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Tampa, FL 33618  
(813) 961-1822  
[www.TheBowmanAcademy.com](http://www.TheBowmanAcademy.com)

# **Student / Parent Handbook**

## **Mission Statement**

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Bowman Academy is a private, independent preschool for children 2 through 5 years of age. Its purpose is to provide a strong academic foundation within a safe, nurturing environment in which students achieve their highest potential.

## **Statement of Philosophy**

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Bowman Academy strives to provide the best possible educational environment to nurture the social, physical and intellectual development of each student. The school recognizes each child as a unique individual capable of making a positive difference in our world, and provides a stimulating learning environment which encourages self-respect and a positive self-image. Bowman Academy hopes to instill in all students a respect for rules and for others, and to encourage tolerance and respect for individual differences. Parental involvement in our school's academic and social activities is welcomed and supported, to help our programs succeed.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

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Bowman Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, mental or physical disability or handicap, political beliefs, marital status, national origin or sexual preference. There are no formal eligibility requirements, including students to be fully toilet trained in our 2 and 3 year-old classrooms.

## **Admissions Information**

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Tours of Bowman Academy, as well as an opportunity to meet with the school's director and/or classroom teacher are conducted by appointment only. If you have any questions concerning enrollment or other aspects of the program, please contact the school office (813) 961-1822 between the hours of 8:30am – 3:00pm.

## **School Hours**

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Academic instruction is conducted between the hours of 8:30am – 11:45am. Lunch, outside play and rest-time are provided following the regular instructional day. An Extended Academic Day Program is available to our Pre-K 4 students based on availability (see below). Before Care is offered from 7:30am - 8:30am at an hourly rate. After Care is offered from 12:00pm - 6:00pm also at an hourly rate.

## **Curriculum**

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The Bowman Academy has been providing children with an accelerated academic program in a loving atmosphere for over 40 years. Bowman offers a child-centered program for 2, 3, 4, and 5 year-old children. Instruction is based upon research and knowledge of all areas of child development – social/emotional, physical, cognitive and language. Teachers use their own experiences, as well as the children's interests, to adapt the curriculum to create a unique experience for each Bowman class and student. Curriculum focuses on the content areas of literacy, math, science, social skills and the arts. Our curriculum offers children many opportunities for positive interactions (including play) with other children and adults, and allows them to learn about the world and themselves. As children play, they learn new skills, develop coping mechanisms, test new ideas, as well as develop/advance gross and fine motor skills. Bowman Academy treats each child with respect and reinforces his/her value as an individual and as a unique member of the community.

## **Extended Academic Day (Pre-K 4 Only)**

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Bowman Academy believes in an accelerated academic foundation offered in a loving and nurturing environment. The Extended Academic Day program is an additional opportunity to develop that academic foundation, and to better prepare your child for kindergarten. An Extended Academic Day is offered to our students in the Pre-K 4 classes.

By signing up for this program, you elect to have your child's school day extended by two hours in the afternoon until 2:00pm. Your child will rotate between two classes taught by our Bowman teachers. One class is designed to further develop reading and writing skills, while the second focuses on science and math. This extended program is independent of the regular Pre-K 4 program. If you choose not to enroll your child for the Extended Academic Day, you may take your child home at the end of the morning program (11:45pm dismissal) or leave them at Bowman for After Care.

The cost of this program is \$210 per month for three days weekly (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday), and August is prorated. Please note that these charges are less per hour than the standard morning program, even though the classes are smaller with more individualized teaching. After care charges do not apply during this extra instructional time.

## **Afternoon Special Classes (Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 Students Only)**

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Additional special classes will be offered to our Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 students based on their level of interest. A separate charge is added for children participating in these afternoon classes, which may include dance instruction, yoga and soccer. After Care charges apply due to a required increase in staffing. These classes will be scheduled at the discretion of Bowman Academy.

## **Bowman Vaccination Policy**

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Bowman Academy requires that all enrolled students be fully vaccinated. Prior to the first day of class, every child must have a current Florida Certificate of Immunization (Form DH680) documenting that all immunizations are up to date, signed by the child's physician. Religious and personal exemptions will not be accepted. Medical exemptions will be accepted in only rare and clearly documented circumstances (e.g., a child who has severe immune suppression due to anti-cancer treatments).

Physical examinations are valid for a period of two years from the date of examination. Immunization records contain an expiration date. State law requires that current health records be on file for every child. If your child's health records have expired, s/he will be unable to attend school until current health records have been received. Bowman Academy will provide families with a reminder of upcoming expirations; however, it is the responsibility of the family to make sure all records are up to date.

## **Bowman Illness Policy**

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Fever - Fever is a physiological response to an infection, which helps the body's defense mechanism. In most childhood illnesses, temperature is lowest in the morning, rises in the afternoon, and is highest in the evening and at night. As a child begins to recover, the morning temperature may be normal with fever still present later in the day. Any child with a temperature of 100° F or higher is considered to have a fever and will be sent home from school. Students should be kept home until free of fever

(temperature less than 100 F° without the use of fever reducing medication) for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.

Gastrointestinal Conditions – Students with gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting and /or diarrhea must be free of symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.

Pediculosis Capitis (Head Lice) – Students who have been identified as having head lice will be sent home and must stay at home until they are completely free of lice and nits. Upon returning to school, students must report to the office to be rescreened prior to going to class.

Communicable Disease – When a student is absent with a communicable disease, a physician is required to confirm the diagnosis. Instructions from the doctor for returning to school must be given to the office. Most frequent communicable diseases for the pediatric population include but are not limited to the following conditions: COVID, Fifth Disease, Impetigo, Infectious Mononucleosis, Pinkeye, Pinworm, Scabies, Scarlet Fever, and Strep Throat – Group A Streptococcus.

If your child is absent due to illness, please notify the office so we can be aware of any illness that may spread to other students. At times, Bowman Academy has students with documented weakened immune systems whose parents need to be made aware when an illness is present in their child’s classroom.

Bowman Academy reserves the right to request a note from your child’s doctor before returning to school, in order to ensure the safety of students and staff.

As part of the enrollment paperwork each year, families are required to acknowledge receipt of the Department of Children and Families Flu Brochure. In September of each year, child care facilities are also required to provide families with information at the start of cold and flu season. Bowman Academy will provide families with an electronic version of this brochure.

## **Medication Policy**

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Some children may be required to take medication while they are at school. Parents are required to bring the prescription medicine to the office in its ***original prescription container*** and fill out the medication consent form for dosage, time, and training. We may require further instruction on administration of medication from the parent or physician. Over the counter medicines must be in their original containers and will be administered as directed by the parents, unless the parents are requesting administration of a larger amount of medication or more frequent dosing than indicated on the package. In that case, a note for the higher dosage or more frequent dosing will be required from the physician. If refrigerated, medication will be store away from food. If not refrigerated, medicine will be stored in a cabinet out of the reach of children. All unused medicine will be returned to the parent. The medication container must have the proper labeling, including:

- Name of child
- Name of health provider
- Name of medicine
- Issue date of medicine
- Dosage
- When to administer (specific times, with/without food)
- Storage requirements
- Expiration date

All staff will be informed and a copy of the Bowman Medical Report outlining any student's documented allergies and/or special dietary needs will be posted in each classroom. A copy of the Medical Report will also be located in the student lunchroom and snack bins. Staff will receive important medical information at the start of each school year and will be notified of the location of medications and/or Epi-Pen Injectors. Updates to the Bowman Medical Report will be made as needed throughout the year. Staff will be made aware of all changes if and when they occur.

## Fee Policy

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- Registration and Supply Fees are due at Registration.
- The Registration Fee is non-refundable. Half of the Supply Fee will be refunded if a child is withdrawn prior to January 1 of the current school year.
- A 10% tuition discount is given for each additional child per family during the school year.
- There will be NO additional charges for supplies throughout the year.
- Tuition will be billed monthly for 10 months, beginning in July. Payment is due on the 15th of the previous month.
- August tuition is prorated; for all other months, a full month's payment is expected. The monthly rate remains the same regardless of how many school days are in the month (except August).
- Monthly statements will be emailed to the primary email account indicated on the Enrollment Form, unless otherwise noted.
- A 1.5% monthly Late Fee will be added on overdue accounts.
- For children withdrawn during the school year, full tuition for the month in which they leave is owed.
- Before Care and After Care charges will be reflected on the following month's statement. After Care charges will be assessed in addition to the charge for Afternoon Specials (Dance, Karate, Soccer.). This is necessary because of the need for Bowman staff supervision.
- A check that is returned because of insufficient funds will be charged a \$25 fee by Bowman Academy for each time it is returned.

## Arrival & Departure Procedures

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As students arrive at school, the time they enter will be recorded on the daily attendance sheet. Parents will also be asked to share if their child will be staying for lunch and nap. A Bowman staff member will document the time a child is picked up and record it on our sign out sheet.

Bowman Academy asks that students arrive no later than 8:45am, in an effort not to disrupt instructional time, as classes begin promptly. Parents are encouraged to use the drive-through entrance for morning drop off to assist with a smooth transition. Please pull cars through the breezeway so more than one car can be loaded or unloaded at one time.

If arriving later than 8:45am, please use the side entrance to the office and ring the bell for admittance. Before Care and After Care services are available from 7:30am – 8:30am and from 12:00pm – 6:00pm at an hourly rate of \$5.50. Please note if your child participates in after care at Bowman, students may be mixed ages in the afternoon.

Before Care and After Care charges will appear on the following month's statement and are prorated by the quarter hour. Bowman Academy closes at 6:00pm. An additional fee of \$5.00 per minute past

6:00pm will be charged if not picked up by closing time. Continued late pick up will result in denial of the After Care option for your child.

Families are asked to contact the front office via email or phone to let school staff know your child will be absent from school. Bowman Academy is required by the Department of Child and Families to contact families if they have not let a staff member know of an absence.

### **Authorization to Release a Child**

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No student will be released to a person not authorized on the Emergency Card to pick up the child. Bowman Academy must have written or verifiable verbal authorization for changes in this respect. A photo ID must be presented by any person who is added to the Emergency Card. Emergency Cards are located in the office and in the front room. Upon enrollment, a color-coded dismissal card will be provided. We ask that this card be displayed in the front right window when picking up in the drive-through loop.

In the case of separation/divorce, court documents must be provided to inform the school of custodial rights and if the non-custodial parent may pick up the child. No changes to the pick up authorization form will be accepted by phone. Restraining orders must be on file in the office.

If your child is to be picked up by someone other than a parent or the “persons authorized to pick up child” (listed on your child’s Emergency Form), you must provide written notification in each instance. Provide the individual’s full name and inform this person that they will be required to provide proof of identification before your child will be released. In the event of an emergency, a parent may call the office to give permission for his/her child to go home with someone else, and will be asked to text or email a signed note to verify the emergency change.

It is the responsibility of the adult picking up the child to provide a car seat or booster seat, and secure the child in the vehicle according to Florida Law.

### **Injuries**

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Minor injuries will be given first aid attention by a qualified staff member. In the event of a medical emergency or accident, parents will be contacted per the information on the Emergency Card. This agreement is also your authorization for Bowman Academy to contact your family doctor and take whatever emergency measures are deemed necessary for the care and protection of your child. Parents will be asked to sign a school Accident Report at the time of pick-up. A copy outlining the incident and action taken will be provided to the parent and a copy also will be included in your child’s personal file.

### **Emergency Plans**

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The Bowman Academy crisis response plan will be followed in the event of an emergency necessitating evacuation or lock down. Details of this plan are available in the school office. Bowman Academy’s primary responsibility is the safety of your child. Every action will be taken to ensure your child’s well being. Bowman Academy’s doors remain locked at all times. Individuals must be greeted by a staff member to gain access in to the building. Video surveillance is used on the perimeter of the building with direct access to staff inside the building. The fenced playground is also locked during the school day. Per child care guidelines, no guns of any kind are permitted on campus.

Bowman Academy is required to conduct monthly emergency drills, which include fire, tornado, etc. in the unlikely event of an emergency at school. These drills are conducted during various times of the school day to familiarize students and/or staff with procedures and policies outlined in our emergency plan. Please make sure your child's emergency card is up to date. Please contact the office if you have a change in address, email or phone number.

## **Distracted Adults**

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Twice annually in the months of April and September, Bowman Academy must provide parents/guardians with an informational flyer created by the Florida Department of Children and Families regarding the potential for distracted adults to fail to drop off a child at their childcare center, and instead leave them in their vehicle. Families will be electronically sent this document twice per year.

## **Guidance and Discipline**

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Please be sure that you have read and understand the Disciplinary Practices of Bowman Academy. Conscious Discipline by Dr. Becky Bailey is utilized at Bowman. No form of physical punishment is ever administered. Teachers will handle discipline problems with positive guidance. Any discipline problems that continue or those of a serious nature (causing bodily harm to self or others) will be reported to the Director. These instances include biting or use of inappropriate language. If your child becomes physical with another student, you will be notified by either your child's classroom teacher or the school's director in order to discuss the situation. Instances are reviewed and handled by the Director on a case by case basis. If instances continue or behaviors continue, termination of enrollment may occur at the discretion of the Director.

## **Lunch and Snacks**

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Bowman takes care in the selection of snacks and any special foods offered to your child. We ask parents to join our efforts to promote good eating habits and good food choices with any food coming into the school, such as food for lunch or any special celebrations. Upon request, Bowman will provide a list of nutritional information, menu ideas and literature on child nutrition from our parent resource library.

As part of our program, Bowman provides opportunities for children to learn about healthy food choices. Parents are required to provide lunch (including a drink) for students staying later than 11:45am. Cold lunches should be packed in a lunchbox containing a cold ice pack, as lunchboxes cannot be stored in the refrigerator. A water bottle with the child's name on it should be provided daily. Bowman Academy will check water bottles throughout the day and refill with cold filtered water when needed. Please note, candy and soda are not permitted at school.

Healthy snacks are offered twice during the day, one mid-morning and the other mid-afternoon. Children are permitted to eat and drink as much as they would like within reason, unless there are any documented restrictions. An individual health plan will be completed for any child requiring special accommodations or monitoring during lunch and snacks. If your child has any special dietary requirements, a letter from your pediatrician about the condition along with directions, may be required.

Per Childcare Licensing guidelines, food associated with young children's choking incidents must not be served to children under 4 years of age, such as but not limited to, whole/round hot dogs, popcorn, chips, pretzels, nuggets, whole grapes, nuts, cheese cubes/sticks and any food that is of similar shape and size of the trachea/windpipe. Food for toddlers must be cut into pieces ½ inch or smaller to prevent choking.

If your child arrives to school with an item not in compliance, the items will be cut by Bowman staff on the first occasion with a note sent home reminding families of the guidelines. If the item continues to be sent to school, it will not be served to your child and the items will be sent home.

## **Accident/Incident Policy**

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If your child has had an accident at school with an injury, the Director or staff member may call you, and an accident/incident report will be completed. You will receive a copy of the report and will be asked to sign the original, which will be kept at school.

## **Allergies**

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In classrooms where children have potentially life-threatening allergies, Bowman Academy may consider additional safety measures and address each situation on a room-to-room basis. Parents of children with allergies, or those requesting special snacks, are asked to provide a supply of safe treats to be used in lieu of store bought and bakery prepared items. Talk with your child and help them understand that food sharing is not allowed. This is a preventative safety measure to reduce food allergy exposures. Hand washing and tabletop washing are additional risk reduction measures that are employed at Bowman Academy. Parents can help by ensuring adequate hand and face washing at home prior to arrival at school.

Bowman requests students eat a healthy meal prior to coming to school so they are energized and ready to learn. Due to food allergies, your child must finish their breakfast before entering school. Children will not be permitted to eat breakfast in their classrooms or the front room during Before Care unless approved by the School Director.

## **Rest Times**

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Bowman provides a quiet rest or naptime for all children on site past 1:00pm. Some children may need sleep; others may only rest. Bowman Academy will do its best to accommodate each child's sleep needs. Your child may bring a blanket, small pillow and snuggle item for naptime. Please remember to label all items, which will be stored in your child's cubby until Friday, when they are returned for laundering. For children who do not sleep, alternate items/activities will be provided during quiet time while others rest.

## **Celebrations**

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Children are invited to celebrate their birthdays at school. If parents choose to provide a birthday snack, a treat that is nutritious and healthy choice is preferred, and must be store bought. Please confirm a date with your child's classroom teacher at least one week in advance. This time is necessary to assess the safety of all children in the classroom, primarily with regard to life-threatening allergies. It will also allow parents of those children who are not able to eat the provided snack the chance to provide an alternative treat.

At times, Bowman Academy students may participate in activities that include food consumption, such as special celebrations or instructional learning activities. Parents must provide written consent (on the enrollment packet) for these types of snacks to be consumed. If you indicate these snacks are not permitted, you may provide an individual snack in a sealed container to be kept for special occasions and celebrations.

Bowman teachers and staff will be happy to distribute party invitations provided **all** students in your child's class are invited to attend the party. A copy of the Bowman School Directory is provided at the beginning of the school year with email and physical addresses for parent use only. Information from this directory should be used for school purposes only.

## **Dress Code**

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Active indoor and outdoor play is a regular part of our school day. Please dress your child in clothing that is suitable for running, climbing and other vigorous activity. Because the children work with paint, clay and other messy materials, they should wear clothing that can be laundered easily. Sneakers or shoes with rubber soles are required. Dress shoes, Crocs or sandals are not permitted because they present a safety hazard. Children should be sent to school in clothing to protect from excessive cold and/or heat. Please make sure that belts, ties, snaps, and/or buttons are child-friendly and do not interfere with toileting. Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen before school, as students will spend time outside.

A complete change of clothing to be kept at school is required. Please label all clothing with your child's name, which will be stored in his/her cubby in the event a change of clothing is needed.

## **Toilet Training**

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Bowman Academy does not require children in our Pre-K 2 and Pre-K 3 classrooms to be potty trained. Diaper changing stations are available in these classrooms for those students still working on mastery. Stations are sanitized following each change and staff wear gloves and wash hands. Parents and classroom teachers will collaborate on an individual basis regarding procedures, times of day and any specific instructions.

Pre-K 4 students are expected to be fully potty trained. They should be independent with cleaning themselves, as well as dressing and undressing. Please be aware that Bowman Academy does not have a diaper station in the Pre-K 4 wing of the school.

## **Media Release Information**

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On occasion, pictures may be taken of students for the school yearbook, local news media or Bowman Academy social media to celebrate student and school accomplishments. However, children will not be identified by name without your written permission. Additionally, these pictures will not be used for advertising or marketing purposes. On the enrollment form, parents are asked for permission to use media images of their child. It is understood that photographs and/or videotapes of classroom activities made by parents are only for their own personal use.

## **Items From Home**

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An individual cubby is provided for each Bowman child. Please label all of your child's belongings. Items such as toys, candy, gum, and money are not permitted. A snuggle toy is permitted for rest time only, and will remain in your child's cubby during school hours. In the event of show and tell, children are not permitted to bring toys associated with violence including guns, knives, and swords. Bowman Academy is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen personal items.

Students are asked not to bring in a backpack or personal item to be brought back and forth each day. Backpacks with a change of clothes or nap items, should remain at school until they are sent home to be laundered. Bowman Academy Pre-K 3 & Pre-K 4 year-olds will be provided with a bag to use daily.

Devices that record, beep, or can be used to make phone calls are prohibited to protect the privacy of all students in class. These include phones, cameras or smart watches.

## **General Health Requirements**

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No smoking, including e-cigarettes and vaping are permitted on the school premises, including the parking lot, at any time.

## **Family Involvement**

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Bowman feels communication is an important part of fostering a successful school experience. Be sure to check your child's folder or daily home note for information about their day, as well as any additional correspondence and information related to upcoming events.

A parent bulletin board is located in the drive-through drop off /pick up location, as well as by the main office door. Important notices and information will be posted. Additionally, monthly teacher and director newsletters, as well as a calendar of events are posted on the Bowman website. It is each parent's responsibility to stay informed.

Bowman Academy encourages an "open door" policy that includes visitation and observation upon request/approval.

Formal parent/teacher conferences occur two times a year. Informal conferences may take place any time throughout the course of the year and by request of the family, teacher or director. Email correspondence is always welcomed and encouraged.

## **Field Trips**

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Bowman Academy does not participate in any off campus field trips.

## **Staff Requirements**

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Child Care Licensing requires all Bowman Academy staff members to be fingerprinted and documented through the Department of Children and Families Clearinghouse Database. Staff members must complete 45 hours of required training through the Department of Children and Families. A minimum of 10 hours per year of continuing education training is also required.

Bowman Academy provides yearly CPR and First Aid Training for staff, in addition to a medication administration review and fire safety training review. The Bowman Academy Exposure Plan is also reviewed annually and signed by all staff members.

Bowman Academy Teachers are required to create a monthly newsletter, which is posted on the Bowman Academy website each month. Teachers also create lesson plans and daily schedules. All student files and ongoing assessments are kept confidential and are used to assist teachers in completing progress reports, which are shared during parent/teacher conferences.

Many students at Bowman Academy receive outside therapies and/or work with outside agencies. Bowman is happy to collaborate with these individuals in order to help differentiate instruction and provide any necessary interventions or supports required to ensure each child is meeting their fullest potential.

All childcare personnel are mandated by law to report their suspicions of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment to the Florida Abuse Hotline.

## **Communication**

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Communication is critical to a successful program. Each month, a classroom newsletter will be posted on the Bowman Academy website for you to review. In addition, a school-wide newsletter is also posted with upcoming events and information.

Bowman Academy also uses the Class Dojo app. At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians will be invited to join their classroom's app. Teachers are asked to post at least twice per week in order to give families insight into their child's day. Teachers may post reminders, share activities and photos, or use the messaging system for either group or individual correspondence. This app will be utilized along with email and written notes.

Communication between Bowman Academy staff and families is best done through email. Families are encouraged to contact their teacher for specific classroom questions, but may call the Bowman Academy front office (813) 961-1822 to report an absence or with general school questions. The Bowman Academy also has a cell phone (727) 477-6915 for families who would prefer texting information. Phone messages, texts, and emails will be answered within 24 hours of being sent.

## **Volunteers**

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Parents are encouraged to become involved at Bowman Academy. Teachers regularly include parents in special celebrations and welcome parents who want to share special talents with the class. Some ways to help include volunteering to be the classroom parent, assisting with the annual Fall Festival fundraising event, volunteering to read to the class, and assisting with staff appreciation events. Parent activities, talents and skills are always welcome! Joining the Bowman Academy Parents' Club is another way to volunteer and support the school. The Parents' Club provides many opportunities for parent involvement throughout the school year.

Volunteers assisting school staff during regular school hours will be required to sign-in and out in the school office. Any individual who volunteers more than 10 hours per month is required to have a background check with information documented in the DCF Clearinghouse Database.