



430 Newport Way NW Bldg 460

Issaquah, WA 98027

425-427-8445

www.thelearningnestpreschool.net

PARENT HANDBOOK

All Day Program: 7:00am – 6:00pm

Full Time Program: 9:00am – 3:00pm

After School Program: IVE Students

Ages: 1 month to 9 years

Open Monday to Friday

Weekend Drop-In Care

THE LEARNING NEST PRESCHOOL

Parent Handbook

2026-2027

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Welcome to The Learning Nest Preschool!

We are honored that you have chosen The Learning Nest Preschool to be part of your child's early learning journey. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment where children feel loved, respected, and inspired to learn. We believe that strong partnerships between families and educators are essential to every child's success. This handbook outlines our policies and procedures and serves as a guide to help ensure a positive experience for every family. Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference.

We look forward to partnering with your family and watching your child learn, grow, and thrive.

Mission Statement

At The Learning Nest Preschool, our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing, and inclusive learning environment where every child feels valued, respected, and inspired to reach their full potential. Through play-based learning, Spanish language immersion, and developmentally appropriate experiences, we foster curiosity, creativity, independence, and a lifelong love of learning.

We believe that children learn best through meaningful relationships, exploration, and hands-on experiences. Our dedicated educators partner with families to support each child's social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development while celebrating the unique strengths and cultural backgrounds of every child.

Our commitment is to create a community where children build confidence, develop kindness and respect for others, and grow into compassionate, capable learners prepared for future success.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to inspire confident, compassionate, and curious children who embrace learning, celebrate diversity, and positively contribute to their communities. We strive to be a trusted partner for families and a leader in early childhood education by providing exceptional care, meaningful learning experiences, and strong family relationships.

Our Core Values

Safety: Every child deserves a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment.

Respect: We value every child, family, and staff member with kindness and dignity.

Learning Through Play: Children learn best through exploration, creativity, and hands-on experiences.

Relationships: Strong partnerships between families and educators are essential to children's success.

Inclusion: We celebrate diversity and welcome families from all cultures, backgrounds, and abilities.

Integrity: We uphold honesty, professionalism, and ethical practices in everything we do.

Excellence: We are committed to continuous growth and providing the highest quality early childhood education.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The Learning Nest Preschool does not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religious views, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, disability, sex or marital status. This is a commitment made by The Learning Nest Preschool in accordance with federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Religious Statement

The Learning Nest Preschool does not teach or promote any specific religious activity. We do, however, provide opportunities for families and staff to share their cultural celebrations with each other. Families are encouraged to bring information, artifacts and activities to share with our learning community.

Infant Care Statement

For infants, our program emphasizes responsive caregiving, secure attachments, individualized routines, language-rich interactions, sensory exploration, and developmentally appropriate experiences that support each child's physical, social-emotional, cognitive, and language development.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

1. **Registration Fee & Material Fee:** There is a yearly registration fee and material fee for \$450 total which is nonrefundable. Due at time of registration, no exceptions.

2. **Enrollment Process:**

- Submit signed enrollment forms and the enrollment contract, along with payment for registration and material fees, to reserve your child's spot.
- Confirmation and receipt will be sent to parents immediately after submitting payment
- Parents will receive an email with important information before the first day of school.

***PLEASE NOTE:** If there are any changes to enrollment we require a one month notice to avoid charges. If no notice is received parents will be responsible of the month's tuition payment.

3. **Programs Offered:**

Monday to Friday	3 days, 4 days or 5 days
*Drop In Weekends	
All Day Program	7:00am – 6:00pm
Full Day Program	9:00am – 3:00pm

4. **Drop-In Care:**

- Provided depending on availability.
- Advance arrangements required (book through our website for weekends and email to add extra hours/change days)
- Hourly rate is \$45 per hour or \$120 (3 hours), \$192 (6 hours), \$252 (9 hours) per day
- Invoice will be sent for extra hours/drop in, amount is due before service is provided
- We only accept check payments

5. Tuition & Payments:

- Tuition payments are due on the 1st of the month.
- **We only accept checks as payment method**
- There is a \$20 fee for late payments (a \$20 late fee will be applied every day for payments received after the 3rd of the month until full payment has been made)
- A \$50 fee is charged for all returned checks

6. Absences:

- If a child will be absent, parents are required to call the center. If the center has not been informed about absences after 2 days parents will be contacted, if center is not able to reach parents after multiple attempts center will call Police and Child Protective Services.
- If a child is absent for two weeks without notice from parents about absences, enrollment contract will be terminated. Parents are responsible to make payments for such month and after until formal notice is submitted.

7. Billing Policy:

- No adjustments are made for vacations, sick days, absences, holidays, closures, emergency closures, snow days or any other natural disasters or causes outside of the school's control such as power outages or damages to the facilities.
- Parents are responsible for paying the month of December in full regardless of two-week Holiday break.

8. Schedule Changes:

Two weeks' notice is required for any changes in schedule. The invoice for new schedule will be prorated based on the effective date of the schedule change

9. Late Pick Up Fees:

- \$15 fee for every 10 minutes late
- Late Pick Up Fees are due that same day, please pay by cash or check (pay to the order of the teacher on duty, NOT the school)
- For emergency, notify the center. If you cannot pick up your child, please decide for someone in your emergency contact list to pick up the child.
- If you do not contact the center and we are not able to contact you or the emergency contacts, Child Protective Services or the Police will be contacted.

INFANT CARE

10. Safe Sleep Policy

Infants Under 12 Months

The Learning Nest Preschool is committed to providing a safe sleep environment for all infants in accordance with Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) licensing regulations and current safe sleep recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related infant deaths, the following procedures will be followed:

- Every infant will be placed on their back for every sleep, including naps, unless we have written medical instructions from the child's licensed health care provider requiring a different sleep position.
- Infants will sleep in an approved crib or portable crib that meets current Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) safety standards.
- Each crib will have a firm, tight-fitting mattress covered by a fitted sheet only.
- Cribs will remain free of:
 - o Blankets
 - o Pillows
 - o Comforters
 - o Bumper pads
 - o Positioning devices
 - o Stuffed animals
 - o Toys
 - o Bibs
 - o Necklaces or other items that may present a suffocation hazard.
- Infants who fall asleep in swings, bouncy seats, car seats, or other sitting devices will be moved to a crib as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Staff will visually monitor sleeping infants at frequent intervals and document sleep checks as required by Washington State licensing regulations.
- Infants who can roll independently will always be placed on their backs initially. If they roll onto their stomach or side on their own during sleep, staff will not reposition them.
- The sleep environment will be maintained at a comfortable temperature to avoid overheating. Infants should be dressed appropriately for sleep, and wearable sleep sacks may be used if provided by the family and appropriate for safe sleep.
- Smoking, vaping, or the use of tobacco products is prohibited anywhere on the premises.

Pacifiers

Parents may provide a pacifier for sleep if desired.

- Pacifiers will not be attached to clothing, blankets, or stuffed animals.
- Staff will not force an infant to use a pacifier.
- If the pacifier falls out after the infant falls asleep, it will not be reinserted unless the infant awakens.

Sleep Equipment

Parents may not provide wedges, sleep positioners, weighted blankets, weighted sleep sacks, or other sleep devices unless required by a licensed health care provider and accompanied by written medical authorization.

Individual Sleep Needs

The Learning Nest Preschool recognizes that every infant has individual sleep patterns. Staff will work with families to follow each infant's feeding and sleeping schedule while maintaining all Washington State safe sleep requirements.

11. Infant Feeding Policy

The Learning Nest Preschool is committed to meeting each infant's individual nutritional needs while following Washington State licensing regulations and each family's feeding preferences.

Breast Milk and Formula

- Parents must provide breast milk and/or formula in labeled bottles with the child's full name and the date the milk was prepared or expressed.
- Breast milk and formula will be stored according to current food safety and Washington State licensing requirements.
- Bottles will only be warmed using approved methods. Bottles will never be heated in a microwave.
- Any unused breast milk or formula remaining after a feeding will be sent home according to current health and safety guidelines.
- Staff will never prop bottles or leave an infant unattended while feeding.
- Bottles will not be placed in a child's crib.

Introduction of Solid Foods

- Solid foods will only be introduced after written approval from the child's parent or guardian.
- Parents must notify staff of any new foods introduced at home and any known food allergies or sensitivities.

- Infants will always be supervised while eating.
- Foods that present a choking hazard will not be served.

Feeding Schedule

Each infant's feeding schedule will be individualized according to the family's instructions and the child's developmental needs. Feeding schedules may be adjusted as infants grow, with parent communication and approval.

12. Breastfeeding Accommodation Policy

The Learning Nest Preschool supports breastfeeding families and recognizes the importance of breast milk for infant health and development.

- Nursing parents are welcome to breastfeed their child at the center at any time during operating hours.
- A comfortable, private space will be available upon request for breastfeeding.
- Expressed breast milk must be clearly labeled with the child's full name and the date it was expressed.
- Staff will handle, store, warm, and serve breast milk according to current health and safety recommendations.
- Frozen breast milk should be brought in appropriately stored and labeled.
- Parents are responsible for providing enough breast milk for the child's daily needs.

13. Daily Infant Care Policy

The Learning Nest Preschool understands that every infant develops at their own pace. Staff work closely with families to provide individualized care while maintaining a consistent daily routine.

Each infant's daily care includes:

Feeding: Infants are fed according to their individual feeding schedule and hunger cues.

Diapering: Diapers are checked frequently and changed promptly whenever soiled or wet. Staff follow Washington State sanitation and handwashing procedures during every diaper change.

Parents are responsible for supplying:

- Diapers
 - Wipes
 - Diaper cream
- *Written parent authorization is required before diaper cream may be applied.

Sleep: Infants follow their own sleep schedule rather than a classroom schedule. Safe sleep practices are always followed as outlined in the Safe Sleep Policy.

Tummy Time: Awake infants are provided supervised tummy time throughout the day to encourage healthy physical development, muscle strength, and motor skills.

Developmental Activities: Infants participate in age-appropriate activities including:

- Singing
- Reading
- Sensory exploration
- Outdoor walks (weather permitting)
- Floor play
- Language development
- Social interaction

Staff respond to infants with warm, nurturing interactions to support secure attachment and healthy emotional development.

Daily Communication: The Learning Nest Preschool believes communication with families is essential during the infant years.

Daily information will be shared through **MyKidzDay**, including:

- Feeding times and amounts
- Bottle information
- Diaper changes
- Nap times
- Mood
- Activities
- Milestones
- Photos (when permitted)
- Any concerns observed during the day

Parents are encouraged to communicate any changes in feeding schedules, sleep routines, medications, illnesses, or other important information at drop-off.

14. Infant Medication Policy

Because infants are especially vulnerable to illness, medications should be administered at home whenever possible.

If medication must be given during childcare hours:

- Parents must complete the required medication authorization form.

- Staff will follow the physician's instructions and DCYF medication requirements.
- Bottle-fed infants receiving medication mixed with formula or breast milk must have written instructions from the child's health care provider.
- Staff will document the date, time, dosage, and staff member administering the medication.

Common medications that may be administered with proper authorization include:

- Fever reducers/pain relievers
- Diaper ointments
- Sunscreen
- Antihistamines
- Prescription medications
- Emergency medications such as epinephrine auto-injectors or inhalers

15. Infant Illness Policy

Because infants have developing immune systems, staff will closely monitor them for signs of illness.

Parents will be contacted immediately if an infant experiences:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
- Difficulty breathing
- Repeated vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Poor feeding or refusal to eat
- Excessive sleepiness or unusual irritability
- Signs of dehydration
- Any symptoms requiring immediate medical attention

Infants who are unable to comfortably participate in routine care or who require one-on-one medical care beyond what staff can safely provide must be picked up promptly.

16. Infant Immunizations Requirements

Infants must remain on the recommended immunization schedule established by their health care provider and Washington State.

Parents are responsible for notifying the center whenever their infant receives scheduled vaccinations and providing updated immunization documentation before returning to care when applicable.

17. Infant Allergy Awareness

When introducing solid foods, parents should communicate any newly introduced foods and any observed reactions.

Staff will only serve foods approved by the parent and appropriate for the infant's developmental stage.

New foods will not be introduced at the center unless requested in writing by the parent.

Infants with diagnosed food allergies will have individualized feeding plans to minimize the risk of exposure and cross-contamination.

18. Infant Supplies

Parents of infants must provide the following items:

- Diapers
- Baby wipes
- Formula and/or breast milk
- Bottles
- Pacifiers (if used)
- Two complete changes of clothing
- Sleep sack (optional, if approved for safe sleep)
- Weather-appropriate outdoor clothing
- Diaper cream (if needed)

All items must be clearly labeled with the child's full name.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

19. Medication:

- If medications are prescribed for your child, she/he must remain at home for at least 24 hours after taking the first dose of medication to avoid any kind of contagion. Children may return to school when they are no longer contagious and are able to participate in all activities.

Washington State Regulations regarding Medication:

- Written parent permission required for any medication to be administered by staff of The Learning Nest Preschool. Your child's teacher will provide forms for this purpose. We are not authorized to administer any medications without proper authorization medical forms signed and dated.
- All medications must be in their original containers, labeled with your child's full name and with clear instructions for use.
- Some over the counter medications can be given to the child by The Learning Nest Preschool staff with written permission from parent.

These medications are:

- Antihistamines
 - Non aspirin fever reducer pain reliever
 - Non-narcotic cough suppressant
 - Decongestants
 - Anti-itching ointments/lotions
- Any medication that is not listed above or that is not labeled with instructions for use are not allowed
 - We ask parents to administer necessary medication at home whenever possible before bringing their child to school
 - All medications need to be given to the child's teacher to be properly stored
 - Please don't leave medications on the cubbies, backpacks or lunch bags

Each time medication is administered, staff will document the administration in the child's medication log. Documentation will include:

- Child's name
- Name of the medication
- Date and time the medication was administered
- Dosage administered
- Name or initials of the staff member administering the medication
- Any unusual observations or reactions, if applicable

Medication records will be maintained as part of the child's confidential health record in accordance with Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) requirements.

- Diaper ointments: Do not require a medication record but parents are required to sign authorization form
- Sunscreen: Parents should apply sunscreen every day prior to bringing the child to school. Sunscreen won't be applied at school for any reason, if needed we inform parent immediately.

20. Individual Health Plan (IHP) Policy is required for any child with a health condition that may require specialized care, monitoring, accommodations, emergency response, or medication while attending the program.

Conditions that may require an Individual Health Plan include, but are not limited to:

- Life-threatening allergies (anaphylaxis)
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Seizure disorders
- Epilepsy
- Heart conditions
- Feeding tubes or specialized feeding needs
- Chronic medical conditions
- Any condition identified by the child's licensed health care provider that requires individualized care while at the center

Individual Health Plan Requirements

Before a child with a qualifying medical condition begins attendance, parents or legal guardians must provide:

- A completed Individual Health Plan (IHP) prepared by the child's licensed health care provider, when required.
- Written medication authorization forms for any medication administered at the center.
- Any prescribed medications or emergency medical supplies required by the child's health care provider.
- Emergency contact information that is current and accurate.

The Individual Health Plan must clearly outline:

- The child's diagnosis or medical condition.
- Daily care instructions.
- Medication requirements.

- Signs and symptoms that require intervention.
- Emergency response procedures.
- When emergency medical services (911) should be contacted.
- Any accommodations necessary to support the child's participation in the program.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff members responsible for the child's care will:

- Review and understand the Individual Health Plan before caring for the child.
- Receive training on the child's medical needs when appropriate.
- Follow all instructions outlined in the Individual Health Plan.
- Document medications administered and any health-related incidents as required.
- Communicate with parents regarding any concerns related to the child's health while in care.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for:

- Providing complete and accurate health information.
- Supplying all required medications and medical equipment before the child's first day of attendance.
- Replacing medications before their expiration date.
- Updating the Individual Health Plan whenever the child's medical needs change.
- Informing the center immediately of any changes in diagnosis, treatment, medications, emergency contacts, or health care providers.

Review and Updates

Individual Health Plans will be reviewed:

- Before the child's first day of attendance.
- At least annually.
- Whenever there is a change in the child's medical condition, treatment, or medication.
- Whenever requested by the child's health care provider or the center.

Confidentiality

- Individual Health Plans and all related medical information will be maintained as confidential records. Information will be shared only with staff members who need the information to safely care for the child or as otherwise required by law.

Emergency Situations

- If a child experiences a medical emergency, staff will immediately implement the child's Individual Health Plan, administer emergency medication if authorized, contact emergency medical services (911) when appropriate, notify the child's parent or guardian, and document the incident according to center procedures.

21. Illness Policy: The health and safety of the children, families, and staff is our highest priority. To help prevent the spread of illness, we ask families to keep children at home when they are sick and notify the center if their child has a contagious illness or has been diagnosed with a communicable disease.

Children attending the program must be well enough to participate comfortably in all daily activities, including outdoor play.

Children should remain at home if they have any of the following:

- Fever of **100.4°F (38°C) or higher**
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Persistent cough that interferes with daily activities
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing not controlled by medication
- Unexplained rash, especially when accompanied by fever or behavior changes
- Eye drainage or conjunctivitis with discharge
- Mouth sores with excessive drooling
- Signs of a contagious illness as determined by a health care provider
- Any illness that prevents the child from comfortably participating in classroom activities or requires more care than staff can safely provide
- Parents should notify the center as soon as possible if their child will be absent due to illness.

If a child becomes ill while at the center:

- The child will be separated from the group while remaining under staff supervision.
- Parents or emergency contacts will be notified immediately.
- Children should be picked up as soon as possible, preferably within one hour of notification.
- If a medical emergency occurs, emergency medical services (911) will be contacted immediately.

Children may return to the program when:

- They have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- They have been free of vomiting and diarrhea for at least **24 hours**.
- They can comfortably participate in all daily activities.
- They no longer pose a risk of spreading illness to others.
- They meet any exclusion recommendations from their health care provider or local public health authorities.
- The Director may request a written release from a licensed health care provider before a child returns to care when appropriate.

22. Immunization Policy: We are committed to protecting the health and well-being of all children, families, and staff by complying with all Washington State immunization laws and Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) licensing requirements.

- A completed **Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS)** signed by a health care provider or verified through the Washington State Immunization Information System (IIS), or
- A **Certificate of Exemption (COE)** when permitted by Washington State law
- Children may not begin attending until all required immunization documentation has been received and reviewed.
- Parents are responsible for keeping their child's immunization records current throughout enrollment.
- Whenever a child receives additional immunizations or booster doses, an updated immunization record must be provided to the center promptly.
- Failure to maintain current immunization documentation may result in exclusion from care until the required records are received.
- In accordance with Washington State law and local public health guidance, children who are not fully immunized or who have an approved exemption may be temporarily excluded from attending childcare during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease to help protect the health and safety of all children and staff.
- All immunization records are maintained as confidential medical records and are accessible only to authorized staff or regulatory agencies as required by law.
- The Learning Nest Preschool follows all current Washington State immunization laws and DCYF licensing requirements. If state requirements change, the center reserves the right to update this policy accordingly.

23. Reporting Child Abuse:

- Washington State law requires staff to report any suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation to Child Protective Services Immediately. The Learning Nest Preschool cares about health and safety of the children in our care and it is our intention to assist families in maintaining a positive, safe and healthy environment for their children.

24. Termination of Care:

- **Written One-Month Notice** stating you are withdrawing your child from our program and understand you are responsible for payment of such month. Only formal notice will be accepted. (Please note, failure to pay such month will result in penalty fees which can be \$40 per day for each overdue day and reporting failure to pay to a collection agency).
- The Learning Nest Preschool reserves the right of immediately terminating the enrollment contract if parents fail to pay tuition, are constantly late paying tuition, have unacceptable behaviors such as yelling, accusing, threatening, harassing or creating a toxic work environment against staff members. As a business, The Learning Nest Preschool has the right to refuse service to anyone who doesn't follow our policies. Please note, this is not the same as our Expulsion Policy.

25. Sign In & Sign Out Procedures:

- State law requires that every child be signed in and signed out of The Learning Nest Preschool by a parent, guardian, or authorized individual.
- Each classroom has a sign in/sign out electronic system and written sheet attendance.
- Please use full signatures when signing in or signing out.
- No one under the age of sixteen is allowed to sign in or sign out a child from the center
- Children will not be released to unauthorized people. To release a child, we must have written permission from the child's parent or guardian and listing the individual's full name. Anyone other than the parents known to staff will be asked to show a valid photo ID.
- If a parent or authorized adult forgets to sign their child in or out in continued occurrences a **\$10 administrative fee** may be charged for each occurrence due to the additional staff time required to correct attendance records and maintain compliance with licensing requirements.

26. Alcohol, Tobacco, Cannabis, and Illegal Drug Policy

- The use, possession, sale, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, cannabis (marijuana), illegal drugs, or any controlled substance without a valid prescription is strictly prohibited on the premises of The Learning Nest Preschool, including the building, playground, parking areas, and during all school-sponsored activities and field trips.
- The use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), vaping devices, and all nicotine products is also prohibited on the premises and within sight or smell of children, in accordance with Washington State law.
- Staff members who are impaired by alcohol, cannabis, illegal drugs, or the misuse of prescription medication will not be permitted to supervise children or remain on duty.

- Parents, guardians, or authorized adults who appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while picking up a child may be asked to identify another authorized adult to transport the child safely. If staff believe a child may be at risk, appropriate authorities may be contacted to ensure the child's safety.

27. Program Information Available for Parent Review: Parents and guardians are welcome to review the center's policies, licensing information, and other required documents at any time during normal business hours.

The following documents are available for review in each classroom building and in the administrative office:

- Parent Handbook
- Health Policies
- Staff Policies
- Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Menus
- Current Liability Insurance Information
- Fire and Safety Inspection Reports (when applicable)
- Required DCYF postings
- Curriculum information
- Daily classroom schedules
- Additional program policies required by Washington State licensing regulations

DAILY OPERATIONS

28. Supplies Needed:

- A rest blanket for naps (Blanket needs to come to center every Monday and goes back home every Friday to be washed). Center provides sheets.
- Indoor shoes (such as crocs, slippers or any other clean indoor footwear) to be used while inside. This helps us keep the classroom clean from muddy shoes.
- Baby wipes (1 package) and diapers (if applicable)
- Accurate emergency information (any changes need to be provided immediately)

29. Clothing:

- Dress your child casually and ready to play, the child may get messy, and paint will be used regularly.
- Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. We go outside "rain or shine" unless it's pouring.

- Each child must keep at least one extra change of clothes at school.

30. Rest Time and Naps:

- All children will be provided with a nap or rest period. Children who do not want to sleep are allowed to stay in a quiet area
- A sheet will be provided by the school
- Parents provide a sleeping mat and blanket labeled with the child's name
- Parents bring sleeping mat and blankets on Monday and take it back home on Friday to get washed

31. Outdoor play: Daily outdoor experiences promote physical activity, social-emotional development, creativity, problem-solving, and an appreciation for nature.

- Children will have opportunities for outdoor play every day, weather permitting, in accordance with Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) licensing requirements. Outdoor play may include active games, nature exploration, gross motor activities, sensory experiences, gardening, and free play.
- Children should come to school dressed appropriately for the weather. Outdoor play will take place in most weather conditions, including light rain, if it is safe to do so.
- Outdoor play may be shortened or canceled when weather conditions present a health or safety risk, including but not limited to:
 - Lightning or thunderstorms
 - Extreme heat or cold
 - Poor air quality due to wildfire smoke or pollution
 - Heavy rain, snow, or ice creating unsafe conditions
 - Other hazardous weather conditions as determined by the Director
- Parents are responsible for providing weather-appropriate clothing each day, including:
 - Closed-toe shoes suitable for active play
 - Jackets or coats
 - Rain jackets and rain boots
 - Hats and gloves during cold weather
 - Sun hats during warm weather (optional but encouraged)
- Children should always have at least one complete change of clothing available at the center.

32. Meals and Nutrition:

- Breakfast is served daily until 8:30am. Children who arrive after 8:30am should have had breakfast at home before coming to school.
- Snacks are provided for children at 9:45am, 2:30pm and 4:45pm
- School provides lunch for all our students, which meets all the nutritious requirements
- Organic Milk is provided for children by school

- **We are a nut free facility.**
- Parents are welcome to pack a lunch from home is desired
Lunch should contain:
 - ½ cup of fruit and ½ cup of vegetables
 - 2 fruits or 2 vegetables
 - 1 slice of bread or ½ cup of pasta or ½ cup of grains
 - Protein (cheese, milk, beans)

33. Birthdays and Celebrations:

- You are welcome to bring treats for your child to share on her/his birthday.
- Communicate in advance with your teacher for better planning
- Do not bring foods with nuts
- All treats must be brought from a store, no home baked goodies
- No candles or balloons allowed
- You may bring uncut fruits and vegetables, or previously cut fruits and vegetables packed and brought from a store

34. Items from home:

- Toys, games, and other personal items are NOT allowed at school, unless your child has been asked by the teacher to bring a special something from home.
- The Learning Nest Preschool has a policy against bringing any kind of toy weapons or real weapons to school grounds. Our priority is keeping the children safe; toy weapons brought to the center will be confiscated and returned to the parent or guardian at pick-up. It is important to send the right message to children and have them learn about gun safety and school is not a place for guns or other weapons. All pretend gunplay is extremely discouraged at The Learning Nest Preschool.
- We are not responsible for any lost items

35. Screen Time:

- Electronic devices from home are strictly prohibited
- Tablets, computers, and smartphones are used only in limited circumstances by staff members when they directly support children's learning and development.

Examples may include:

- Educational activities that enhance classroom learning.
- Interactive movement or music activities.
- Virtual visits or educational presentations.
- Special classroom projects.
- Communication with families through classroom applications.

- Children are not permitted to bring personal electronic devices, including tablets, handheld gaming systems, smartwatches with games, or cell phones, to the center.

36. Parking:

- Parents may park in front of the building and along the fence when bringing the children to and from the center. Please remember to NEVER allow your child to enter or leave the center without adult supervision, and NEVER leave the child unattended in cars or playground area.
- Parents are NOT allowed to park in the handicap designated parking spot unless they have a permit, parking without a permit will result in towing of your car at the parent's own expense.

37. Field Trips:

- You will receive at least a 2 weeks' notice for any field trips.
- Notice will include locations of trip, transportation, time and fees
- Staff will supply parents with permission slips.
- Our field trips will take place at a close by location to walk to that specific location

CURRICULUM AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

38. Educational Philosophy

At The Learning Nest Preschool, we believe every child is capable, curious, and full of potential. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment where children feel valued, respected, and encouraged to explore the world around them.

Our curriculum is inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach, which recognizes children as active participants in their own learning. Through hands-on exploration, meaningful play, and open-ended experiences, children develop creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a lifelong love of learning. Teachers serve as guides and facilitators, encouraging children to ask questions, investigate ideas, and learn through discovery.

We also incorporate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) experiences into our daily curriculum. Children engage in age-appropriate activities that promote curiosity, experimentation, observation, and logical thinking while building a strong foundation for future academic success.

As a bilingual Preschool, language is woven naturally throughout each day. Spanish is spoken in the classroom, giving children meaningful opportunities to develop listening, speaking, reading, and early writing skills in both Spanish and English. Research shows that learning a second language during early childhood supports

cognitive flexibility, problem-solving abilities, communication skills, and cultural awareness.

For our youngest learners, we provide a responsive, relationship-based infant program focused on secure attachments, individualized care, language-rich interactions, sensory exploration, and developmentally appropriate experiences. We recognize that every infant develops at their own pace, and we work closely with families to support each child's unique routines, milestones, and emerging abilities.

Our classrooms foster the development of the whole child by supporting growth in the following areas:

- Social and emotional development
- Language and communication
- Cognitive development
- Physical development and motor skills
- Early literacy and mathematics
- Creativity through art, music, and dramatic play
- Independence and self-help skills

We believe children learn best through play. Play provides opportunities for children to explore, create, build relationships, solve problems, and develop confidence while experiencing the joy of learning.

Strong partnerships with families are an essential part of our philosophy. We value open communication, mutual respect, and collaboration to support each child's growth and success. Together, we create a welcoming and inclusive community where every child is encouraged to become a confident, compassionate, and lifelong learner.

At The Learning Nest Preschool, we strive to:

- Foster a lifelong love of learning.
- Promote kindness, empathy, and respect for others.
- Encourage curiosity, creativity, and independent thinking.
- Build confidence through meaningful learning experiences.
- Support each child's individual pace of growth and development.
- Celebrate diversity and cultural awareness through language and inclusive practices.
- Prepare children academically, socially, and emotionally for kindergarten and beyond.

39. Classroom Organization and Staff-to-Child Ratios: In accordance with Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) licensing regulations to ensure the safety, supervision, and quality of care provided to every child.

Our classrooms are organized by age and developmental stage.

Classroom Ages		Staff-to-Child Ratio
Koalas	1 month to 12 months	1:3
Birds	12 months to 30 months	1:7
Owls	2½ to 3½ years	1:10
Rabbits	3½ to 5 years	1:10

- Children may transition between classrooms based on their age, developmental readiness, available space, and the Director's assessment. Families will be notified before classroom transitions occur.
- The Learning Nest Preschool always maintains required staff-to-child ratios and group sizes in accordance with Washington State licensing regulations.

40. Positive Guidance & Discipline: Our staff use developmentally appropriate strategies that include:

- Building warm, trusting relationships with every child.
- Setting clear, consistent, and age-appropriate expectations.
- Encouraging positive behavior through praise and encouragement.
- Modeling respectful communication and problem-solving.
- Redirecting children toward appropriate choices and activities.
- Helping children identify and express their emotions using words.
- Teaching conflict-resolution and social skills.
- Offering choices to encourage independence and decision-making.
- Using natural and logical consequences when appropriate.
- Supporting children in calming their bodies and emotions before discussing behavior.
- Working collaboratively with families to encourage consistency between home and school.

The following practices are strictly prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or physical discipline of any kind.
- Spanking, slapping, shaking, grabbing, or pinching.
- Yelling, threatening, or intimidating children.
- Humiliation, ridicule, or shaming.
- Name-calling or negative labeling.
- Withholding food, water, rest, toileting, or other basic needs.
- Punishing children for accidents related to toileting.
- Isolation or confinement.
- Using physical restraint except when necessary to prevent immediate harm to the child or others, as permitted by Washington State regulations.

41. Behavior Support: When challenging behaviors arise, our staff will use positive guidance strategies and developmentally appropriate interventions to help children learn appropriate social and emotional skills.

Behavior support may include:

- Building positive relationships with the child.
- Observing and documenting behaviors to identify possible triggers.
- Using redirection, encouragement, and positive reinforcement.
- Teaching emotional regulation and problem-solving skills.
- Modifying the classroom environment when appropriate.
- Providing individualized support and consistent expectations.
- Communicating regularly with families regarding concerns and progress.

If behaviors continue despite classroom interventions, the Director may schedule a conference with the child's family to develop a collaborative behavior support plan.

When appropriate and with family involvement, additional supports may include:

- Developmental screenings.
- Referrals to Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT), Child Find, Kinderling, or other community resources.
- Consultation with outside professionals involved in the child's care.
- Reasonable accommodations that can be safely implemented within the program.

42. Expulsion Policy: We are committed to reducing suspension and expulsion whenever possible. Before considering expulsion, we will make reasonable efforts to support the child and family through communication, documentation, conferences, behavior support strategies, and referrals to appropriate community resources when appropriate.

However, enrollment will be terminated when:

- The child's needs cannot be safely met within the program despite reasonable interventions.
- The child's behavior presents an ongoing and significant safety risk to themselves, other children, or staff.
- Parents or guardians repeatedly fail to participate in the agreed-upon behavior support process or refuse to provide information necessary to safely care for the child.
- Parents or guardians engage in threatening, abusive, or inappropriate behavior toward staff, children, or other families.
- Families repeatedly fail to comply with the policies outlined in this Parent Handbook.

Whenever possible, families will receive written notice of concerns, documentation of the support provided, and an opportunity to participate in developing solutions before enrollment is terminated. Immediate termination may occur when necessary to protect the health and safety of children, families, or staff.

43. Parent-Teacher Communication:

Daily communication between parents and teachers is essential, if you have any questions or concerns, please make sure you address this with your child's teacher. We use MyKidzDay App to keep parents updated about our students and share daily reports. Parent-Conferences are scheduled twice during the school year to provide information about development, milestones, concerns, and answer any questions.

44. Developmental Screenings and Referrals: Developmental screenings may be conducted using age-appropriate, research-based screening tools to help identify children who may benefit from additional support or evaluation. Developmental screenings are not intended to diagnose developmental delays or disabilities but to identify areas where further assessment may be beneficial. Parents will be informed before a formal developmental screening is completed, and screening results will be shared confidentially with the child's family.

When appropriate and with the family's knowledge, we may recommend additional evaluation or support through community resources, including:

- Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT)
- Child Find
- Kindering
- Speech, occupational, or physical therapy providers
- The child's pediatrician or other licensed health care provider

Participation in outside evaluations or services is the family's decision. The Learning Nest Preschool will make reasonable efforts to collaborate with families and service providers, when appropriate and with written parent consent, to support the child's success within the program.

FAMILY POLICIES

45. Parent Visits and Volunteering: We believe that strong partnerships between families and educators contribute to children's success. Parents and legal guardians are welcome to visit the center during operating hours and are encouraged to participate in classroom activities, special events, and celebrations whenever possible.

Family members who wish to volunteer in the classroom or participate in school activities may be required to complete all Washington State licensing requirements, which may include:

- A background check.
- TB screening or testing, if required.
- Any additional documentation required by DCYF.

To minimize disruptions to the classroom routine, we ask that parents coordinate classroom visits or volunteer opportunities with the classroom teacher whenever possible.

For the safety and confidentiality of all children, volunteers must respect classroom rules and maintain the privacy of every child enrolled in our program.

46. Parent Code of Conduct: We are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and welcoming environment for children, families, and staff. We ask all parents, guardians, and visitors to treat everyone with courtesy, professionalism, and respect.

Parents and visitors are expected to:

- Treat children, families, and staff with kindness and respect.
- Communicate concerns calmly and respectfully.
- Follow all center policies and procedures.
- Support a positive learning environment.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of all children and families.

The following behaviors are not permitted:

- Yelling, profanity, or abusive language.
- Threatening, intimidating, or harassing staff, children, or other families.
- Physical aggression or violence.
- Bullying or discrimination.
- Entering classrooms in a disruptive manner.

- Posting false, defamatory, or confidential information about the center, children, families, or staff on social media.
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on center property.

The Learning Nest Preschool reserves the right to refuse service or terminate enrollment when a parent, guardian, or visitor engages in behavior that jeopardizes the safety, well-being, or respectful environment of the program including staff members.

47. Confidentiality Policy: We respect the privacy of every child and family. Information regarding children, families, staff, enrollment records, medical information, developmental concerns, and personal information will be kept confidential and shared only with individuals who have a legitimate need to know or as required by law.

Staff members are prohibited from discussing confidential information about children or families with unauthorized individuals.

Parents are also expected to respect the privacy of other children and families and should refrain from discussing confidential matters involving other enrolled children.

Confidential information may be released only:

- With written parent or guardian authorization.
- As required by Washington State law.
- When requested by authorized licensing or regulatory agencies.
- When necessary to protect the health or safety of a child.

48. Photography and Social Media Policy: We love documenting children's learning experiences through photographs and videos.

Photographs may be used for:

- Classroom documentation.
- Daily communication with families through MyKidzDay.
- Classroom displays.
- School newsletters.
- Marketing materials, website, or social media **only with written parent permission.**
- Parents can check the option on the enrollment forms indicating whether they grant permission for their child's image to be used for promotional purposes.
- Families are welcome to photograph or record their own child during school events; however, we ask that they respect the privacy of other children and avoid posting images or videos that include other enrolled children without permission from those families.
- The Learning Nest Preschool reserves the right to photograph classroom activities for educational documentation while honoring each family's media preferences.

49. Parent Concerns and Grievance Procedure: We value open communication and encourages families to share questions, concerns, or suggestions. We believe concerns are best resolved through respectful and timely communication.

Parents are encouraged to follow these steps:

Step 1: Speak directly with your child's classroom teacher to discuss the concern.

Step 2: If the concern is not resolved, schedule a meeting with the Director.

Step 3: If additional review is needed, the Director will investigate the concern, communicate with all appropriate parties, and provide a written or verbal response within a reasonable timeframe.

We ask that concerns be discussed privately rather than in front of children, other families, or during classroom instruction.

Families may also submit concerns in writing if preferred.

The Learning Nest Preschool is committed to treating all concerns fairly, respectfully, and confidentially.

Parents have the right to contact the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) regarding licensing concerns at any time.

50. Restraining Orders and Custody Agreements: If a parent or legal guardian has a court order restricting another individual's access to a child, a current copy of the signed court order must be provided to the Director before the restriction can be enforced.

- The center cannot deny a parent access to their child without legal documentation.
- Parents are responsible for immediately providing updated copies of any custody agreements, parenting plans, restraining orders, or court orders affecting the release of their child.
- Children will only be released in accordance with legally enforceable court orders and the center's authorized pick-up procedures.
- If an unauthorized individual attempts to pick up a child or if staff believe a child's safety may be at risk, staff will immediately contact law enforcement and the child's parent or legal guardian, as appropriate.
- All legal documents will be maintained confidentially and shared only with staff members who need the information to ensure the child's safety.
- Unless otherwise directed by a valid court order provided to the center, both legal parents will have equal access to their child's records, attendance information, and enrollment documents in accordance with applicable law. The Learning Nest Preschool will remain neutral in family disputes and cannot interpret or enforce custody agreements beyond the legal documentation provided.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

51. Emergency Preparedness: We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for every child in our care. We maintain a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plan to help ensure the safety of children, staff, and visitors during emergencies.

Our staff receive ongoing training and participate in regular emergency drills to prepare for situations that may require evacuation, sheltering in place, lockdown, or other emergency responses.

Emergency situations may include, but are not limited to:

- Fire
- Earthquake
- Severe weather
- Power outage
- Gas leak
- Flooding
- Wildfire smoke
- Hazardous material incidents
- Medical emergencies
- Lockdown or security threats
- Other emergencies requiring immediate action

Parents are expected to keep all emergency contact information current so they can be reached quickly if necessary.

52. Emergency Evacuation Procedures: If an evacuation becomes necessary, children will be safely evacuated under the direct supervision of staff.

Staff will:

- Take attendance records and emergency contact information.
- Account for every child before leaving the building.
- Escort children to the designated evacuation location.
- Continue supervising children until it is safe to return or until they are released to an authorized adult.
- If the center cannot return to the building, families will be notified immediately using the center's communication system and provided with instructions regarding reunification.

- Children will only be released to individuals authorized on the child's emergency contact form.

53. Fire, Earthquake, Lockdown, and Shelter-in-Place Drills: To help children and staff prepare for emergencies, The Learning Nest Preschool conducts emergency drills throughout the year in accordance with Washington State licensing requirements.

Children and staff participate in drills that may include:

- Fire evacuation
- Earthquake preparedness ("Drop, Cover, and Hold On")
- Lockdown procedures
- Shelter-in-place procedures
- Drills are conducted in a calm, age-appropriate manner to help children become familiar with emergency routines while minimizing fear or anxiety.

54. Medical Emergencies: All staff maintain current Pediatric First Aid and CPR certification as required by Washington State licensing regulations.

If a child experiences a medical emergency:

- Staff will immediately provide appropriate first aid.
- Emergency Medical Services (911) will be contacted if necessary.
- Parents or guardians will be notified immediately.
- If a parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts listed on the child's enrollment forms will be contacted.
- A staff member will remain with the child until a parent, guardian, or emergency contact arrives.

55. Emergency Closures and Severe Weather: We may close, delay opening, or close early due to circumstances that affect the safety of children or staff.

Examples include:

- Severe weather
- Snow or ice
- Power outages
- Water service interruptions
- Wildfire smoke or poor air quality
- Public health emergencies
- Building damage
- Other hazardous conditions

Families will be notified as soon as possible through MyKidzDay, email, phone, or text message.

Tuition remains due during emergency closures, weather-related closures, or other circumstances beyond the center's control. No refunds or makeup dates allowed for emergency closures and severe weather.

56. Emergency Contact Information: Parents are responsible for always maintaining current emergency contact information.

Families must notify the center immediately of any changes to:

- Home address
- Phone numbers
- Work information
- Emergency contacts
- Authorized pick-up persons
- Medical information
- Health care provider information

At least **two emergency contacts** who can arrive promptly should be listed for every child.

57. Reunification After an Emergency: If children must be relocated because of an emergency, parents will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so.

Children will only be released to:

- A parent or legal guardian, or
- An individual listed on the child's authorized pick-up form.
- A government-issued photo ID may be required before a child is released.
- Parents are asked not to rush to the center immediately during an emergency unless instructed to do so, as emergency responders may need access to the facility.

58. Emergency Supplies: We maintain emergency supplies in accordance with Washington State recommendations.

Emergency supplies include items such as:

- First aid kits
- Drinking water
- Non-perishable food

- Emergency medications (when applicable)
- Flashlights
- Batteries
- Blankets
- Diapers and wipes for infants
- Infant formula (when provided by families)
- Emergency contact information
- Emergency supplies are inspected and updated regularly to ensure they remain ready for use

CLOSURES

59. School Closure Days: When holidays land on a weekend, we will observe the holiday the day before or the Monday after. Please see calendar for reference.

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Holiday
- Winter Holiday (2 weeks)
- Martin Luther King Jr Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- President's Day
- 4th of July

The Learning Nest Preschool is licensed by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) and operates in compliance with all applicable state licensing regulations.

This handbook is subject to revision. The Learning Nest Preschool reserves the right to update policies as necessary to comply with Washington State regulations or improve program operations. Families will be notified of significant policy changes.