2017

Little Treasures Learning Center Family Handbook

www.littletreasureslearningcenter.org

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Our Philosophy

Little Treasures strives to provide a setting where the children's needs are met in a loving, caring and nurturing atmosphere. We promote this atmosphere by providing a competent, caring staff and providing high quality materials. We welcome input from our parents because we know that your child is the most important person in your life and you have valuable information to share. By listening to parents and encouraging their input, we hope to make the bridge between home and child care smaller. We will also introduce concepts of education through play based on your child's interest and developmental level. By offering a program of relevant, developmentally appropriate play activities, the children will be better able to explore and investigate the world around them.

Center Goals

1. To provide an environment which will develop the whole child; the emotional, physical, cognitive, and social domains.
2. To foster creativity in the children. We will introduce different art media, dramatic play, math, science, and movement activities to enhance each child's creativity.
3. To help children develop positive self-images and emotions. Children will be encouraged to solve problems and be independent. Activities provided will be appropriate for a variety of developmental levels so that each child can be successful!
4. To provide a non-biased and multicultural atmosphere.
5. To use the outdoors as a second classroom as often as possible.

Collaboration

We believe that it is crucial for parents and teachers to work together as a team in the education of their children. Just as we share information about your child's day, development, interests, and social experience, we expect you to share the same types of information. We will strive to share information with you verbally each day and encourage you to seek us out as well. Infants and toddlers will receive a daily sheet each day to inform you of their activities. Preschool and kindergarten have information sheets to use as needed. Each classroom has a daily board where you can see what activities your child has participated in that day. Lesson plans and daily schedules are posted on the parent information boards.

During the time your child is with us we will collect and compile information that will show your child's progression through the learning areas. We will share these with you at your request and during parent/teacher conferences. We will continually observe your child to understand their developmental level and offer parent conferences at least twice a year.

Description of Programs and Services

We are open from ***6 am to 6 pm*** *Monday through Friday*. We are staffed by experienced early childhood educators who carefully plan and implement developmentally appropriate programs, which focus on learning through discovery and exploration. The program breakdown is as follows:

Infants (6 weeks-12 months)
Ones (13 months-24 months)
Twos (24 months-36 months)
Preschoolers and Kindergarten (37 months -6 years)

Detailed schedules are posted within each classroom.

Open Door Policy

We encourage parents to visit during the day. This makes the child feel special and facilitates communication between the center and home. We do ask, as a courtesy to our teachers, that if you plan to come during a busy activity or circle time, to be mindful of possible disruptions to the group should your child disengage from the activity. Your child's teacher would be happy to suggest times of day which would be optimal for a visit. You may also feel free to inquire about your child's day via telephone. Sometimes it can be comforting to hear about a child's morning, especially if it started in a hectic manner.

All parents (and other special family members or friends) are encouraged to volunteer their special talents and skills to the center. These may include assisting with special classroom projects, chaperoning on field trips, reading to the children, or just helping out on any given day. We often look for parents with special skills or occupations like sewing, cooking, drawing, fire fighters, police officers, veterinarians, etc.

Parent Communication

We believe that daily communication between parents and staff is important. In order to maximize communication, you will have access to the following:

* Newsletters
* Parent Bulletin Board
* Special Events
* Parent Teacher Conferences

Admissions

Prior to attendance at Little Treasures Learning Center each child will need to have the following forms on file. These will need to be updated every 6 months or sooner if there is a change in information.

Child Care Agreement Form

You will be financially responsible, at the very least, for the weekly fee on your agreement. Any additional time you are in the center will be added on to your tuition amount for that week. As an example, if you are registered for 28 hours but need to come an additional 4 hours, we will add that on to you weekly tuition amount. We ask also that if there is any change to your child's schedule you let us know as soon as possible, as our staffing depends on attendance.

Emergency Contact Form

The emergency form will need to contain all the information requested including: parent or legal guardians contact information, a list of people who may pick up your child(including addresses/phone numbers, at least two emergency contact persons, all relevant medical information (including a health policy number) and signed permission for emergency medical care and administration of first aid procedures.

Health Assessment

The health assessment needs to include a physical and immunization record. This will need updated according to your child's age and immunization schedule (Infants=2, 4, 6, 9,12 months; Toddlers=15, 18, 24 months; Preschool/Schoolage=annually).

Special Paperwork/Requests

- If your child has an IEP/IFSP please feel free to share this information. We will be happy to work with you to make this the best learning environment.
- Your child's records may be transferred to any educational setting. All requests need to be made in writing. Records will be given to a parent/legal guardian or directly mailed to the appropriate facility.
- Within 45 days of your child's start date, their teacher will complete an Ages and Stages Questionnaire on your child. You will be given a copy of the questionnaire and offered a conference. We also ask that you complete the "Getting to Know You Questionnaire" to help us gain a better understanding of your child and provide responsive care.

Authorization For Release of Children

Children will be released only to a parent/legal guardian or to persons whose names are listed on the emergency contact form. Families should advise the center management in advance if a person not listed on the original form is to pick up their child. For the safety of the child, photographic identification will be requested of all authorized persons picking up children. **Be sure that any person who is picking up your child is aware that they need to bring a photo ID, even if they have picked up the child before. Due to staff turnover and shift changes the staff on duty at any given time may not recognize an authorized person.** We cannot legally deny access to a parent or guardian unless there is an active restraining order on file or a specific schedule of court-ordered visitation rights that prohibits this.

Families or other authorized persons are responsible for transporting their child to and from the center in an appropriate child restraint system. If someone other than yourself will be picking up your child from the center, please make sure you leave your child's car seat or that the individual has an appropriate car seat for your child. Little Treasures will not transport children unless there is an emergency situation.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

- Please do not leave children unsupervised in a car.
- You must turn off your car and bring all children into the building.
- Please be sure to drop your child off in the appropriate room each morning. It is important for the staff to know who is in the center at all times.
- Each morning and evening you will sign your child in and out on the time clock by the front door. If you forget please let us know so we can fix it in the computer.
- Please remember that you are responsible for your child until they are with a staff person at drop off and as soon as you sign them out at pick up.

Positive Discipline

Our philosophy consistently emphasizes basic respect for the individual child. Young children are striving for understanding, independence, and self-control. Children learn by exploring, experimenting, and testing the limits of their environment and experiencing the consequences of their behavior. In this way they begin to understand how the world works, their own limits, and appropriate assertiveness. Children are helped to learn self-control and how the world works in a relaxed, positive atmosphere of support and understanding that recognizes the child's struggle. Children are accepted as they are. Development is viewed as a process of growing, with each age and stage having its own characteristics, challenges and needs. Adults view discipline as an important aspect of teaching and learning. Through positive guidance and modeling, the staff help children to feel good about themselves and to behave in responsible ways.

In our approach:

- a "yes" environment is created, which enhances and encourages children's positive behavior.
- Teachers model appropriate behavior.
- Teachers encourage children's efforts to build feelings of self-worth.
- Children are given alternatives, which enable them to turn destructive situations into constructive ones.
- Natural and logical consequences are used to motivate and empower children to make responsible decisions about their behavior.
- Behaviors such as cooperating, helping, negotiation, and problem solving are encouraged.

- Expectations are limited to what is realistic for the developmental level of the child. They are clarified for the children so that they understand what is expected of them.

Time out will only be used as a last resort and never for children under the age of 2. Physical punishment or abusive language will never be tolerated.

Electronic Devices

Little Treasures is not responsible for any damaged or lost devices/cases/chargers a child may bring from home. "Screen time" will be limited and is up to the staff persons discretion.
Please refrain from using your cellular device(s) while dropping off or picking up your child.

Toys From Home

Except for toys that are needed at nap time, we ask that you leave your child's toys at home or in the car. It is often difficult for small children to "share" toys which are their own. We will not be responsible for any lost or broken toys.

Clothing

Sometimes learning and having fun can be extremely messy. Your child should come to school in comfortable, washable clothing. Each child needs to keep extra clothing, including socks and underwear, in their cubby every day. All items should be clearly labeled to avoid loss and confusion. Check your child's clothes regularly to ensure they are seasonally appropriate and still fit.

Meals and Snacks

We strive to serve nutritious meals and snacks for your child. Meals may be served family style which means that the teachers sit and eat with the children. This offers opportunities for conversation, for practicing self-help skills and manners, and for trying new foods. Menus are planned every month and are available for you to take home. Please keep in mind that children will often eat foods at school that they won't eat at home. The presence of peers and teachers will have a big influence on your child. We ask that you keep meals from home to a minimum and give the menus a chance. Infants will be fed according to their individual schedule. Breakfast will be served until 8:30 am.

Naptime

Children, infants through kindergarten, will have an opportunity for resting. Infants are given an individual crib that is available at all times of the day. They will always be put to sleep on their backs. Children ages 1 year and up are provided with a cot that is set aside for their individual use. You are to provide bedding that makes your child comfortable. All bedding will be sent home weekly to be laundered.

Outside Play

According to State regulations, we will take the children out daily except in severe weather (under 25 degrees). Please send your child to school dressed appropriately for the weather. You may want to dress them in layers that can be taken off or added as weather may change during the day especially in the fall and spring. Keep in mind that the weather is not what makes a child sick, germs do! Being inside all the time is often more detrimental to a child than 10 or 15 minutes outside.

It is very important to dress your child appropriately!

Children will be closely supervised outdoors. Special attention will be given to high-risk play areas, such as the swings or slides. Staff will also be assigned specific children that they are responsible for while on the playground. Children will not go beyond a teacher's range of direct supervision and will stay within the fenced in playground.

Tuition/Fees/Payments/Accounts/Schedules

- Please call by 10:00 am to let us know if you are going to keep your child home or if you will be arriving late. At 10am, we will count for lunch and make any necessary staff adjustments. Your child's spot is NOT guaranteed after 10am without communication from you.
- All payments are due by Friday of the service week.
- All schedules/changes are due by Wednesday at 12noon, prior to the week of attendance.
- Tuition is an hourly rate converted to a weekly rate.

Tuition is based on child's agreement and is charged regardless of attendance.

Infants/Toddler	
Hours Per Week	**Rate Per Hour**
10-19	$6.00
20-29	$4.90
30-39	$4.50
40+	$4.30

Preschool/ Pre-K/School Age	
Hours Per Week	**Rate Per Hour**
10-19	$5.85
20-29	$4.75
30-39	$4.40
40+	$4.20

Preschool Only 8:30am-12:00pm	
# of Days	**Weekly Rate**
2 Days	$27.00
3 Days	$40.50
4 Days	$54.00
5 Days	$67.50

School Age	
	Daily Rates
Before	$5.00
After	$10.00
Before/After	$12.50

- **There is a 10 hour/week minimum.**
- **Rates include: Breakfast (until 8:30am), Hot Lunch, and 2 Snacks**
- **Families with two or more children will receive a 10% discount on the oldest child's tuition.**
- **Registration Fee: $25/Family**
- **Late Payment Fee: $25 per week late**
- **Annual Supply Fee: $25/Family**
- **NSF Fee: $25**

Closures/Absences

- We are closed for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Christmas Eve is an optional day and you will be informed if we are closing or if the center is closing for any other occasion.
- Tuition will be charged, per your agreement for all days the center is open. Tuition will not be charged on days the center is closed. Part-time children will be given the option to change their weekly schedule to make up the day(s) the center is closed. Availability in the classroom will be taken into consideration because staff:child ratios need to be maintained at all time.
- Each child will be allowed a total of 4 "absent weeks" for the year; at the rate of $50/week/child. After the 4 weeks are used, you will be responsible for your regular tuition. A week is considered Monday-Friday.
- You must call in advance to bring your child on a day that is not regularly scheduled and we will do our best to accommodate your needs.

Health & Safety

Supervision of Children

No child will be left unsupervised. Staff will directly supervise children by sight and hearing at all times, even while sleeping. At least 2 staff will be available if there is more than 1 child in the center. Staff will continually count children throughout the day.
The following staff:child ratios will be maintained at all times

Age	Staff:Child
Infants 0-12 months	1:4
Young Toddlers 13-24 months	1:5
Older Toddlers 25-36 months	1:6
Preschool and Kindergarten 37-6years	1:10

Accident Procedures

We set up our environment to keep accidents to a minimum. However, they still happen. When a minor injury occurs, we will treat it from our first aid kit and document the incident. We will notify you with an incident report. A major injury occurs which requires transportation to a hospital, you will be notified immediately. Please be sure to sign the transportation box on the emergency contact form giving permission to transport your child in case of an emergency.

BE SURE ALL CONTACT NUMBERS IN YOUR CHILD'S FILE ARE CURRENT AND ACCURATE.

The director and staff will conduct monthly inspections of the center to look for any safety concerns. Please inform the director if you notice any safety issues or have any concerns about safety.

Sanitation and Hygiene

Germs and illness are a concern of most parents entering child care. We have several policies in place to help cut down the spread of germs.

- Staff and children will be washing their hands when they arrive, before and after eating, after handling bodily fluids, and after diapering or toileting.
- All changing tables will be sanitized with bleach water after each use.
- Each room will be sprayed with bleach solution each night to sanitize all toys and surfaces.
- Tables will be sanitized between uses and before children eat.
- Any toys that are put into a child's mouth will be sanitized.

Health Education

Health education is part of our curriculum. Children will have lessons throughout the year that focus on proper hand washing procedures, healthy foods, exercise and the prevention of the spread of germs. All staff members are trained in managing illness in child care and other health related topics.

- All indoor and outdoor areas of Little Treasures Learning Center are smoke free. No tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs are permitted on the property.
- No guns or lethal weapons may enter the facility.

All children enrolled at Little Treasures are required to be immunized according to the recommended schedule. Parents must provide LTLC with updated documentation that reflects these immunizations. Newly enrolled children must submit documentation prior to their enrollment date.

Illness

- Each day, the staff will conduct a daily health check upon the arrival of each child. They will be observed for any symptom of illness or injury. Parents/legal guardians are encouraged to communicate relevant information about the child.

We ask that you please call to let us know if your child will be staying home due to illness.

Children will be excluded from the center for the following reasons:

- ❖ Illness that prevents the child from participating in program activities
- ❖ Illness that results in a greater need for care than our center can provide without compromising the health and safety of others
- ❖ Fever of 101 degrees or higher
- ❖ Diarrhea/uncontrolled or unformed stools
- ❖ Vomiting
- ❖ Rash of unknown origin

You will be called if your child exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease. If your child has been ill or is sent home because of illness, one of the following steps must be taken before your child may return to the center.

Option #1
Your child returns to school after 24 hours free of symptoms.

Option #2
Your child is seen by a physician, placed on antibiotics or appropriate medications, and returns to school 24 hours after treatment has begun. In many cases, a child is still contagious until they have had a full day (24 hours) of medication.

Option #3
Your child is seen by a physician, who at the present time will guarantee in writing that your child has been diagnosed with a condition which is not contagious and that normal child care routines will not frustrate the condition.

Medication Policy and Food Allergies

Little Treasures Learning Center is a "Nut Free" Zone.

Based on state licensing regulations our medication policy is as follows:

- A prescription or nonprescription medication may be accepted only in an original container.
- A staff person shall administer a prescription only if written instructions are provided from the individual who prescribed the medicine.
- The label of a medication container shall identify the name of the medication and the name of the child for whom the medication is intended. Medication shall be administered only to the child whose name appears on the label.
- Medication shall be stored in a locked medicine box.

Please be sure to give ALL medication directly to a staff person.

- Medication shall be stored in accordance with the manufacturer's or health professional's instructions on the original label. Medication which needs to be refrigerated will be kept in the kitchen or infant refrigerators.
- A parent shall provide written consent for administration. Medication logs are in each room/ask a staff person for one.
- If a child has food allergies, they need to be documented in writing by the parent. A copy of this documentation will be kept in the child's file and a notice of the allergy will be kept in each room of the center.

Do not assume your child has medication in the center because any medication that has expired will be discarded!

In the event of a medication error, the Regional Poison Control Center will be notified and the child's parent/legal guardian will be contacted immediately. In order to prevent medication errors, two staff members will verify the following 5 items before administering the medication:

- Right child
- Right dose
- Right medicine
- Right time
- Right route of administration

Emergency Plans and Evacuation

- The safety of our children is of utmost concern. First aid kits are placed in every area of the center. They also accompany children on the playground.
- Emergency phone numbers are posted by each phone in the building and our security system is directly linked to local police, the fire department and Noga Ambulance service.
- Our center has an emergency plan on file with all local agencies and is available to parents upon request.

Inclement Weather and Other Emergencies

Any emergency closures will be announced on local radio and TV stations. If there is an emergency in the center we will take the children to our "safe house"-which is Wayside Emmanuel Church (the building adjacent to our property). You will be notified as soon as possible if this occurs.

Reporting Abuse and Neglect

Individuals working with children are mandated reporters and are required by law to report cases to the appropriate state authorities if they have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect. The child protective agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report of abuse or neglect is substantiated and to ensure the needs of the child are met. We will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect. Our concern is always the protection of the child.

Staff Policies *(All staff information is kept on file and regularly updated)*

Little Treasures Learning Center requires all staff to obtain the following:

- FBI Fingerprinting Clearance, Criminal Clearance & Child Abuse Clearance
- Physical and TB test
- Annual professional development hours
- First Aid training & Fire Safety training

Curriculum Statement

Curriculum: Our center uses a homegrown curriculum. It is theme-based on a monthly schedule.

Center Goals:

- To provide an environment which will develop the whole child; the emotional, physical, cognitive, and social domains.
- To foster creativity in the children. We will introduce different art media, dramatic play, math, science, and movement activities to enhance each child's creativity.
- To help children develop positive self-images and emotions. Children will be encouraged to solve problems and be independent. Activities provided will be appropriate for a variety of developmental levels so that each child can be successful!
- To provide a non-biased and multicultural atmosphere.
- To use the outdoors as a second classroom as often as possible.

Goals: We will use Ages & Stages, Work Sampling, Ounce, individual needs of children to identify specific goals for each child. ELS will be used as a guide or reference for planning.

Experiences: Children will experience learning through centers, indoors and outdoors. These experiences will be individual, small group and whole group experiences.

Materials: Materials will be available regularly to promote exploration of centers, seasonal or theme-based items, math, science, language, dramatic play and arts.

Roles: Learning takes place due to a child's interests, the teacher's planned intentions and the parent's involvement in the classroom.

ELS: Our curriculum focuses on the Key Learning Areas of the Early Learning Standards for Infant/Toddler and Pre-Kindergarten.

Approaches to Learning through Play

Creative Thinking & Expression

Mathematical Thinking & Expression

Social & Emotional Development

Scientific Thinking and Technology

Social Studies Thinking

Health, Wellness & Physical Development

Language & Literacy Development

Partnerships for Learning

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Receipt of Family Handbook

- I have received a copy of the family handbook.
- I understand I can ask questions or voice concerns at any point in time.
- I understand it is my responsibility to keep my child's file updated- including the health assessment form.
- I understand my financial obligation, based on the agreement form.

_____
Parent/Legal Guardian Name

_____
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

_____
Date