



# **Mini Learners Enrichment**

## **Parent Handbook**

# Parent Policy Handbook



## Welcome Statement

We are so excited to welcome you and your child to the Mini Learners Enrichment Program! Our goal is to create a safe, joyful, and home-like space where children ages 3–5 can thrive through play, discovery, and meaningful connection.

At Mini Learners, we believe learning happens everywhere — in art, in music, in movement, in stories, and in friendships. With a Reggio Emilia–inspired, play-based philosophy, we encourage children to explore, imagine, and grow at their own pace.

We are not a licensed childcare facility, but an enrichment program designed to give your child short, meaningful experiences (up to 4 hours) that spark curiosity and build confidence. Our vision is for every child to feel at home — shoes off, ready to explore, and free to experience the joy of childhood.

## Mission

At Mini Learners, our mission is to create a nurturing, home-like environment where children ages 3–5 can thrive, play, and grow through meaningful exploration. We believe childhood should feel free, joyful, and authentic — no shoes required — with space to imagine, create, and experience life.

Rooted in a Reggio Emilia–inspired, play-based philosophy, our enrichment sessions encourage curiosity, independence, and connection. Through art, language, music, movement, and hands-on discovery, children build social skills, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning.

Mini Learners is more than a program — it's a community where children feel at home, families feel welcomed, and every child is celebrated as capable, curious, and full of potential.

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## Services Provided

### Our services include:

#### ✦ Enrichment Sessions (Ages 3–5)

- Part-time, short-term sessions (up to 4 hours, not licensed childcare).
- Morning or afternoon options.
- Small group learning for individualized attention.

#### ✦ Play-Based Learning

- Reggio Emilia–inspired activities that encourage curiosity and creativity.
- Themed weekly explorations (seasons, family, community, nature).
- Hands-on learning centers: art, building, dramatic play, and science.

#### ✦ Bilingual Exposure (English & French)

- Songs, stories, and simple vocabulary woven into daily routines.
- Language learning through repetition and play.

#### ✦ Social & Emotional Development

- Group circle times that build confidence and friendships.
- Activities that promote cooperation, sharing, and communication.
- “Feelings” discussions to support emotional awareness.

#### ✦ Creative Arts & Expression

- Music, movement, and storytelling.
- Art projects with a variety of materials.
- Dramatic play to explore imagination and role-play.

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## Non-Discrimination Policy

Mini Learners Enrichment Center, welcomes all children and families regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, ability, or family structure. We are committed to creating an inclusive and respectful environment where every child feels valued and supported.

## Health and Safety

The health and safety of every child is our top priority. We maintain a clean and secure environment and follow these measures:

- Regular handwashing and sanitization routines
- Daily health checks upon arrival
- Immediate notification of parents if a child becomes ill
- Safe storage of cleaning supplies and medications
- Monthly fire and safety drills

Children showing signs of illness should remain at home until they are symptom-free for 48 hours without medication.

### Please keep me home if...

	I have a fever of 100F or more, especially if I also have shortness of breath, sore throat, diarrhea, vomiting, or rashes.
	I've experienced diarrhea or vomiting in the past 24 hours.
	I have rashes, especially with fever or itching.
	I'm having a sore throat.
	I'm having an eye infection with discharged pus, redness, or swelling.
	I have head lice.
	I'm not feeling well.

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## **Mini Learners Sessions:**

Morning Session: 8AM-12PM

Afternoon Session: 1PM-5PM

***Note: We are not a licensed childcare facility, so your child may only attend one session per day.***

## **Discipline Policy**

At Mini Learners, we believe children learn best in an environment built on respect, kindness, and consistency. Our approach to guidance is rooted in helping children develop self-control, problem-solving skills, and empathy.

## **Our Discipline Philosophy**

- Positive Guidance – We encourage good choices by modeling respectful behavior and reinforcing positive actions.
- Redirection – When conflicts arise, children are gently redirected to a new activity or guided to make a different choice.
- Natural Consequences – Whenever possible, children experience logical, age-appropriate consequences (example: if blocks are thrown, they are put away for the day).
- Conflict Resolution – We help children use their words to express feelings, listen to others, and work toward solutions together.
- Safe & Calm Space – If a child feels overwhelmed, they may take a short break in a quiet area before rejoining the group.

## **What We Do Not Use**

- No physical punishment.
- No shaming, yelling, or isolation.
- No withholding of food, drink, or bathroom access.

## **Partnership with Parents**

We view discipline as a team effort. If repeated challenges occur, we will communicate openly with families to ensure consistency between home and Mini Learners.

# Additional Policies

## **Overtime**

At Mini Learners, we are committed to following North Carolina state guidelines for enrichment programs. Because we are not a licensed childcare facility, we are legally required to limit sessions to a maximum of 4 hours per day.

## **What This Means for Families**

- Each session will begin and end at the scheduled time.
- We are unable to provide “overtime,” extended care, or late pick-up options under any circumstance.
- Children must be picked up promptly at the end of their session to remain in compliance with state regulations.

## **Parent Responsibility**

We ask families to plan accordingly to ensure their child is picked up on time. Repeated late pick-ups may result in removal from the program.

## **Why This Matters**

This policy protects our program and ensures we remain within the legal boundaries for operating as an enrichment program. It also helps us maintain smooth transitions and a positive experience for every child.

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### **Termination and Refund**

Either parents/guardians or the Mini Learners Enrichment Center may terminate this agreement with written notice provided in advance. If the parent/guardian terminates the agreement, no refund will be provided for fees already paid. If we terminate the agreement, any prepaid fees for the remaining care period will be refunded on a prorated basis. However, we may terminate this agreement immediately in the event of safety concerns, non-payment, or breach of contract. In such cases, no refunds will be issued.

### **Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

For the safety of all children, please adhere to the following drop-off and pick-up procedures:

- Drop-off: Please ensure your child is dropped off by the designated time and check them in with a staff member before leaving.
- Pick-up: Only authorized individuals listed in your enrollment form may pick up your child. Please notify us in advance if the list of emergency contacts and other people authorized to pick up your child changes.

### **Sign-In and Sign-Out**

Parents or authorized guardians must sign in their child upon arrival and sign out at pick-up. They should sign the attendance book. Please make sure to list the exact time of drop-off and pick-up in the attendance book. Please also sign your name on the sign-in and sign-out forms every day. This process is vital for tracking attendance, ensuring safety, and complying with regulations.

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## **Vaccinations**

Mini Learners is an enrichment program that operates for less than four hours per day and is not a licensed childcare facility. Because of this, we are not required by the State of North Carolina to collect or maintain vaccination records for children or staff.

## **What This Means for Families**

- Families may choose whether or not to provide their child's immunization records.
- Enrollment at Mini Learners is not dependent on vaccination status.
- We respect each family's personal choices and medical decisions.

## **While we do not require vaccinations, we are committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment by:**

- Encouraging proper handwashing and hygiene practices.
- Following clear illness policies (children must remain home if sick, with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or contagious symptoms).
- Cleaning and sanitizing our space daily.

Our goal is to create an inclusive, nurturing space where every child feels welcome.

## **Illness and Emergencies**

In the case of illness or an emergency during session, we will contact the parent/guardian immediately. If a child requires medical attention, we will seek emergency services if necessary. The parent/guardian will be responsible for any medical costs associated with treatment.

## **Medications**

Medication's will only be administered with written consent and according to the provided instructions.



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## Meals and Nutrition

The following are our meals and food policies:

- At Mini Learners, we want to keep snack time simple and safe. We will only provide pre-packaged snacks (such as crackers, applesauce cups, or granola bars) when needed. We do not prepare or serve homemade foods.
- We encourage families to pack a small snack and water bottle for their child each day. This ensures children have something they enjoy and that fits their dietary needs..

## Nap Time

At Mini Learners, we do not include a scheduled nap or rest period in our daily routine, since our enrichment sessions are limited to 4 hours or less. Our time together is focused on play, exploration, and learning activities.

## Optional Rest Space

We understand that some children may become tired during the session. For those occasions, we provide a quiet, comfortable space where a child may rest if needed. Parents are welcome to send a small comfort item (blanket, stuffed animal, or pacifier if appropriate) to help their child feel secure.

## Family Responsibility

- Nap/rest is not a guaranteed or structured part of our schedule.
- Children who regularly require naps should be scheduled for a session time that best fits their rest routine at home.



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## Bathroom Policy

At Mini Learners, we believe bathroom routines are an important part of supporting each child's independence, comfort, and dignity. A designated staff member will always be available to assist children as needed.

## Our Approach

- **Diapering:** For children who are not yet toilet-trained, a designated staff member will handle diaper changes in a safe, clean, and respectful manner.
- **Potty Training:** We partner with families to support children who are learning to use the toilet. Staff will offer gentle reminders, encouragement, and assistance as needed.
- **Independence:** Children who are toilet-trained are encouraged to use the bathroom independently, with staff nearby to provide help if requested.

## Health & Safety

- All diapering and toileting procedures follow strict hygiene practices, including proper handwashing and sanitizing.
- Staff never leave children unattended in the bathroom.
- Parents are asked to provide diapers, pull-ups, wipes, or extra clothing as needed for their child.

Our goal is to make bathroom routines stress-free and supportive, helping each child feel comfortable and confident as they grow in independence.

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## Rules

To maintain a safe and respectful environment, we encourage all children to:

- Be Kind – Use kind words and gentle hands with friends.
- Be Safe – Walk inside, use toys correctly, and follow directions.
- Take Care – Take care of our classroom, materials, and each other.
- Listen & Try – Listen to teachers and friends, and try your best.
- Have Fun – Play, explore, and enjoy learning together!

## Dangerous behavior

At Mini Learners, the safety of every child and staff member is our top priority. While we understand that children are still learning how to manage their emotions and actions, certain behaviors place others at risk and must be addressed immediately.

## What We Consider Dangerous Behavior

- Hitting, kicking, biting, or intentionally hurting others
- Throwing objects in a way that could cause harm
- Running away from the group or refusing safety directions
- Damaging property in a way that creates unsafe conditions

## How We Respond

1. Immediate Intervention – The child will be calmly and safely removed from the situation.
2. Redirection & Support – Staff will help the child calm down, reflect, and practice safer choices.
3. Parent Communication – Families will be informed of any incident the same day.
4. Partnership – If dangerous behaviors continue, we will work with parents to create a behavior support plan.

## Program Boundaries

- If repeated dangerous behavior places the safety of the group at risk, temporary suspension or dismissal from the program may occur.
- No child will ever be shamed or punished harshly. Our goal is always to teach, support, and guide.

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## Signs of Neglect

At Mini Learners, the safety and well-being of every child is our highest priority. While we are an enrichment program and not a licensed childcare facility, we are still dedicated to protecting children and supporting families.

## Our Commitment

- Staff are trained to recognize basic signs of neglect or abuse, such as:
  - Consistently inappropriate clothing for weather
  - Frequent untreated illnesses or injuries
  - Persistent hunger or poor hygiene
  - Repeated lack of supervision or care
- We approach these situations with sensitivity and compassion, understanding that all families face challenges.

## Steps We Take

1. Documentation – Any concerning patterns or observations will be documented by staff.
2. Communication – Minor concerns may be shared with parents directly in a respectful, private conversation.
3. Reporting – If staff have reason to suspect abuse or neglect, we are legally and ethically obligated to make a report to the North Carolina Division of Social Services (DSS) as mandated reporters.
4. Confidentiality – All concerns and reports will be handled with discretion and confidentiality, protecting the dignity of both the child and family.

## Why This Matters

This policy is in place to ensure every child at Mini Learners is safe, supported, and cared for in a healthy environment. We see ourselves as partners with families, and we take our responsibility to protect children very seriously.

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At Mini Learners, our goal is to provide a safe, joyful, and enriching experience for children ages 3–5 through play-based learning and exploration.

***We want to clearly state once more that Mini Learners is not a licensed childcare or daycare facility. We operate as an enrichment program with sessions limited to four (4) hours or less in accordance with North Carolina guidelines. We do not claim to be, nor should we be considered, a childcare center.***

This handbook has been created to provide families with a clear understanding of our policies, expectations, and program structure. By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read and agree to the policies outlined in this handbook, and that you understand Mini Learners is an enrichment program and not a daycare facility.

## **Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment**

I have read and understand the policies of Mini Learners Enrichment Program. I acknowledge that this program is not a licensed childcare or daycare facility and operates only within the guidelines allowed for enrichment programs in North Carolina.

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

