



2023 - 2024

PARENT HANDBOOK

Bethany Lutheran Preschool

2501 Beacon Hill Road

Alexandria, Virginia 22306

703-765-8687

www.BLPS-TOTS.com

www.bethanybobcats.com

@BLPreschool

@blps_tots

Serving God's children and their families since 1959.

2023-2024 BLPS School Calendar

DATE	EVENT	PARENT PARTICIPATION
Monday, August 28	Teachers and staff return to BLPS	
Thursday, August 31	Orientation + Meet the Teacher	10:00am - 12:00 noon
Monday, September 4	Labor Day Holiday	NO SCHOOL
Tuesday, September 5	Elementary Classes Begin	9:00am - 2:00pm
Tuesday, September 5	Preschool Classes Begin	9:00am - 1:00pm
September 27, 28, 29	Fall Picture Days	(see BW for classroom schedules)
Monday, October 9	NO SCHOOL- Teacher Work Day	NO SCHOOL
Friday, October 13	ME Museum	Early Release @ 12PM
Monday - Tuesday, October 6 - 7	Parent/Teacher Conferences	6th & 7th - No School
Monday, October 31	Classroom Parties	Happy Halloween!
Monday, November 6 th and 7 th	NO SCHOOL - Conferences	NO SCHOOL - Please sign up for a conference time with your teacher
Monday - Friday, November 20- 24	Thanksgiving Holiday	NO SCHOOL
Friday, December 8	Christmas Event	Early Release @ 11AM
Friday, December 15	Christmas Parties	ALL STUDENTS WILL DISMISS AT 1:00 PM
December 18 - January 2	Christmas Holiday	NO SCHOOL
Monday, January 15	M. L. King Holiday	NO SCHOOL
Friday, January 26	NO SCHOOL - Teacher Work Day	NO SCHOOL
Monday, February 19	Presidents' Day	NO SCHOOL
March 5, 6, 7	Spring Picture Days	(see BW for classroom schedules)
Friday, March 22	Easter Event	Early Release @ 12PM
Monday - Friday, March 25- April 2	Spring Break	NO SCHOOL
Wednesday, April 10	Teacher Work Day	NO SCHOOL
Friday, May 3	Student Holiday	NO SCHOOL
Monday - Friday, May 20- 22	Field Trip Week	Preschool & Elementary on-site
Thursday - Friday, May 23 - 24	Parent/Teacher Conferences	NO SCHOOL - please sign up for a conference time with your teacher
Monday, May 27	Memorial Day Holiday	NO SCHOOL
Friday, June 7	Last Day of School Summer Bash	Early Release @ 12PM
Monday - Thursday, June 10-14	Teacher Clean Up Days	Have a great summer break!

CLOSING ALERTS

Non-scheduled days off (snow days, etc.) Days will be made up after 11 missed days.

- If there is another state-mandated lockdown due to COVID-19, the school will be closed until further notice. *All classes will continue with virtual (online) learning from home.*
- If Fairfax County Public Schools have a delayed opening of any length due to emergency weather conditions, Preschool class hours are 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Elementary class hours are 11 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- If Fairfax County Public Schools have an early closing due to emergency weather conditions, all after-school activities are cancelled. Dismissal will begin at 12:00 noon.
- All aftercare programs (Kid Klub and enrichment classes) are CLOSED on early release days and school closure days.
- All Before-care programs are CLOSED on delay start days and school closure days.

CONTENTS

Purpose	2
Admissions	3
Beginning the School Year	3
Tuition	4
Notification of Withdrawal	5
Parent / Teacher Communication	5
Dress	6
Snack and Lunch Time	6
Behavior Policy	7
Discipline Policy	8
Health and Safety	9
Health and Safety (continued)	10
Arrival and Dismissal	11
Parking Lot Safety After School Activities	12
Emergency Preparedness	13
Weather Policy	13
Regulation Information	14
Kid Recipes Stay Connected	15
Verse of the Year Handbook Agreement	16
Health and Safety Guidelines (updated addendum)	17-21



Serving God's Children and Their Families Since 1959.

PURPOSE

Bethany Lutheran Preschool was founded in 1959 to provide a Christian education for young children and to be an outreach to their families. The school is an extension of the educational ministry of Bethany Lutheran Church, a Missouri Synod congregation. The school includes children of the congregation, children of other congregations, and children whose families have no church affiliation.

The Christian faith is the foundation of Bethany Lutheran. The school program is designed to develop children's knowledge and skills in all developmental areas — spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual — and to help children become lifelong learners.

Each child is a child of God; our objective is that children come to know God and His love for them. To achieve this, we tell Bible stories about the life of Jesus and hold regular chapel services led by the Pastor.

The concept of individual self-worth is basic to our program. Each child has an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as an individual personality, learning style, and family background.

Curriculum and instruction are responsive to individual differences in ability and interests. Different levels of ability, development, and learning styles are expected, accepted, and used to design the curriculum. Children are allowed to move at their own pace in acquiring important skills including language arts, math, science, social studies, art, etc.



ADMISSIONS

Bethany Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of educational and admission policies.

A completed health form, signed by a physician, and proof of the child's identity and age must be in the school files before a child may attend classes. These documents are required by law.



BEGINNING THE SCHOOL YEAR

The first day of school is very important for both parents and children. Your school staff would like to make the first day the beginning of a growing Christian relationship among parents, teachers, and children. We begin the school year with Meet the Teacher appointments. This will give you and your child the opportunity to see their new classroom and spend some one-on-one time with their new teacher(s).

The week before school starts, you may want to get your child accustomed to the daily schedule to be followed for the school year. Begin by having your child select school clothes and breakfast for the next day. Help your child get to bed early and rise at the time normally set to get up for school. Also, limit nighttime activities if the next day is a school day.

Try to project a calm attitude for your child on the first day. You may want to explain that going to school is important and that learning is interesting and fun.

When you take your child to school, reassure him or her that you will come back. Many children are afraid their parents will not return. Usually children will say goodbye and mingle with the other children. However, some experience separation anxieties.

School may seem scary, even if they attended the year before. When you drop your child off, say that you are leaving and that you will come back after school. Be sure to be on time when you pick up your child. A minute seems like an eternity to a waiting preschooler.

TUITION

Tuition is based on the actual costs of operating the school. The tuition is an **annual** tuition. Tuition may be paid in one of three ways: *in full*, *semi-annual* (two payments made in August and January), or *installments* (ten equal installments made August 2023 – May 2024).

The Installment Tuition Plan begins with the first payment due **August 15, 2023** and the final payment due **May 15, 2024**. A payment record sheet with our tax identification number can be found online at www.mybrightwheel.com. We encourage you to use this sheet to maintain your records for tax purposes.

Making Installment Payments

- Cash payments should be made to the Director or Assistant Director in person so that a receipt may be provided to you.
- Check payments may be given to the Director, Assistant Director, or mailed to the school. Checks should be made payable to BLPS with the student's name recorded in the memo line.
- Automatic Withdrawals can be set up by editing your billing profile on www.mybrightwheel.com or via the Brightwheel app.
- Electronic payments may be made prior to the 15th of each month at www.mybrightwheel.com or via the Brightwheel app.
 - Please keep in mind: debit and credit card fees are your responsibility. An additional 2.9% of the tuition (or registration fee) will be added to your payment total.
- If monthly tuition is more than 15 days late (or BLPS receives notice of insufficient funds), a late fee of \$25 may be charged. If special payment schedules need to be arranged, please see the preschool office or email preschoolfinance@bethany-lcms.org.



NOTIFICATION OF WITHDRAWAL

If at any time during the school year your child is unable to continue attending preschool, whether due to relocation or other factors, please notify the preschool office in writing, at least 45 days in advance of the child's last day of school. If less than 45 days' notice is given, parents are responsible for tuition for the next monthly installment. There are no refunds or prorating of tuition for withdrawals after May 1, 2024.

The school reserves the right to dismiss a student when ...

- Required documents are incomplete
- Tuition payments are 45 days late
- A child's behavior threatens others
- A child exhibits behaviors of unreadiness such as severe anxiety

Dismissal may occur after a conference with the Director, Assistant Director, child's teachers and child's family.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Teachers and parents greatly enrich the lives of children by sharing ideas and information. Aside from informal contacts, parents receive weekly updates that include a calendar of events, describe learning activities, and share school experiences.

Special days are scheduled for formal parent/teacher conferences. Parents may also speak with their child's teacher over the phone or via the Brightwheel app. Please avoid lengthy discussions during the busy times of drop-off and pick-up.

For more personal conversations at arrival or dismissal, it is best to check with the teacher or the office beforehand concerning the teacher's availability.



Babysitting: We discourage staff members from providing private child care or babysitting services on their own time. If a staff member does provide babysitting services, the staff member is acting in their individual capacity. We will not be responsible for the performance of babysitting services by members of our staff, including transportation of your child(ren).

DRESS

Children will be more comfortable and ready to engage in play if they wear clothing suitable for play. Learning how to manage snaps, belts, zippers, tights, etc. is something to be responsible for at home, as well as at school. It is helpful to dress children in clothes that can be easily pulled down and up by the child in the bathroom. Younger children should wear clothing that makes diaper changes easy and quick.

It is equally important that children's clothing be suitable for mess and fun. Painting and running on the playground can mean spills and dirty clothing. Pretty dresses or dress slacks place a burden on the child to keep clean and reduces their opportunity for playing with their friends.

Appropriate shoes for play are important. Children's shoes should provide support and traction for play. Shoes, such as sneakers, are recommended. Sandals, plastic shoes, or cowboy boots are dangerous on the playground and not safe for climbing.

Clothing and personal belongings, such as a backpack, should be labeled with your child's full name. Coats or sweaters are strongly advised for those "uncertain weather" days.

SNACK AND LUNCH TIME

Time is set aside in the early part of the day for a light snack and during the latter part of the day for lunch. Parents are responsible for providing their child's snack and lunch. Please note: staff are unable to heat up snacks and/or lunches. **Make sure your child's snack is in a labeled Ziploc bag, separate from their lunch, to avoid confusion.** Bethany Lutheran Preschool cannot provide utensils, so make sure your child has everything that they need in their lunchbox each day.

Healthy snacks are often the most popular with children. Please help keep snack and lunch time simple, healthy, and in child-size portions.

Some favorite snacks enjoyed by the children include:

fresh fruit slices, fruit cups, applesauce,
carrots or celery sticks with salad dressing for dipping,
yogurt, cheese and crackers

If your child has a medical condition that impacts dietary needs, please inform your child's teacher. Parents are responsible for providing any special foods for their child. The following are prohibited items at school for snacks or lunch...

NO tree nuts such as walnuts, almonds, macadamia nuts, etc.

NO peanuts or peanut products

This includes, but is not limited to, peanut cookies, peanut butter, trail mixes or granola bars with nuts and products containing peanuts or tree nuts.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Our mission is to ensure that each child has an equal right and opportunity to receive a quality Christian education in a safe, secure, and nurturing environment. Teachers make every effort to address disruptive and unsafe behaviors through age appropriate behavior management techniques.

Behaviors that interfere with learning or the safety of others will be addressed. Disruptive behaviors impact the child who exhibits the behaviors, the individual who may be directly affected, and the entire class. Disruptive behaviors include, but are not limited to, aggressive behaviors such as hitting, kicking, biting, or attempting to bite, throwing objects at another individual, and severe anxiety such as inconsolable crying.

In the event a child exhibits aggressive behaviors, the following is practice at BLPS:

1. The event is discussed with the teacher and child involved. There will be an age-appropriate discussion of acceptable behavior as well as making good choices.
2. At the judgement of the staff, students may be removed from the room to discuss the event and more appropriate conflict resolution.
3. Parents of all children involved will be made aware of the event.

If there are reoccurrences of aggressive behavior:

1. The parent(s) of the child will be notified and instructed to come get the child as soon as possible.
2. A meeting between parent and staff may be required to better address the issue, to explore positive intervention techniques at school and home, or to discuss continuation in the school program.

It is our desire that both parents and school work in Christian harmony to help the children interact in appropriate ways. Parents may be required to meet with staff to best resolve issues. Resolutions may include, but are not limited to, abbreviated days for the child or parents remaining at school for a period of time.

Parent and Guardian Behavior

Although the child is the representative of a family during the school day, parents and guardians are an integral part of the Bethany family. Parents and guardians are welcome at Bethany and we encourage that involvement. If at any time a parent or guardian's behavior is threatening or inappropriate, Bethany Lutheran Preschool reserves the right to dismiss a student from the preschool.

The school maintains the right to terminate enrollment at any time.



HEALTH AND SAFETY continued...

The following are standard procedures for the 2023-2024 school year.

- We will continue taking temperatures of staff and children upon entering the facility.

TIP: Take your child's temperature each morning before leaving the house to avoid the inconvenience of having to return home if your child is found to have an elevated temperature.

- Children's and staff's hands will be washed and sanitized first thing in the morning upon arrival and periodically through the day.
- Sick policy for staff and children: Children with a temperature over 99.9 degrees will not be permitted to attend until the temperature is under control for 24 hours (without the use of medication). Staff who are sick cannot return to work unless fever free for at least 24 hours (without the use of medication).
- We will continue to strictly adhere to keeping our small class sizes each day.
- Staff will clean and sanitize frequently used surfaces daily, deep cleaning every Friday.

We hope that these policies and procedures will keep our families comfortable in bringing their children to school with us and their friends. Our main priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of all of our students and staff alike.

UPDATE 08/15/22: Please see the Health and Safety Guidelines addendum on pp. 20-23



ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Keeping a routine and schedule is a vital part of learning at school. Our Elementary and Preschool programs begins at 9:00 a.m. when teachers are prepared to assume responsibility for the class and welcome each child. Parents will escort children from their cars to the classroom.

School doors are locked at all times during the day. Late arrivals check in with the school office before entering their classroom. We often do not realize that entering a classroom when friends have settled in can be confusing to some students and disruptive to others. Routine late arrival impacts your child as well as their classmates. Instructions for the day occur in most classrooms within the first 25 minutes of the day.

Elementary Families:: If your student is more than 15 minutes late to class, they will be considered tardy. 4 tardies equal 1 absence. If a student has 9 or more unexcused absences during the school year, they will not be eligible to move on to the next grade level.

Preschool classes end at 1:00 p.m. and Elementary classes end at 2:00 p.m. Children are released from the classroom to their parents in an orderly fashion. Names of persons authorized to pick up your child must be kept current on the child's emergency preparedness form and on Brightwheel. No child will be released to a person not authorized by the parent(s). Identification may be required until the staff are familiar with faces. Please inform the school in writing of any changes in pickup routine.

Please pick up your child on time. Children do not have the same understanding of time as adults and five minutes late to a child can seem like an hour. **Children must be picked up no later than 10 minutes** after their scheduled dismissal time. Charges for a late pick up are as follows:

◆\$15.00 for every 15 minutes after dismissal.

◆\$30/half hour or any part of the half hour after the first 10 minutes.

According to state guidelines, children whose parents/guardians are one-half hour late and have not communicated with the preschool are considered abandoned.

Virginia law requires the school to report the event to Child Protective Services.



PARKING LOT SAFETY

For the safety of children and parents, please drive slowly and enter the parking lot by driving towards the rear of the lot. A diagram of parking lot travel is included below.

According to the Commonwealth of Virginia, leaving a young child unattended in a vehicle for any length of time is considered abandonment.

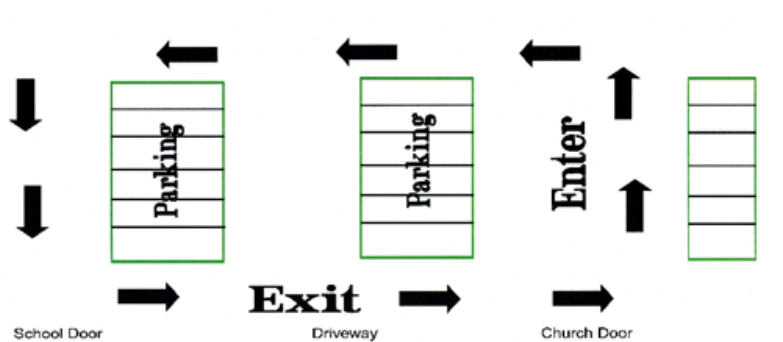


RAINY DAY DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

(NOT IN USE FOR 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR)

Rainy day / inclement weather drop-offs and pick-ups are conducted curbside. Enter the lot by driving towards the rear of the lot, as usual. Continue across the rear of the lot and form a line beginning at the school door. BLPS staff will escort children from your vehicle into the building.

**Elementary Drop-Off begins at 8:40 a.m. and Pick-Up begins at 1:40 p.m.
Preschool Drop-Off begins at 8:50 a.m. and Pick-Up begins at 1:50 p.m.**



AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Enrichment classes are an opportunity for children to play and socialize with a variety of Bethany friends or to learn a sport or explore other activities. Offerings have included martial arts classes, cooking classes, soccer classes, etc.

Children must be between the ages of 3 - 6 years old *and be bathroom independent*. Fees for enrichment classes are separate of tuition.

When in session, all after-school activities are 1:00 - 1:45 p.m.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Crisis plans and emergency preparedness have unfortunately become a way of life. In the event that Fairfax County Public Schools (F.C.P.S.) declares Emergency Preparedness mode, Bethany Lutheran Preschool will act as follows:

1. In the event that F.C.P.S. emergency plans go into effect before the start of our school day, Bethany Lutheran Preschool will be closed.
2. If F.C.P.S. emergency plans go into effect during our school day, children will be kept indoors in a safe, secure environment.
3. Parents or a designated adult are expected to pick up their child as soon as possible, unless instructed otherwise.
4. A staff person will remain with children until all children are united with a family member or designated adult.
5. We will communicate via mobile text alert, email, and the Brightwheel app.

In the event that an emergency or unsafe condition occurs at the school which may cause us to close the building, children will be escorted away from the building in fire drill fashion. All classes will assemble at the furthest end of the parking lot. Families will be contacted by mobile text alert informing them to pick up their children. Children will be kept safe and secure with a staff member.

It is important that parents keep their child's emergency information up to date. Please notify the preschool office of any changes in phone numbers, address, or persons with permission to pick up their child, as well as any changes in medical information.



Our school calendar is similar to Fairfax County Public School's calendar. *There are exceptions, so please check the school calendar found at the front of this booklet.*

When Fairfax County Schools (K - 12) close due to inclement weather, BLPS closes. Closings are announced on local radio and television stations. Mobile text alerts (via Brightwheel) are sent out to email addresses and phone numbers on file.

Any late openings for FCPS will delay the opening of all preschool and elementary programs to **10:00 a.m.** Dismissal will be at the regularly scheduled time. All before-school activities will be closed.

If Fairfax County closes early due to any emergency, all after-school activities will be cancelled and pick up will begin at **12:00 p.m.**

Regulation Information

Virginia State Law Section 63.1 - 196.3 of the Code of Virginia, allows preschools operated by religious institutions the opportunity to file for an exemption from license by meeting documentation and other requirements specified within the exemption law. The statements below have been prepared and distributed to meet requirements of the exemption law.

1. The maximum number of children the preschool can have at any one time is 80.
2. BLPS is located at 2501 Beacon Hill Road, Alexandria, VA. There is more than 3,084 square feet of school space. The enclosed playground is beside the school and contains swings, slides, and preschool size playground units. The kitchen is made available for our use, however, we do not provide food services.
3. All staff are certified by a physician to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children. A negative tuberculin skin test is also required.
4. All staff are required to pass a criminal record check.
5. Staff qualifications: The preschool director interviews prospective staff members and makes preliminary hiring recommendations. Final approval for selection must be decided by the Board of Christian Education of Bethany Lutheran Church.

Qualifications for Lead Teachers include:

- (1) a degree in education or early childhood education course work.
- (2) experience with preschool children.
- (3) ability to plan daily and long range activities for preschool children in a Christian environment.
- (4) a tender, caring concern for children.
- (5) a strong desire to work with preschool children.
- (6) an effective ability to interact with adults and children.
- (7) Christian by faith affirmation and example. Members of Bethany Lutheran Church have preference over other applicants if they have equal capabilities in all other areas.

Teaching Assistants are expected to meet the above qualifications for teachers except numbers (1) and (3).

6. Bethany Lutheran Church and Preschool is covered by Public Liability Insurance through Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana. The agent is National Church Group Insurance Agency, Falls Church, Virginia.

Preschool Recipes

Bethany's Best Play Dough

2 cups flour
1 cup salt
2 tablespoon oil
4 teaspoons cream of tartar
2 cups water
Food coloring



Mix all the ingredients in a large pot. Cook over medium heat. Stir until it forms a ball in the pot. Knead. Store in an air-tight container.

Note: soak pot immediately!

Bethany Bubbles

2 cups dish washing detergent (Dawn is the best)
6 cups water
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Karo corn syrup (clear) to help bubbles keep their shape

In a bowl or recycled plastic bottle mix all of the ingredients well.
Let sit for thirty (30) minutes.

Use a wand or try a variety of items around the house, such as a flyswatter.



We have several ways you can see what's happening at
Bethany Lutheran Preschool.

You can follow us on social media:



@BLPreschool



@blps_tots

Our preschool web address is www.BLPS-TOTS.com

Our elementary web address is www.bethanybobcats.com

You can also contact the School Office via phone or email

703.765.8687 | preschool@bethany-lcms.org | office@bethanybobcats.com

Bethany Lutheran Preschool's Verse of the Year:

***"He has made everything beautiful in its
time."***

Ecclesiastes 3:11



Parent Handbook Agreement

By signing this agreement, I confirm that I have received
a link to the 2022-2023 BLPS Parent Handbook.

www.blps-tots.com/about

Parent Name (printed)

Parent Signature

Child(ren)'s Name(s) (printed)

Child(ren)'s Class(es) (printed)

Please return signed agreement to your child's teacher or the school office.

Health and Safety Guidelines – COVID-19 and Monkeypox

Last Revision Date: August 15, 2023

Policy Purpose: Bethany Lutheran Preschool is focused on ensuring the safety and well-being of all employees and children. To promote infection control and mitigate risks, the following policies are in effect for all. This policy serves as an addendum to the policy in the Staff/Parent Handbooks.

Glossary:

Outbreak – A sudden increase of a specific illness in a small area.

Three or more epi-linked cases (cases with known exposure or close contact to one another) that occur within 14 days of another case in a single group, such as a classroom. Report an outbreak to the Fairfax County Health Department [here](#).

Isolation – Separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.

Quarantine – Separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

Emerging Infectious Diseases

COVID-19

COVID-19 is caused by a coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness. Symptoms appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

Signs and Symptoms*

Fever or chills

Cough

Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Fatigue

Muscle or body aches

Headache

New loss of taste or smell

Congestion or runny nose

Nausea or vomiting

Diarrhea

*This list does not include all possible symptoms of COVID-19. Refer to the CDC for the latest information on COVID-19.

How it spreads

COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out droplets and very small particles that contain the virus. These droplets and particles can be breathed in by other people or land on their eyes, noses, or mouth. In some circumstances, they may contaminate surfaces they touch.

Anyone infected with COVID-19 can spread it, even if they do **NOT** have symptoms.

This risk classification is based on metrics developed by the CDC for COVID-19 community levels and are based on recent hospitalizations, hospital capacity, and the number of cases in the community. This guidance applies to the general population including childcare programs.

The classification table and actionable steps / BLPS policies can be viewed on the website version of this document [HERE](#) under Health and Safety Guidelines, pages 2-4.

COVID-19 Outbreak

An outbreak of COVID-19 is defined by the Fairfax County Health Department as three (3) or more epi-linked cases (cases with known exposure or close contact to one another) that occur within 14 days of another case in a single group, such as a classroom or after-school activity.

The Virginia Regulations for Disease Reporting and Control requires outbreaks to be reported directly and immediately to the local health department. If you identify three (3) or more COVID-19 cases in a class or group at Bethany, please report it to the Health Department's Containment Branch through the [REDCap Reporting Survey](#).

Containment will review the submission and determine whether or not the situation meets outbreak criteria, as well as provide guidance on next steps.

Note: Three (3) sporadic cases in the facility with no known link to each other does not constitute an outbreak.

For an up-to-date COVID-19 status (low/medium/high), please [CLICK HERE](#). Data provided by the CDC updates every Thursday by 8pm ET.

Bethany Lutheran Preschool will follow Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) if they move to mask mandatory. All Fairfax County mask mandates will supersede BLPS policy.



Monkeypox

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder. Monkeypox is rarely fatal. Monkeypox is not related to chicken pox. There are no treatments specially for monkeypox virus infections. However, monkeypox and smallpox viruses are genetically similar, which means that antiviral drugs and vaccine developed to protect against smallpox may be used to prevent and treat monkeypox virus infections.

Signs and Symptoms

Rash that can appear on the face, mouth, chest, hands, genitals, or feet. The rash will go through several stages including scabs, before healing. It can simply look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy.

Fever

Chills

Swollen lymph nodes

Exhaustion or fatigue

Muscle aches and backache

Headache

Respiratory symptoms (e.g. sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough)

A person can experience all or only a few symptoms. Sometimes people complain of flu-like symptoms before the rash. Monkeypox symptoms usually start within 3 weeks of exposure to the virus. If someone has flu-like symptoms, they will usually develop a rash 1-4 days later.

Monkeypox can spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks.

How it spreads

Monkey pox can spread in a few ways:

It can spread to anyone through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact.

Direct contact with monkeypox rash, scabs, or body fluids from a person that is infected.

Touching objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox.

Contact with respiratory secretions (cough/sneezing)

Note: A person can spread monkeypox to others from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed.

The classification table and actionable steps / BLPS policies can be viewed on the website version of this document [HERE](#) under Health and Safety Guidelines, page 6.



