick. Parent cooperation is necessary to promote a healthy environment. It is unfair for students, teachers and other classmates to be exposed to a bad cold or other illness.

Student records must be kept up to date and are located where staff members can quickly access in case of emergency.

Should a parent be contacted immediately when a student is showing symptoms of illness, students should be picked up by the parent or authorized adult to pick the student up within 90 minutes of the documented call.

Students should not return to the program until they have been without symptoms for 24 hours or more.

Such illnesses include:

- Fever; auxiliary temperature over 99 degrees. If the student enters school and is known to have a fever during the previous 24 hours, the student will not be admitted to class. The student MUST be symptom free for 24 hours.
- Respiratory; breathing difficulty, ex. Wheezing, or excess coughing
- Vomiting; more than the usual “spit up”
- Diarrhea: characterized by frequent watery or discolored bowel movements, which are not related to medications or food reactions
- Rash: undiagnosed rash, raised bumps on the skin, other than heat rash
- Sore throat: sore or red throat that needs to be cultured due to other present signs
- Cold Symptoms: profuse nasal discharge or discharge from eyes or ears
- Conjunctivitis: pink eye, redness of the eye with burning and thick purulent discharge or drainage
- Other common communicable diseases such as Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease, Head Lice, Hepatitis, etc.

Re-admittance Requirements

- Fever: Symptom free for 24 hours
- Vomiting: Symptom free for 24 hours
- Diarrhea: Symptom free for 24 hours
- Strep Throat: No sooner than 48 hours after the start of oral medication or 24 hours after injection
- Prescription for illness: No sooner than 24 hours after the start of oral medication
- Conjunctivitis: No sooner than 24 hours after the start of medication and free of drainage
- Undiagnosed Rash: Physicians statement for readmittance
- Head Lice: Following treatment (must be nit free and rechecked)
- Other Common Communicable Disease: Physicians statement for readmittance

Medication

If your student requires medication to be given, the staff at Somerset Academy Bethany can administer medication if the medicine is in its original container and accompanied by specific instructions on the prescription label from the prescribing doctor, as well as required paperwork

Medication forms can be found in the front office and must include the following:

- Students first and last name
- Original container with original prescription
- Signed medical authorization form by the parent or authorized adult and physician
- Time and Dates medication is to be given

Medication WILL NOT be administered if the medication form states, “as needed.” Parents’ written instructions on medical form MUST match the doctor’s instructions. DO NOT leave medication with your child, in a lunch box, or put their medication in their reusable cup.

Medications and forms must be handed to the front office staff for storage, refrigeration and administration. Medications are kept out of reach in a locked cabinet in our school clinic.

Medical Emergency

In the event of an accident or medical emergency, the staff of Somerset Academy Bethany will contact the custodial parent. If it is impossible to reach a parent and emergency treatment is required, 911 will be called and the student will be transported by EMS and a school employee to the nearest hospital, if necessary. The authorization for the school to contact your family physician and take emergency medical procedures deemed necessary is part of this handbook agreement. All fees incurred are the responsibility of the student’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Somerset Academy Bethany Staff are CPR, First Aid and Basic Water Safety certified and trained.

Emergency Closing

Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool follows the policies and guidelines regarding emergency closings at Saint Lucie County School District. This includes hurricane warnings, tornado warnings, emergency evacuations, etc. The school is to remain closed until emergency closings have been lifted and the school is safe for reopening. It is the

responsibility of the parent to check all forms of communication regarding emergency closings and re-openings.

Regular fire, weather, emergencies and alternate route drills are conducted.

Safety Procedures

Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool follows strict policies regarding safety and awareness. A Somerset issued car tag or ID is required for the student to be released.

No child will be released to any person not listed on the student's pupil ID/registration form.

Prior permission is necessary for anyone other than those on file to pick up the student.

The school playground equipment and classroom materials are cleaned, sanitized and inspected regularly.

Proper handwashing techniques are practiced daily for staff and students. This practice includes after restroom breaks, lunch and snacks.

Toilet Procedures

Potty training is different for each individual child. Each student will exhibit signs of readiness at different ages, at their own pace. Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool requires all students to be fully and independently potty trained prior to enrollment.

Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool does not offer a potty-training program, nor are the classrooms equipped with restrooms. It is important that all enrolled students take care of their own toileting needs, including changing their clothing in case of an accident.

Abuse

The State of Florida and Department of Children and Families require that all members of early childhood programs and school institutions be actively aware of potential harm to a child. All teachers are considered mandated reporters who are legally required to report known or suspected child abuse, neglect, or abandonment to the Florida Abuse Hotline. Failure to report can result in penalties, including fines and potential criminal charges.

Equal Opportunity

The policies within this Handbook for The Somerset Academy Bethan Preschool is intended to protect the welfare of all children in attendance and is devised to provide the best quality care. Students are enrolled without regard to race, creed, or national origin. Somerset Academy will abide by all state, county and city licensing requirements regarding fire and safety precautions, health, sanitation and staff ratios.

What do I need to bring to school?

Pre-Kindergarten Program (ages 4-5):

Daily: Labeled Backpack, Labeled Lunchbox & Reusable Water Cup

Weekly on Monday: Enrichment Folder, Rest Time Blanket

Preschool Program (ages 3-4):

Daily: Labeled Lunchbox & Reusable Water Cup

Weekly on Monday: Backpack, Enrichment Folder, Rest Time Blanket

Both Programs:

To Remain at School: 2 extra changes of clothing to include undergarments, socks, and shoes.

Dirty and/or soiled clothing will be sent home at the end of each day. Please make sure to replenish items, as needed. A reminder note will be sent home.

Sweaters or Jackets on cool days. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather each day.

Please see attached:

Early Childhood Program Letter

Daily Schedules-website

School Academic Calendar-website

Supply List-website

ESE Paperwork

Know Your Childcare Facility Form

Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool

As, parent or guardian, I have read and agree to adhere to the listed items below and all other policies established by Somerset Academy Bethany Preschool, Inc.

Please Initial:

- _____ Philosophy & Goals
- _____ Preschool Hours of Operation
- _____ Tuition & Policy Agreement
- _____ Arrival & Departure Routine
- _____ Discipline Policy
- _____ Lunch & Snacks
- _____ Preschool Uniform Policy
- _____ Rest Time
- _____ Toys
- _____ Virtual Field Trips & Family Engagement
- _____ Communication
- _____ Health & Illness
- _____ Medication
- _____ Medical Emergency
- _____ Emergency Closing
- _____ Safety Procedures
- _____ Toilet Procedures
- _____ Abuse
- _____ Equal Opportunity
- _____ Received the "Know Your Childcare Facility" Form

Parent(s) Signature: _____ Date: _____

Students Name: _____ Date: _____



SOMERSET ACADEMY
— **BETHANY** —

Preschool Program



Parent Handbook
Revised 9/2025