Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool

FAMILY HANDBOOK

Building blocks
Cooperative preschool

Last updated August 2025

Location: 23845 Summit Road, Los Gatos, CA 95033
Mailing Address: 23800 Summit Road, Los Gatos, CA 95033
Website: http://www.buildingblockscoop.org

The Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool program is owned and operated by the Loma Prieta Community Foundation

Loma Prieta
Community Foundation

Table of Contents

About Us **4**
Curriculum Philosophy–Milestones Curriculum **4**
Child-Led Play **4**
Universal Design for Learning and Inclusion **5**
What to Pack **5**
A Student's Typical Day **5**
Days/Hours of Operation **6**
Age of Children Accepted for Care **6**
Annual Calendar **7**
Photo Policy **7**
Enrollment **7**
Bonus Days 7
Extended Day Program 7
Summer Program 8
Admission/Enrollment Documents Required **8**
Caregiver Participation in the Classroom **8**
Tuition **8**
Payment 8
Refunds 9
Scholarships 9
Withdrawing 9
How to Pay 9
Parent-Teacher Conferences & Assessments **9**
Class Cancellations **10**
Family Responsibilities **10**
All Parent Meeting 10
Maintenance Days 10
Family Jobs 11
Fundraising **11**
School Organizational Structure **12**
Confidentiality **12**
Discipline Policy **12**
Behavioral Support **13**
Dismissal and Termination Policy **13**
Supplemental Services **14**
Sustainability **14**
Absences **14**
Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures **14**
Allergies **15**

No Food Sharing Policy..... 15
Birthday Celebrations..... 15
Illnesses..... 15
Communicable Disease Exposures..... 16
Medication Policy and Incidental Medical Services..... 16
Epi-Pens..... 16
Storage..... 16
Medical or Dental Emergencies..... 17
APPENDIX – SUPPORTING POLICIES..... 18
Universal Design for Learning and Inclusion Policy..... 19
Photo Policy & Consent Form..... 21
Caregiver Participation in the Classroom Policy..... 22
Tuition Policy..... 23
Referral for Outside Assessment Policy..... 25
Behavioral Support Policy..... 27
Sustainability Policy..... 28

About Us

The mission of Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool (BB or Building Blocks) is to provide a welcoming and nurturing environment where children, their families, and their teachers build community through play.

We are a parent-run, cooperative preschool serving families in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Founded by mountain families in 1991, BB's programming continues to be guided by parent involvement and is facilitated by teachers trained in early childhood education. Children and their families play, learn social and emotional skills, prepare for formal schooling, and build a community together.

Curriculum Philosophy–Milestones Curriculum

Building Blocks is committed to creating an environment that nurtures child-led play in alignment with best practices. We embrace an emergent curriculum, where our teachers design learning experiences based on the unique interests, strengths, needs, and lived experiences of each child, rather than relying on rigid, pre-planned lessons. In addition, we use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to guide accessibility and inclusion in the classroom and in the play yard.

Our approach supports the developmental milestones, as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), across various domains–a principle we honor in the naming of our curriculum philosophy as the Milestones Curriculum. In addition, our approach aligns with the *California Preschool Learning Foundations* and the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), comprehensive frameworks established by the California Department of Education to guide early childhood education.

Our programming incorporates child-led play along with purposeful activities designed and guided by teachers. The flow of teaching and learning is mutual and dynamic. We aim to stimulate the children's natural curiosity, support them in learning how to interact with others, assist them in effectively expressing themselves, and encourage them to try new experiences. Additionally, we believe outdoor education is essential to early childhood development. Nature provides an ever-changing, sensory-rich environment that invites curiosity, exploration, and discovery. Through outdoor play and learning, children develop physical strength, resilience, creativity, and a deep connection to the world around them. Through these efforts, Building Blocks provides children with what they need to succeed in everyday life, as well as in their future formal education. The heart of our program consists of truly listening to both children and adults. By doing so, we honor their thinking, creativity, and growth.

Child-Led Play

Building Blocks features a play-based curriculum because play is how children learn best. Through play, children are able to experiment with their world and what they learn is meaningful to them. Mathematics, science, language, writing, etc. are all necessary parts of play, and because the children consider them meaningful, they are learned

efficiently. Our program focuses on social emotional learning by preparing children to become independent learners, ready to care for and advocate for themselves. They learn to set boundaries and how to cooperate and collaborate with others. They practice stretching their attention spans, following directions, negotiating scenarios, resolving conflicts, taking turns, and feeling and identifying a wide variety of feelings. They learn they are capable, creative, and that their ideas are valuable. We strive to create a strong foundation of confidence, curiosity, and resilience. Our goal is for the children to head to Kindergarten knowing that they have within them the tools to reach their full potential.

Universal Design for Learning and Inclusion

Building Blocks aims to foster an inclusive and welcoming environment for all children, ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities in the Santa Cruz Mountains. By implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, BB creates a diverse, supportive, and engaging educational experience that celebrates every child's unique abilities and needs.

We welcome families of children with disabilities and make great efforts to collaborate with families and service providers to meet varying needs. In addition, BB believes neurodivergence is a normal possibility for *all* children. *All* children are welcome here unless we cannot safely support them (or other children). Please see the Universal Design for Learning & Inclusion Policy.

What to Pack

- A large, healthy snack (NO PEANUTS - please see our Allergy Policy for additional guidance) (pack snack separately from lunch)
- A large, healthy lunch with any necessary utensils (NO PEANUTS - please see our Allergy Policy for additional guidance)
- Full water bottle
- Extra clothes (2-3 changes of clothes - we get messy and wet often!)
- Weather-appropriate clothing for outdoor play (rubber boots during/after rain, please)
- A reusable bag to send wet clothes home (can be a plastic shopping bag)
- Diapers/pull-ups, if needed
- For the full Extended Day Program (12:30 pm-3:30 pm), please pack an additional peanut-free snack in another separate container

Please note BB does not store the snacks or lunches in the refrigerator, so please plan accordingly and use an ice pack (labeled with your child's name) when needed.

A Student's Typical Day

8:30 Drop Off
8:45 Morning Meeting
9:00 Child-Led Play (Indoors and Outdoors)
10:00 Snack

10:15 Child-Led Play (Indoors and Outdoors)
11:15 Clean up
11:30 Storytime
11:50 Lunch
12:30 Pick up for the Core Program. Must exit Building Blocks by 12:45
12:15-1:30 Transition to Storyroom for Extended Day Program
12:30 Quiet Time
1:00 Child-Led Play (for students who aren't nappers or whose families opt out of naps)
3:00 Snack
3:30 Final pick up for the Extended Day Program

For drop-off, please sign your child in, put their snack in the bin, and have them wash their hands. A teacher will greet them with a “hug or high five” (which they can decline!) and then they can come in to put their stuff in their designated cubby and go play.

For pick-up, please sign your child out and check your child’s cubby as well as the shoe bin before leaving. For those enrolled in only the Core Program, please vacate the play yard by 12:45 pm.

Unstructured play time is an essential part of play-based learning. During our “child-led play” periods, activities are available to the children that include art, sensory activities, imaginative play, construction materials, science activities, outdoor activities, books, puzzles, etc. These activities are thoughtfully planned in alignment with the Milestones Curriculum, taking into consideration the skill level of the students and skill progression over time.

Days/Hours of Operation

The Core Program runs from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm.
The Extended Day Program will run in 1-hour increments from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm, based on availability.

The Director is onsite from 7 am to 1 pm for the Core Program, and will remain onsite as long as children are present for the Extended Day Program.
Additional Assistant Teachers are onsite 8:15 am to 12:45 pm for the Core Program, with certain Additional Assistant Teachers remaining onsite for the Extended Day Program.

Age of Children Accepted for Care

Children ages 2-5 years old are accepted for care in a Tuesday/Thursday class or Monday/Wednesday/Friday class format, with the option of enrolling for additional Bonus Days (see below for more information). Applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. Children do not need to be potty trained for Tuesday/Thursday class, while they should be mostly potty trained for the Monday/Wednesday/Friday class.

Annual Calendar

To the extent possible, Building Blocks aligns its school calendar with Loma Prieta Joint Union School District to allow families with children in our school district to follow a similar schedule. In general, our school year begins after Labor Day and ends the week of Memorial Day. A more detailed school calendar, including holidays, steering committee meetings, and social events, is distributed at the beginning of each year.

Photo Policy

Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool values documenting the joy and learning that happens every day. Photos and videos may be taken during classroom activities, field trips, events, etc. with express consent from families. These images help us share our program's story with families, celebrate children's achievements, and support school communication.

Please see the Photo Policy & Consent Form.

Enrollment

Families can begin the enrollment process by completing an online interest form and scheduling a school visit. The Membership Team will then invite you to complete the online enrollment forms through Jovial, our online portal. A student is considered enrolled once all online enrollment forms are completed and processed, and the enrollment fee of $100 has either been paid or waived, if applicable. If classes are full, children will be placed on a waitlist.

Priority enrollment is given to children currently enrolled in Building Blocks, their siblings, alumni family, and residents of the Loma Prieta Joint Union School District. Building Blocks does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, disability, or any other status prohibited by law.

Bonus Days

Families have the option to register for additional bonus days (Bonus Days), allowing us to offer a mixed-age setting, beneficial for both classes and offers families opportunities for more school days to meet their families needs. Teachers provide cohort-differentiated instruction, adjusting lessons and activities to fit the specific learning stages and abilities of each age group in the classroom. All students are eligible for all Bonus Days - up to 5 days per week.

Extended Day Program

The Core Program is the wonderful, standard day at BB from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm for the Tuesday/Thursday class or Monday/Wednesday/Friday class and includes any Bonus Days. The Extended Day Program provides added flexibility for families while continuing to honor the values of our play-based, child-led model. The Extended Day

Program will run in 1-hour increments from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm, based on availability, and offers a developmentally appropriate balance of rest, nourishment, and play. Enrollment is monthly and availability is based on staffing capacity.

Summer Program

The summer program (Summer Program) consists of weekly sessions for ages 2-5 throughout the summer. Typically, the Summer Program will be offered Monday through Thursday on certain weeks in June and July. A finalized schedule of the Summer Program will be provided by the end of the school year. Sessions will be held mostly outdoors.

Admission/Enrollment Documents Required

Placements are determined solely by age. Families meet with the Director for a tour and discussion of program philosophies. If it is determined to be a good fit, enrollment forms must be completed before the child attends.

Families will be given access to our Jovial portal, where the Student Enrollment Form and the Family Enrollment Form can be completed.

Caregiver Participation in the Classroom

Caregiver visits offer children the benefit of strong home-school connections and allows adults to contribute meaningfully to our community. Caregiver visits may include opportunities such as spending time in the play yard or classroom, arriving early to have lunch with your child, leading a talk or activity related to a special activity, hobby, or profession, or completing a special task during school hours.

Caregiver visits must be arranged in advance with the Director.

To ensure the safety of all students, all caregivers will be run through a Megan's Law database search in advance.

Please see the Caregiver Participation in the Classroom Policy.

Tuition

Payment

The Core Program school year tuition is divided into nine monthly installments. The first payment to reserve your child's spot is due September 1st. For children accepted on a rolling basis in the middle of the school year, the first payment will be due the first day of the month that your child begins BB. Subsequent tuition payments will be due on the first of each month until the end of the school year. Please pay your bill on time and consider paying in advance.

The Extended Program monthly tuition is billed differently than the Core Program - it is hourly based. With prior notification, credits for the Extended Day Program tuition may be considered for absences due to extended illness or vacations. This is unlike our Core Program and the credits will only apply to tuition for the Extended Day hours.

The Summer Program is billed weekly, based on the specifically chosen weeks of enrollment.

Refunds

All tuition payments are non-refundable.

Scholarships

We offer partial scholarships based on financial need and funds available for scholarships. The scholarship application can be found in your Jovial Family Portal. All application information is kept confidential. Families can apply at any time.

Withdrawing

Tuition is due on the first of each month, so please notify your child's teacher by the end of the month if you wish to withdraw. All bills must be paid in full before withdrawing.

How to Pay

E-payments make the task of our parent volunteers so much easier! Please use E-payments through our online system.

- E-payment Option 1 - ACH BANK ACCOUNT PAYMENTS: Families can select ACH payment to have the amount due directly debited from your bank account. This is easiest and only costs BB $1 per transaction. For security, our payment processor requires verification of “microdeposits” the first time a family makes an ACH payment. Following your first ACH payment, you will receive an automated email with instructions to verify the amounts of two small microdeposits into your bank account (for example $0.02 and $0.06).
- E-payment Option 2 - CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS: If you choose to pay by credit card - you MUST select the button "Yes" to donate the cost of processing the payment. Otherwise we will add the cost of credit card fees to your next bill. Our little non-profit preschool cannot absorb the costs of credit card fees, and this is the only way we can accept credit card payments.

For tuition and our tuition policy, please see the Tuition Policy.

Parent-Teacher Conferences & Assessments

We offer parent-teacher conferences to support open communication and collaboration between families and educators. Parent-teacher conferences are typically offered in Fall after the start of the school year and getting to know students. We discuss each child’s growth in social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development, as well as their

engagement in classroom routines, play, and peer relationships. It is also a time to share observations from home, review progress toward goals, and strengthen the partnership between families and teachers in support of the child.

Families may request additional conferences by reaching out to the Director. While we monitor each child's development, we do not offer formalized assessment, like the DRDP. We use the DRDP to guide our understanding of age appropriate skill development. If a child appears to be behind on developmental milestones, we will initiate a conversation with the family and may refer the child for an outside assessment through Early Start to ensure they receive appropriate support and resources.

Please see the Referral for Outside Assessment Policy.

Class Cancellations

A class may be canceled due to health or safety concerns such as a high Air Quality Index reading, no running water, or a staff shortage (for example, a concern if a storm results in multiple major road closures). If this does occur, families will be notified as soon as possible. Two class cancellations are already factored into the overall tuition cost since staff are still paid on those days. If a class is canceled more than two times, families will be compensated.

Family Responsibilities

Being part of a cooperative preschool means you're not just enrolling your child—you're joining a community. A cooperative preschool is not only a wonderful environment for your child to learn and get to know their peers, but also an amazing opportunity to build your own support system with families you will know for many years to come.

All Parent Meeting

The Steering Committee and Early Childhood Education Teachers and Staff hold a meeting for all families in August before the school year starts. The meeting goes over all essential information about the upcoming school year and what it means to be a member of a cooperative preschool. If your child enrolls after this meeting, the Membership Chair or a Member of the Steering Committee or staff Leadership Team can review the information with you.

Maintenance Days

One adult from each family is required to participate in a four-hour maintenance day each semester. Maintenance days are scheduled in the morning on a weekend. Projects may include repairing, repainting, weeding, and cleaning classroom materials. There is no specialized knowledge needed to participate in a maintenance day.

If your family is not able to participate in maintenance days, you may contact the Maintenance Chair to schedule alternative maintenance tasks or Buy-Out of the requirement for $300 per semester.

For more information about Buy-Out options, see our Tuition Policy.

Family Jobs

Each family holds one school job for the school year. As part of the annual enrollment process, families can express their preferences for which jobs they want. The Steering Committee and Staff Leadership Teams work with each family to identify a good-fitting job and then provide support to families throughout the school year to ensure families are able to fulfill their family job successfully. Currently, families take on designated roles that function as part of a team with other families.

To meet the needs of a variety of families, we offer Buy-Out options for Family Jobs. Families opting into a Buy-Out are still a part of our co-op community and are encouraged to build connections with families through attendance of events and opportunities in the classroom. Families can buy out of the school jobs requirement for $900 per year, payable in a lump sum or spread out into monthly payments.

Parental leave is available for the birth or adoption of a new child or other applicable circumstances.

For more information about Family Jobs, see our Job Descriptions Handbook.

For more information about Buy-Out options, see our Tuition Policy.

Fundraising

As a cooperative preschool, Building Blocks relies on fundraising to support teacher compensation, classroom supplies, scholarships, and long-term sustainability—helping us keep tuition as affordable as possible for all families.

Each year, the Steering Committee and Fundraising Team determine a school-wide fundraising goal. This goal is met through a combination of fundraising events, community partnerships, banner sponsorships, and direct giving campaigns.

Family participation in fundraising is strongly encouraged. Whether you contribute by organizing an event, reaching out to your network for donations, or volunteering at a fundraising event, your involvement makes a real impact, and is often a fun way to connect with other BB families.

Some examples of fundraising opportunities may include:

- Community events such as the **Holiday Treat Stand** and **Wine & Dine**
- Sales of items like school T-shirts, Mabel's Labels, or sponsored banners along Summit Road

- One-time or recurring **direct giving campaigns**
- Employer match programs (many companies will match your donation which doubles your impact!)

If you'd like help finding a fundraising opportunity that fits your skills or schedule, reach out to the Fundraising Chair.

School Organizational Structure

As the parent-led cooperative structure of BB evolves to fit the community's needs, the Early Childhood Education Teachers and Staff are taking on a more formalized role. For a more in depth view of how our co-op works, including the titles and roles of the Early Childhood Education Teachers and Staff, and how we all work together, please see the Job Descriptions Handbook.

Confidentiality

At Building Blocks, we create an environment for all families that is based on integrity and cooperation. A primary philosophy behind a cooperative preschool is that your actions affect all of the children and their families. In the course of performing school jobs, families may have access to, overhear, or observe confidential information about children. All adults at Building Blocks must keep confidential any information about children or their families.

Each child in the preschool has the right to expect that nothing that happens to or about them will be repeated to anyone other than a teacher or the Director. If you have a concern, please speak to a teacher or the Director privately. Teachers will address any concerns regarding a child's behavior with the child's family directly. Teachers often have more information, education, and expertise, and can better determine which situations may require parental attention.

Regardless of intention, sharing information about a child with individuals other than a teacher or the Director violates a child's privacy and may even be against the law (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). It is the obligation of each member of the preschool to ensure confidentiality and respect for all other members, teachers, and children.

Discipline Policy

Physical punishment is never allowed.

Building Blocks has 2 rules:

1. Keep it friendly
2. Keep it safe

These rules apply to physical and emotional safety. As teachers, we help children learn what these concepts mean. Sometimes saying "Remember, keep it friendly, keep it safe!"

is the only redirection a child needs. Other times more information is necessary, such as, "The way you are talking to your friend doesn't sound friendly to me." or "Hitting your friend is not friendly or safe."

In teaching conflict resolution, we follow a technique by HighScope that simplifies how to teach children to resolve conflicts on their own through modeling 6 steps:

1. Approach quickly and calmly, stopping any hurtful behavior
2. Acknowledge feelings
3. Gather information
4. Restate the problem
5. Ask for solutions and choose one together
6. Be prepared to give follow up support

Using these steps to help children resolve conflicts teaches children that feelings are important and that another person's feelings may be different than their own. Being involved in the process allows children to learn they are capable of resolving conflicts for themselves, offering the skills and experience to do so.

Behavioral Support

BB is committed to providing every child with a safe, nurturing place to learn and grow. When challenging or unsafe behaviors arise, our first step is to offer gentle, close guidance—often through **shadowing** by our staff—to help children make safe, positive choices.

If a child needs extra support beyond this, we may ask families to partner with us by contributing to the cost of additional staffing. This helps us ensure each child's unique needs are met without compromising the safety and well-being of the whole classroom. Together with families, we may also create **accommodations** or strategies to help the child participate successfully.

In rare cases, if unsafe or disruptive behaviors continue even with these supports in place, the Director may decide that a dismissal is necessary to protect the well-being of all students and staff.

Behaviors that pose an immediate risk of harm to students or staff may result in the family's contract being ended right away. The Director will carefully determine whether a plan to address the behavior is possible or if dismissal is the best step to keep everyone safe.

For more details, please refer to our Behavior Support Policy and the Social-Emotional Strategies and Tools Handbook.

Dismissal and Termination Policy

BB believes that it is rarely in the best interest of a child to be dismissed from a preschool due to behavior.

We will work with caregivers closely using shadowing, additional staffing, accommodations, and parent teacher conferences to attempt to find a solution. If the child is a continuous threat to themselves or other children, we may need to dismiss them from the program and terminate the family's contract with BB for this particular child.

Other reasons for termination include:

- Non-payment of tuition fees
- Repeated late payment of tuition fees
- Failure to adhere to BB's policies and procedures (including repeated late pick-ups or not signing in/out)
- Abusive, threatening, or disrespectful behavior towards staff or other families
- Consistent disagreement/misalignment of values.

Supplemental Services

BB does not provide transportation or food service at this time.

Sustainability

At Building Blocks we are committed to fostering a love and respect for the natural world through our daily practices and Milestone Curriculum. As part of this commitment, we strive to reduce our reliance on single-use plastics and encourage sustainable choices throughout our preschool community.

For more details, please see the Sustainability Policy.

Absences

If your child will be absent from school due to illness or personal reasons, please notify the Director by text or email.

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

To ensure all of our students' safety, your child's teacher needs to know which children are at the school, how to contact caregivers in an emergency, and who will be picking your child up at the end of the school day. Sign in with your child's teacher each morning and sign out before leaving. Children can only be signed out by custodial parents or pre-authorized adults listed in your Jovial Family Portal. Update emergency contact and health information in Jovial as needed throughout the school year.

Allergies

Building Blocks is a peanut-free school. When packing snacks and lunches for your child, please ensure that they do not contain peanuts or peanut butter. If a child has an allergy to other foods, the director will work with that family, possibly creating a policy about that food while the child is enrolled.

Please include any allergies and allergy medications in your enrollment forms. If your child is diagnosed with allergies mid-year, contact your child's teacher and update their record on your Jovial Family Portal.

No Food Sharing Policy

At BB, the health and safety of every child is a top priority. To ensure a safe and inclusive eating environment for all, we kindly ask families to adhere to a "no food sharing" policy. This policy is in place for several reasons, including respecting allergies and dietary restrictions, avoiding choking hazards for various ages and developmental stages, preventing the spread of germs, and recognizing individual nutritional needs.

This means children are not permitted to share food, snacks, or drinks brought from home with other children. Please remind your child that their food is just for them, and their friends' food is just for them at BB. Teachers will actively supervise snack and meal times to help ensure this policy is followed. If your child forgets their snack or lunch, BB will provide a safe and appropriate option from our school supply.

Birthday Celebrations

We love celebrating each child's special day! To ensure health, safety, and inclusivity of all our students, and to further support our "no food sharing" policy, we request families not bring in birthday treats. We have other ways to help each child feel celebrated on their birthday, such as wearing a birthday crown, walking around the sun however many years old they are turning, and singing a special song. We'll make sure their day is memorable!

Illnesses

Per Santa Clara County Public Health Department guidance for schools, do not bring your child to school if they are feeling ill or has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100F in the previous 24 hours
- Pink eye, unmedicated or within 24 hours of starting medication
- Rash or skin infections (this includes ringworm, poison oak rash, etc.)
- Any contagious condition (giardia, head lice, etc.)
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the previous 24 hours

While it is not required, we strongly encourage families to keep their Building Blocks student home if a sibling is vomiting or experiencing diarrhea. Both of these are highly contagious before symptoms appear.

If your child becomes ill at school, or if a teacher feels that your child is too sick to participate at school, you will be contacted to pick up your child. Ensure that your contact information and the contact information of your emergency contacts and authorized pickups are correct in your Jovial Family Portal.

Communicable Disease Exposures

Families must report communicable diseases to the Director immediately. Teachers will notify families of other students who have been exposed per Santa Clara County Public Health Department guidelines. Your child's personal information will not be included as part of an exposure notice. Some examples of these communicable diseases include:

- COVID-19
- Chicken pox
- Hand-foot-and-mouth disease
- Impetigo
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella

Medication Policy and Incidental Medical Services

Parents/guardians/caregivers assume the responsibility of administering any necessary medications their child may require and informing the teaching staff what they have been given prior to drop-off. You may consider asking your physician or health care provider for prescriptions with 12-hour dosages. We further expect that the first dose of any new medication given at home be observed at home so that side effects (i.e. drowsiness, diarrhea etc.) can be identified and communicated to us prior to care. We discourage use of "over-the-counter"medications that only treat symptoms of illness, when a day or two of rest at home might be what is needed most.

Epi-Pens

Epi-Pens for severe allergies are an exception. Epi-pens must be turned in to the Director along with LIC 9221, written instructions from the child's physician, and written instructions and consent from the parent or guardian to administer.

If epi-pen use is deemed necessary at school, parent/guardian/caregiver will be notified and if they are unable to pick up immediately to transport to a medical facility, an ambulance will be called.

Storage

Epi-pens are stored, along with instructions and permission forms, in a designated medication container in the corner of the kitchen counter. During emergency

evacuations, the Lead Teacher is responsible for carrying the medication container.

Medical or Dental Emergencies

If your child is involved in an accident at BB, appropriate first aid will be given immediately. If it is determined that a physician or dentist's care is needed, we will abide by the medical consent forms you submitted as part of your enrollment forms.

If emergency contacts are unreachable by phone, an ambulance will be called. Accidents involving injuries beyond a cut, bruise, or scrape will be recorded in a binder kept on school property. Any accident known or suspected to involve possible injury to the head or back will also be recorded here. If you have questions about a specific incident, please reach out to your child's teacher to view the accident report.

APPENDIX – SUPPORTING POLICIES

Universal Design for Learning and Inclusion Policy

Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool (BB or Building Blocks) aims to foster an inclusive and welcoming environment for all children, ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities in the Santa Cruz Mountains. By implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, BB creates a diverse, supportive, and engaging educational experience that celebrates every child's unique abilities and needs.

We welcome families of children with disabilities and make great efforts to collaborate with families and service providers to meet varying needs. In addition, BB believes neurodivergence is a normal possibility for *all* children. *All* children are welcome here unless we cannot safely support them (or other children).

Key Components of our Universal Design for Learning and Inclusion

Multiple Means of Representation:

- Curriculum and instructional materials will be presented in diverse formats, including visual aids, interactive tools, songs, and tactile objects to ensure that all students can access and understand the content.
- Teachers will provide clear explanations, visuals, and hands-on activities to cater to different learning styles and sensory preferences.
- Supports will be in place for children with different language abilities, including the use of gestures, signs, and culturally relevant resources.

Multiple Means of Engagement:

- Classroom activities will offer flexibility to engage children in various ways, including play-based learning, group activities, and independent exploration.
- Teachers will create a positive, safe, and inclusive environment where children feel valued and encouraged to explore, ask questions, and share their ideas.
- Opportunities for student choice and autonomy will be incorporated to enhance motivation and engagement, allowing children to follow their interests and learn through inquiry.

Multiple Means of Expression:

- Children will have multiple opportunities to express their learning, whether through speaking, drawing, or role-playing.
- Teachers will encourage a variety of ways for students to demonstrate their understanding and will adapt activities to suit individual preferences and needs.

- Efforts will be made to ensure all students, including those with communication barriers, have opportunities to express themselves and be understood.

Implementation and Support:

- Teachers will receive ongoing professional development on UDL practices and strategies to effectively implement the framework in their activities.
- Curriculum will be regularly reviewed and adjusted to ensure it is flexible and inclusive.
- Encourage open communication with families about their child's needs, progress, and goals.
- Provide resources and guidance for families to support learning at home.
- Engage with community services and professionals who can provide additional support and resources.

Inclusion Strategies

- **Individualized Support:** Each child will receive the appropriate support based on their specific needs, which may include assistive technologies, modified materials, and one-on-one assistance.
- **Adaptive Materials and Resources:** Learning tools and materials will be adapted to suit the individual learning styles and needs of each child, including the use of visual aids, simplified instructions, and alternative communication methods.
- **Peer Support:** Children will be encouraged to work together in cooperative learning activities, promoting peer mentoring and fostering a culture of mutual respect and understanding.

Building Blocks is committed to creating a learning environment where every preschool child can succeed. By adopting UDL principles, we strive to provide an inclusive, flexible, and engaging educational experience that supports the diverse needs of all learners.

Created August 2025

Building blocks
Cooperative preschool

Building Blocks Preschool
buildingblockscoop.org

23845 Summit Rd.
Los Gatos, CA 95033

Tel: (408) 497-2222
Email: teacher_nicole@lpcf.org

Photo Policy & Consent Form

Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool values documenting the joy and learning that happens every day. Photos and videos may be taken during classroom activities, field trips, events, etc. These images help us share our program's story with families, celebrate children's achievements, and support school communication. Please note that this consent form takes precedence over any previous answers given in the Student Enrollment Form.

How Photos/Videos May Be Used

- Classroom documentation (e.g., bulletin boards, lesson reflections)
- Internal newsletters or communications to enrolled families
- Private, password-protected online albums or class apps (if applicable)
- Marketing materials (e.g., brochures, website, social media) – **only with consent**
- Staff training or accreditation documentation

Our Commitment

- Photos will always show children in a positive and respectful way.
- We will never sell, trade, or otherwise distribute images to third parties.
- **Parents and staff may not post photos or videos of any child on social media without the express written consent of that child's parent/guardian.**
- Parents/guardians may update their consent at any time by providing written notice.

Photo Policy Consent

Please check ONE box below and sign:

☐ **YES, I give consent** for my child's photo and/or video to be taken and used for the purposes listed above, including marketing materials (e.g., website, social media).
☐ **YES, with limitations.** My child's photo can be used for internal documentation/classroom use, but **NOT** for marketing or social media.
☐ **NO, I do NOT give consent** for my child's photo or video to be taken or used in any way. I understand that staff will make every effort to exclude my child from photos/videos.

Child's Name: _____
Parent/Guardian Name: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Building Blocks Preschool
buildingblockscoop.org
23845 Summit Rd.
Los Gatos, CA 95033
Tel: (408) 497-2222
Email: teacher_nicole@lpcf.org

Caregiver Participation in the Classroom Policy

As a cooperative preschool, we value and rely on the involvement of caregivers in creating a rich, supportive learning environment. Caregivers—including parents, guardians, designated family members, and childcare providers—are welcome and encouraged to visit as guests in the classroom.

Caregiver visits offer children the benefit of strong home-school connections and allows adults to contribute meaningfully to our community. Caregiver visits may include opportunities such as **spending time in the play yard or classroom, arriving early to have lunch with your child, leading a talk or activity related to a special activity, hobby, or profession, or completing a special task during school hours.**

Parents have the right to enter whenever their children are in attendance. If you will be staying for an extended period (like leading an activity), we request that you check in with the Director beforehand. We welcome parents and other caregivers to participate in the classroom! A background check through Megan's Law will be conducted and guidelines for how to participate will be communicated. Classroom volunteering is through prior arrangement with the Director.

While in the classroom and play yard, caregiver guests are expected to:

- Follow the guidance of the classroom teacher or lead staff member
- Engage positively with all children, using respectful and encouraging language
- Model cooperative behavior and help maintain a safe, inclusive environment
- Respect the physical boundaries of the children by limiting physical touch and/or asking the child permission for a hug or high five
- Follow the bathroom rules. All adult use of the bathroom should occur in the *right* bathroom stall (the one with the large toilet) and requires closing and locking the wooden door behind you.

This policy aligns with our commitment to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all students and will be reviewed annually for compliance with current law and best practices.

Created August 2025

Building Blocks Preschool
buildingblockscoop.org
23845 Summit Rd.
Los Gatos, CA 95033
Tel: (408) 497-2222
Email: teacher_nicole@lpcf.org

Tuition Policy

At Building Blocks, we believe tuition transparency is an essential part of our community values. We openly share all tuition rates and any parent participation requirements up front, so families know exactly what to expect. Our goal is to ensure that every family can plan ahead with confidence. Clear, honest communication helps us build the trust and collaboration that make our co-op strong.

Tuition Payments
Tuition for both Core Program (8:30-12:30) and Bonus Days is calculated at an annual rate and divided evenly into nine monthly installments, regardless of how many school days are in any given month. For example, tuition for October, which is a longer month with no school days off, is billed the same as February, a short month with a week of no school. The first payment to reserve your child's spot is due September 1st. Subsequent tuition payments will be due on the first of each month from October to May. Please pay your bill on time and consider paying in advance.

Tuition for Extended Day is billed at the beginning of the month at same time as Core Program and Bonus Day tuition. Extended Day tuition is based on your hourly Extended Day enrollment multiplied by how many of your Extended Day school days occur in the month ahead.

Refunds
All tuition payments are non-refundable.
Credits and make-ups for missed classes are not available for Core Program and Bonus Days.

With *prior notification*, credits for Extended Day Program tuition may be considered for absences due to extended illness or vacations.

Parent Participation
Building Blocks Preschool is a non-profit preschool run by parent volunteers.

- Per school year, each family takes on one school job based on their preferences expressed in their enrollment form. Per semester (two per year), each family contributes one adult to work on a scheduled maintenance day or arrange a separate four-hour project.
- Buy-Out Options are as follows:
    - A **Family Job Buy-Out option** for $900/year. The buy-out can be paid up front or spread out monthly. Monthly installments will be added to a family's monthly tuition bill for an additional $100.
    - A **Maintenance Day Buy-Out option** for $300/maintenance day or $600/year. Families can opt to Buy-Out of Maintenance Days throughout the school year.
    - A **Full Buy-Out option** including all Family Job and Maintenance Day responsibilities for $1500/year. The buy-out can be paid up front or spread out

monthly. Monthly installments will be added to a family's monthly tuition bill for an additional $167.

Scholarships
We offer partial scholarships based on financial need and funds available for scholarships. The scholarship application can be found in your Jovial Family Portal. All application information is kept confidential. Families can apply at any time.

Withdrawing
Tuition is due on the first of each month, so please notify your child's teacher by the end of the month if you wish to withdraw. All bills must be paid in full before withdrawing.

How to Pay
E-payments make the task of our parent volunteers so much easier! Please use E-payments through our online system.

- E-payment Option 1 - ACH BANK ACCOUNT PAYMENTS: Families can select ACH payment to have the amount due directly debited from your bank account. This is easiest and only costs BB $1 per transaction. For security, our payment processor requires verification of "microdeposits" the first time a family makes an ACH payment. Following your first ACH payment, you will receive an automated email with instructions to verify the amounts of two small microdeposits into your bank account (for example $0.02 and $0.06).
- E-payment Option 2 - CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS: If you choose to pay by credit card - you MUST select the button "Yes" to donate the cost of processing the payment. Otherwise we will add the cost of credit card fees to your next bill. Our little non-profit preschool cannot absorb the costs of credit card fees, and this is the only way we can accept credit card payments.

Termination Policy Relating to Tuition
Includes non-payment of tuition fees and repeated late payment of tuition fees.

QUESTIONS? Please email treasurer_bb@lpcf.org.

Updated August 2025

Building Blocks Preschool
buildingblockscoop.org
23845 Summit Rd.
Los Gatos, CA 95033
Tel: (408) 497-2222
Email: teacher_nicole@lpcf.org

Referral for Outside Assessment Policy

To ensure that every child receives the support they need to thrive, Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool (Building Blocks) maintains a clear and compassionate process for identifying children who may benefit from additional developmental, behavioral, or educational support through outside assessment.

Guiding Principles

- **Early Support**: Early identification and support are key to a child's success and well-being.
- **Family Partnership**: Families are essential partners in observing, supporting, and making decisions about their child's development.
- **Respect for Developmental Differences**: Children grow and learn at their own pace. A referral is not a label, but a tool to better understand and support each child's unique path.

When a Referral May Be Considered

A referral may be considered when a teacher or caregiver observes ongoing delays in one or more of the following areas consistently over time, in different settings, and in comparison with age-appropriate expectations:

- Communication (speech, language)
- Social-emotional development (interacting with peers, regulation of emotions)
- Motor skills (fine or gross motor coordination)
- Cognitive skills (problem-solving, attention, memory)
- Behavior (frequent distress, aggression, extreme withdrawal)

Referral Process

Ongoing Observation and Documentation

- Teachers are informed on developmental milestones and use tools, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), to ground observations.
- If a potential concern arises, it is documented with specific examples and reviewed with the Director.

Initial Family Conversation

- The Lead Teacher or Director will meet privately with the child's family to share observations, listen to family insights, and collaboratively decide on next steps.
- The tone is always supportive, non-judgmental, and focused on the child's well-being.

Action Plan and Follow-Up

- Together with the family, the preschool team may create an informal support plan for classroom strategies and revisit the discussion in a few weeks.
- If concerns continue, a referral for outside assessment may be recommended.

Support During Referral

- The preschool will assist families by:
    - Exploring pathway to assessment: Pediatrician, Early Start, School District, or private assessment
    - Offering help in completing referral paperwork if needed.
    - Remaining a consistent partner throughout the assessment process.

Confidentiality

- All information shared or gathered during the referral process is treated as strictly confidential and only shared with written parent/guardian consent.

After the Assessment

- With the family's permission, the preschool team will review the results of the assessment and collaborate with specialists (if involved) to best support the child in the classroom.

Building Blocks is committed to creating a learning environment where every preschool child can succeed. By collaborating with families, outside agencies, and school districts, we strive to support children on their unique path.

Created August 2025

Building Blocks Preschool
buildingblockscoop.org
23845 Summit Rd.
Los Gatos, CA 95033
Tel: (408) 497-2222
Email: teacher_nicole@lpcf.org

Behavioral Support Policy

At Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool, we are committed to supporting every child's growth in a way that aligns with our play-based, cooperative philosophy. We understand that children have unique needs and may benefit from additional support to fully participate in our program.

Initial Support through Shadowing
When a child's behavior is disruptive to the learning environment, an assistant teacher will first provide **shadowing** support for 6 days. This means the assistant teacher will closely observe and guide the child during daily activities to help them make positive choices and stay engaged appropriately.

The purpose of shadowing is to:

- Observe the child's interactions and behaviors in real time
- Identify specific triggers, strengths, and challenges
- Provide immediate support and redirection as needed
- Gather information that can help the family and teachers develop strategies for success

Additional Staffing Support
If disruptive behavior continues after the initial 6 day shadowing period, it may be determined that additional staff support is necessary to help the child succeed and maintain a safe classroom environment. In this case, the family may be asked to contribute to the cost of additional staffing hours dedicated to supporting their child.

Additional Accommodations
Alongside shadowing and additional staffing, the teaching team and family may work together to identify and implement accommodations to help the child participate more successfully. Accommodations will be documented and reviewed regularly to assess their effectiveness.

Examples of accommodations may include:

- Providing alternative seating or a quiet space for calming down
- Adjusting transitions to reduce stress
- Offering visual schedules or extra cues to support understanding
- Allowing sensory tools or comfort items as needed

Safety & Dismissal
Disruptive behavior that persists despite shadowing and reasonable accommodations may result in dismissal and the termination of the family's contract with the school for this particular child. Behavior that places students, staff, or families at risk of physical harm may result in immediate dismissal. The Director will determine if an action plan can reasonably address the behavior or if dismissal is necessary to protect the safety and well-being of the community. Our goal is to create a safe, inclusive, and positive environment for all children to learn, grow, and thrive together.

Created August 2025

Building Blocks Preschool
buildingblockscoop.org
23845 Summit Rd.
Los Gatos, CA 95033
Tel: (408) 497-2222
Email: teacher_nicole@lpcf.org

Sustainability Policy

At Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool (Building Blocks) we are committed to fostering a love and respect for the natural world through our daily practices and Milestone Curriculum. As part of this commitment, we strive to reduce our reliance on single-use plastics and encourage sustainable choices throughout our preschool community.

This policy supports our goal of nurturing environmentally conscious children and families by modeling thoughtful stewardship of our resources. By minimizing plastic use, we help protect our environment and promote healthy habits.

Key Components of our Sustainability Policy

Single-Use Plastics

- Families are asked to avoid sending single-use plastic items such as disposable water bottles, plastic utensils, and snack bags.
- Reusable containers, water bottles, and utensils are encouraged for all snacks and lunches.
- We understand that many children's snacks come in disposable wrappers and allow all such items (pouches, meat sticks, crackers, chips, etc.).
- Families are asked to pack a reusable bag in their child's backpack/bag to send wet clothes home (can be a plastic shopping bag).

Classroom Materials

- Whenever possible, we prioritize natural, recycled, and reusable materials in our classroom activities and art projects.
- We avoid purchasing new plastic toys or supplies unless they are durable, high-quality, and support long-term use.

Education and Awareness

- We incorporate age-appropriate discussions and activities about caring for the Earth and making mindful choices.
- Children learn about reusing, recycling, and reducing waste through play, stories, and hands-on experiences.

Community Involvement

- We welcome ideas and contributions from families to support our sustainability efforts.
- Periodic reviews of our practices help us improve and grow together as an environmentally conscious community.

Building Blocks believes that small changes made consistently can have a big impact. By reducing our plastic use, we create a cleaner, healthier environment for our children—today and in the future.

Created August 2025