

Little Viking Childcare Center

Parent Handbook 2023

576 Vo Tech Rd

Reynoldsville, PA 15851

(814)653-8265 ext.135

lilvikingschildcare@gmail.com

Welcome Message:

 I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to Little Viking Childcare Center. In selecting Little Viking, you have made an outstanding decision in the care and education of your child.

 Little Viking Childcare is committed to creating a safe, warm, loving environment where children can grow physically, emotionally, creatively and socially at their own pace. We want to help your child increase their confidence and self-esteem by treating them as unique individuals, and allowing them to express themselves in a variety of facets.

 In programming activities for the children we follow a play-based learning philosophy. We develop activities for each day that help the children engage and enjoy the learning process. We strive to prepare your children for their early school years by exposing them regularly to letters, numbers, colors, shapes, and new vocabulary as well as cultural activities to increase social awareness.

 This handbook has been created to minimize misunderstandings, and to ensure that all families are aware of the requirements and policies of Little Viking Childcare Center. This handbook covers our philosophies, business policies and expectations of both staff and parents.

 Please read this handbook carefully and feel free to discuss any concerns with me or any of our staff members.

Christy L Weaver MS

Owner/Director

## Meet the Staff

Welcome to our Parent Handbook! My name is Christy Weaver, and I am a Licensed childcare provider and the owner of Little Viking Childcare Center.

I hold a Master of Science degree in Multidisciplinary Human Services and have spent most of my adult life working with children in various capacities including the school classroom, in-home therapy, special education transitions, behavioral therapy, Autism specialization training, US Army Family Readiness Groups and volunteering for Girl Scouts, the Reynoldsville CMA church and the Reynoldsville Historical Society. I also hold Pennsylvania Childcare Director’s Credentials from Lackawanna College. I understand that each child has their own learning style and I try my best to create an environment where they will thrive. My personal goal is to create an environment where every child, regardless of background, culture, ethnicity or disability, can feel welcome and loved and challenged to be the best they can be.

Casey Latshaw is an assistant group supervisor at Little Viking Childcare. Casey has a Child Development Associate Credential and is currently enrolled in the Penn West Clarion Early Childhood Education Program to obtain her associate degree in early childhood education. Casey previously taught religious education classes at her church for several years. Casey is the mother of three children, all of which have attended Little Viking Childcare center resulting in her desire to work for us. Her son Silas was one of our first Little Viking Pre-School Graduates.



Michaela Stankavich is the group supervisor for our teachers as well as the summer School Age instructor. She earned her education through Clarion University of Pennsylvania and is passionate about cultural studies and the arts. Michaela is also employed at Penn Highlands DuBois. Michaela has volunteered with Christ the King Manor, the Reynoldsville Historical Society, Reynoldsville CMA church, Community Theater, Clarion University Choir, and various campus outreach organizations at Clarion. She is currently considering furthering her education in Middle-High School education.

Alena Stankavich is an assistant teacher at Little Viking Childcare. She is a graduate of Jeff Tech and has started on her career path toward her bachelor of arts degree in Communications at Penn West Clarion. She will be pursuing her Associate of Early Childhood as well in the coming year. Alena has volunteered for the past five years for the Alzheimer’s Association Walk for a Cure and has been involved with the Reynoldsville CMA Church, Aevidum (mental health & suicide prevention), Jeff Tech CTSO, Vice President of Digital Media Arts, and has been a volunteer for Christ the King Manor.

## About the Program

If you have any questions or concerns about your child or would like to set up a tour, please reach out to me at **(814)541-0487 , via the Brightwheel App** or at pick-up and drop-off. I look forward to building relationships with your families!

##

## Mission Statement

In keeping with our mission and vision, the following policies and procedures have been developed and adopted to ensure the highest quality of education and safety for our students, while maintaining a loving and caring community. Please review this Parent Handbook carefully. It is important that parents and children, understand and abide by the rules, regulations and policies in this guide.

Mission:

 The mission of Little Viking Childcare Center is to provide excellence in education and child-care through child-centered learning in a supportive, challenging and rewarding environment that provides children with self-confidence, values, knowledge, and the foundations they need to succeed through emotional, physical, and social development.

Vision:

 Little Viking Childcare Center strives to balance academic and developmental needs with a nurturing and supportive environment. The strong partnership of our families, educators, professional staff, and Jeff Tech AVTS, provides the community with a unique opportunity for the Reynoldsville area.

Core Values:

* We encourage children to embrace social responsibility through the development of strong moral values and self-discipline.
* We encourage critical thinking skills in all children so they will develop a lifelong love of learning and exploration.
* We support children in reaching their personal best, physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually.
* We encourage flexibility in curriculum development and teaching approaches in order to fit the makeup of each classroom and attend to the individual needs of each child.
* We value respect for all people, students, staff, families, our community and our larger world.
* We value learning and we know that making mistakes is part of the process of preparing our children for the real world.

Philosophy:

 Little Viking’s teachers develop an innovative and integrated curriculum that challenges students to discover their personal gifts and provides many opportunities for personal growth and development. Children are invigorated by the play-based approach to learning and are captivated by the relevance and engagement of the material. While we utilize a state-approved curriculum, often times, our teachers create unique learning opportunities outside of that as well to provide a more well-rounded education.

 Teachers can individualize, give personal attention, tailor the curriculum, involve all learning styles, and make use of small group teaching styles to ensure that all children are able to build upon their gifts and grow in all areas. We believe that a child’s first educational experience sets the stage for all further learning that will continue throughout life, and it is our job to ensure that we make this first experience the best it can be as well as prepare them for the expectations to come.

 Life skills are a set of valuable traits or characteristics that, once learned, modeled, and lived, give each child the interpersonal tools they need to adapt to anything life throws their way. Life skills are a prominent feature of our curriculum and are modeled, discussed, and reinforced throughout the year. Each month we will focus on 1 or 2 skills as follows:

* Friendship and Caring – to show and feel concern for others
* Integrity – to be honest and fair
* Cooperation – to work together
* Organization – to work in an orderly way
* Responsibility – to do our share
* Common Sense – to think it through and problem solve
* Sense of Humor – to be playful without harming others
* Flexibility – to be willing to change plans when needed
* Perseverance – to not give up when things are difficult or give up before trying something new.
* Mindfulness – to be able to recognize our emotions and react accordingly

## Hours and Days of Operation

We are open Monday through Friday, 6:30am – 5:30 pm, year-round, excluding the following circumstances and holidays -

We are closed on the following holidays:

* Winter Break – Follows DuBois School District Calendar
* Easter Break – Follows DuBois School District Calendar
* Summer Break – One week following the last day of school (DuBois)
* July 4th – We are always closed for the week of the 4th of July for both the holiday and for floor resurfacing.
* Labor Day
* Thanksgiving Break Follows DuBois School District Calendar

We follow the Jeff Tech schedule for Winter:

* If School is Cancelled or Delayed, we will also be cancelled or delayed. We are not permitted on Jeff Tech Campus during the winter months if the Jeff Tech staff is not present for snow removal or ice mitigation.

## Enrollment Process

Parents interested in enrolling their child(ren) should call to arrange for a visit. This is a great opportunity for me to learn more about your family’s needs, answer your questions, and provide a tour of the center and outdoor play area.

If you decide that you would like to enroll your child at Little Viking Childcare Center, you are required to complete the enrollment packet (Child Health Report, Handbook Acceptance, Release forms, Emergency Contact form and Fee Agreement). There is a [$50.00] non-refundable holding fee (deposit) that will be invoiced via the Brightwheel app.. **Both the holding fee and required enrollment paperwork must be submitted in order to hold your child's spot.** Please mail completed enrollment packets to:

Little Viking Childcare Center LLC
576 Vo-Tech Rd

Reynoldsville, PA 15851

## **Tuition Rates**

Childcare costs are **based on age and days agreed to** per child per week not necessarily the days attended. Payment can be made using cash, check or through our online portal and is due the **Monday prior to care being provided.** A **$15.00** late fee will be applied to accounts who are 2 days past the due date. **If payment is not made in full by Friday of that week, services will be suspended until payment is received**. Receipt of payment after each payment indicating the amount and date of payment are available via Brightwheel. If you have concerns about paying for the upcoming week, please speak with me directly prior to the payment deadline.

Weekly Rates are as follows: (effective January 1, 2023) ALL PAYMENTS WILL BE AUTOMATED THROUGH BRIGHTWHEEL. Payments will be due on Mondays prior to the week of service. Please keep in mind that all rates are based on the costs of running the center. Tuition is our only source of income and must be able to cover the costs of payroll, supplies, food, utilities, insurance, software and technology, and training for our workers. For this reason **we will no longer be offering a daily rate and tuition payments will not be adjusted for closures or absences**. Much like cable television or cell phones, the cost does not change if you do not use it. Individuals utilizing the Childcare Works subsidy are charged a $10.00 differential per child to offset the gap between the subsidy payment and the actual cost of care. This is added to the co-pay assigned by the ELRC. i.e. if your co-pay is $5.00 the total weekly payment will be $15.00.

* 0 to 18 Months – Full time (4-5 days) $211.20
* 12 to 18 Months – Part time (1-3 days) $158.40
* Toddler (18-36 months) Full Time (4-5 days) $200.00
* Toddler (18-36 months) Part-Time (1-3 days) $150.00
* Preschool (3 years – Pre K) Full Time (4-5 days) $185.30
* Preschool (3 years-PreK) Part-Time (1-3 days) $138.98
* School Age (Part Time) 1-3 days per week - $108.75
* School Age (Full Time) 4-5 days per week - $145.00
* Additional days (beyond the regular contracted days) will be added at a daily rate of if space is available:
	+ Toddler $40.00
	+ Pre-School $37.06
	+ School Age $29.00
* Sibling discounts are 25% off the cost for the older children.

**Please note:** Tuition costs are subject to change as the cost-of-living increases. Changes to tuition will always be adjusted at the first of the year. If any other changes are made, families will be provided with 30-day written notice of the change.

Registration Fee:

 Annual Registration fees are charged at a rate of $50.00 per child per school year. They are due at the time the child registers initially and then yearly the final week of August.

**Waitlist Policy:**

When a family is put on the waitlist there are several factors that are included in the decision to accept the child into enrollment. The first factor is whether or not, the child is a child of a Jeff Tech Student or Staff Member, as per our contract with Jeff Tech, these individuals take priority over all others. Second, does the child already have siblings attending the center, if so they will be moved to the front of the list. The third factor is whether or not the child is private pay or subsidy. We must maintain a sustainable ratio between private pay and subsidy children due to the fact that subsidy does not cover the full cost of care and therefore can limit the number of staff people that are available to care for the children and maintain the state required student to teacher ratios.

## **Policy on Withdrawal**

I hope that your child stays at Little Viking Childcare until they graduate into kindergarten! However, sometimes situations arise that prevent this from happening. If you intend to remove your child from our center, please **provide notice as soon as possible and no later than 2 weeks in advance**. If notice is not provided at least 2 weeks in advance, you will be required to pay for the remaining 2 weeks of tuition.

## **Causes for Dismissal from Program**

These include but are not limited to: Failure to pay weekly tuition or supply required items, severe behavioral issues that cause harm or stress to other children, and inability to reach agreement on a daily schedule, policies, or practices. I do try to accommodate children and families to the best of my abilities, so please speak with me directly if you have any questions or concerns! At all times every child in the center will be treated equally with no more and no less privilege than any other.

In the event of any concerns raised by staff, parents, or even children, a meeting can be scheduled to address the issues. The meeting will involve owner/operator, involved staff members, and the parent/guardians. The concerns will be clearly stated (ex. Late payment, failure to adhere to policies, behavioral issues, etc. and discussed in a non-judgmental manner. A plan will be designed to resolve the issue. A second meeting will be scheduled to review the situation within a reasonable time frame. In the event the issue cannot be resolved to everyone’s satisfaction, a 2 week written notice of termination of services will be given.

## **Benefits of Choosing Little Viking Childcare Center**

At Little Viking Childcare, we provide a **high-quality, enriching early childhood experience** in a safe and supportive learning environment! Below are some of the many benefits of choosing us:

* **Child Centered Learning Environment**
* **State Approved Curriculums for Infants, Toddlers, and Pre-Schoolers**
* **Convenience of transportation to and from CG Johnson Elementary for School Age Children**
* **Extra security within a public school building (onsite security officers, security cameras, electronic monitoring)**
* **Keystone Stars participant**
* **Accepts Childcare Works Subsidy**.

## **Daily Schedule**

Our daily schedule includes:

* Morning and afternoon group time
* Free Play
* Child-directed learning centers
* Arts & crafts
* Music & Dancing
* Outdoor play and activities
* Snack and meals
* Rest time

## **Items to Bring to School**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Required: * Diapers
* Wipes
* Diaper cream
* Breastmilk
* Bottles
* Change of clothes
 | Optional: * Pacifier
* Swaddle or sleep sack
* Blanket
* Pillow (1 year and older)
* Stuffed animal (1 year and older)
* Slippers
* Backpack
 |

**Clothing**

Please send ***appropriate*** clothing for all types of weather.

List of weather appropriate items:

* Sunscreen
* Hat and sunglasses (if desired)
* Winter coat
* Snowpants
* Winter boots
* Gloves or mittens
* Winter hat or earmuffs
* Waterproof jacket or poncho
* Rain boots

**Please note:** If you have any concerns about providing the mentioned items, please reach out!

## **Toy Policy**

There are many toys and activities for your child to enjoy while at Little Viking Childcare! Please do not allow your child to bring items from home (ex. toys, jewelry, books, gum, candy, and other items). The only exception is a stuffed animal and blankie at naptime which will remain in their cubby until the designated time. Electronic toys are not permitted at any time.

## **Policy on Behavior Management**

Our facility is committed to each student’s success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community. We strive to adhere to all state and federal laws when developing our policies and procedures including DHS, ADA, IDEA and other relevant statutes.

 Thoughtful direction and planning are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions. We intentionally plan activities that teach and develop children’s social and emotional competence.

 Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. Our goal is to create a caring, respectful environment where everyone feels included, loved, and accepted. Learning can only take place when we feel safe and secure in our environment. Children thrive when boundaries are clearly set, and expectations do not change from person to person or day to day. We aim to assure the success of every child by taking preventive measures that support all children. Some of the steps we take to assure this is:

 The environment is set up to be accessible to all children, developmentally appropriate and engaging.

 We utilize transition activities to limit conflict and encourage engagement.

 Our daily schedule allows for a balance of activities, and we implement a curriculum that is aligned with the PA Early Learning Standards, is engaging and meets the level of all children. Our lesson plans reflect individualization for each child.

 Our staff take trainings on how to best support classroom management, teaching social / emotional skills, cultural competence, implicit bias and how to engage in high quality interactions with children. They are trained in child development and are aware of typical developmental milestones and how development impacts child behaviors.

 We strive to support a high-quality workforce by assuring our staff feel supported and valued. We provide multiple avenues to increase staff education whether that be for a specific topic or a completed degree. We always maintain appropriate child / staff ratios and attempt to allow staff time for wellness breaks during their work hours. We allow time for observation, lesson planning and relationship building with children and families.

 Our program has policies and procedures in place to support positive behavior strategies, sharing of resources and multiple supports for our children.

 Screenings and observations are conducted regularly to catch red flags to assist children and set appropriate goals for each individual child.

 You are your child’s first teacher, and we want to create strong family partnerships with you. Some of the ways we attempt to maintain positive relationships between our facility and home are:

 Taking time to interact with families, utilizing getting to know you forms at enrollment, offering parent / teacher conferences and family nights. We also send home daily notes to keep families informed about their child’s day. The Brightwheel app is utilized to provide a constant and rapid communication between families and staff. We also have informational resources to share with families when there are behavior challenges to best support your child both at home and at school.

Each student at [school] has a right to:

* Learn in a safe and friendly place
* Be treated with respect
* Receive the help and support of caring adults

 When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying or violence of any kind. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report it to the Director of the Center.

 If a child’s behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child’s individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program. We will also share social / emotional screenings you can complete for your child, and we can review the results together before planning next steps.

 We utilize information gained from screenings, assessments, behavioral tracking forms and other action steps to help us partner with you in goal setting for your child.

 Our program has access to, and utilizes as necessary, the assistance of a Quality Coach, Infant / Toddler and TA consultants. If your child still is struggling, we can discuss contacting outside sources such as Early Intervention or an Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist through Keystone STARS. If your child is referred to Early Intervention and is found to be ineligible, we can also assist in referrals to other community partners such as Behavioral Health, Psychologists, Social Services, Wellness or Medical Specialists upon request.

 Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline although if a child is a safety risk to themselves or others, we may attempt to separate them from the larger group to calm down and deescalate. We do not shame, ridicule, threaten or belittle any child or their family.

 On rare occasions, a child’s behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

* A child appears to be a danger to others.
* Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
* Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child’s accommodations for success and participation.

 If this situation occurs, we will provide you with information to assist you in locating alternate care such as the contact information for our local resource and referral agency or other providers in the area. We cannot guarantee placement.

 If your child already has an IEP / IFSP in place we request that you provide a copy to the center at the start of services in order to maintain consistency in interventions and adaptations between environments.

CONNECT Helpline:

 Parents who have questions about their child's development may contact the **CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288**. The CONNECT Helpline assists families in locating resources and providing information regarding child development for children ages birth to age 5. In addition, CONNECT can assist parents by making a direct link to their county early intervention program or local preschool early intervention program.

## Inclusion Policy

**Policy Statement:**

 Our program welcomes all children and is committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning and development experiences that support the full access and participation of each and every child. We believe that each child is unique and work in partnership with families and other professionals involved with the child to provide the support every child needs to reach their full potential.

**Procedures:**

Admissions/waiting list

Children of all abilities are accepted into our program and families interested in having their child attend the program will be given an equal opportunity for admission. A waiting list may be maintained and children will be accepted from the list on a first come first served basis.

Inclusive Environment

Early childhood educators at our facility use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the unique needs of all children when planning. Staff will make every attempt to make any adaptations or modifications necessary to meet the needs of the children. Schedules, routines and activities are flexible and our early childhood educators will work with therapists, special educators and other professionals to integrate individual accommodations, modifications and strategies into classroom routines and activities. Any adaptations will be reviewed with families and other professionals supporting the child.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality applies to all verbal and written information about potential, enrolling and previously enrolled children and their families. All staff will be briefed on the need for confidentiality and will be expected to fulfill their obligation to respect the protection of privacy. Written records will be stored in a secure location with access limited to the director and the child’s lead teacher. No information will be released about a child and the parent/legal guardian during enrollment or transition to another receiving program or school without first receiving the written permission of the parent/guardian. This excludes the responsibility held by early childhood educators as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect as outlined in Pennsylvania law or when information is subpoenaed by the court.

Family Centered Practices

Our staff acknowledges and respects the priorities each family has for their child. Families are encouraged and supported to collaborate with staff to ensure that each child has an opportunity for optimum success. Our staff communicates with each family daily and has regular meetings to discuss the child’s successes and challenges.

Professional Development and Support for Staff

Training and support is provided to ensure that all staff are comfortable, confident and competent to meet the developmental and educational needs of all children. All staff receive an orientation on inclusion policies and attend training focused on effective inclusion and/or other disability topics whenever possible. The director provides additional support and resources as appropriate. Our Keystone STARS Quality Coach and other STARS TA services such as ECMH, as well as Early Intervention and other outside services are available and utilized as needed for additional support and resources as appropriate.

Collaboration with Other Professionals

Many children with disabilities or other special needs are supported by developmental and educational professionals such as therapists, teachers and others. Our program welcomes those professionals and works with them to assure the child’s success. The service provider is encouraged to provide services to the child in the context of the early childhood classroom environment and the child’s teacher and the service provider work collaboratively to determine the best strategies to support the child in the group setting. Our facility supports the teacher’s and / or director’s participation in Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings when our staffing allows.

CONNECT Helpline:

Parents who have questions about their child's development may contact the **CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288**. The CONNECT Helpline assists families in locating resources and providing information regarding child development for children ages birth to age 5. In addition, CONNECT can assist parents by making a direct link to their county early intervention program or local preschool early intervention program.

At Little Viking we believe that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs. Due to the diverse needs of the children in our program, it is important to gather as much information about the best ways to engage and educate each child. Your child’s growth and development is measured with developmental assessments and teacher/caregiver feedback. If your child currently has an IEP/IFSP, it is beneficial to share a copy of this plan with us so we can work together to ensure that the plans in place are put into practice. You do not have to provide this information if you do not wish to do so.

**Policy Update: Transitions June 5, 2023**

 Children, as they age, will be transitioning from one group to another within our center. In the month prior to the full transition, children will be gradually exposed to the new group and participate in activities with them as tolerated. Infant/Toddler to Preschool, Preschool to School Age. School age children will begin to work on basic living skills that they can utilize as they prepare for staying home alone.

* Parents will discuss transitioning with the families prior to any transition
* All children will remain with their chronological aged peers unless developmental delay makes transition difficult at which time, discussions with parents will dictate which group to be placed in.

**Special Care Plans:**

 Your child's health and safety is a top priority for us. One of the ways we assure we are prepared to meet your child's needs in any situation to the best of my ability is by utilizing special care plans. If your child needs special accommodations or has a long term health care need such as asthma, allergies, a need for emergency medication, long term medication administration or other medical needs please obtain a special care plan from us. We request that you take the form to your primary care physician and have the form completed and returned to me. Once it is in your child's confidential file at our facility we are asking that you keep it up to date and current at all times.

## **Illness Policy**

I try to maintain a healthy environment for all children in my care. We practice handwashing several times throughout the day and teach children about the importance of healthy bodies and minds. When a child is ill, while it is inconvenient to the parent, we cannot allow the illness to spread and possibly close the center. Please do not send your child if he/she has any of these signs of illness:

* Temperature over 100 degrees
* Skin Rash – unknown or unfamiliar
* Vomiting
* Diarrhea
* Ear Discharge
* Red Eyes or discharge from eyes
* Difficulty breathing or wheezing
* Sore throat, coughing, excessive discharge from nose
* Unusual tiredness, paleness, or irritability
* Head lice
* Infected cuts or wounds

If your child shows any of the above signs of illness, I will call you or the emergency

contact numbers listed on your enrollment form to pick up your child. Your child may return when he/she has been symptom free without medication for 24 hours. In the event of sudden and ongoing illness, once the weekly fee has been paid, it cannot be refunded.

While it is inconvenient to keep a sick child at home it is essential for the health and safety of everyone else at the center. You are responsible to have a back up plan for childcare in the event of emergency.

##

## **Absence Policy**

Whenever possible, parents should provide at least 2 weeks advance notice of a vacation or extended absence. If your family plans to take a vacation, please notify me as soon as possible. **You will be responsible for paying the tuition for the time off if this notice is not received**.

If your child will not be attending on a scheduled day due to illness or emergency, please notify the center as soon as you can. We require that you provide the specific illness so that we can prevent the spread within the center.

If a child is absent from care for a period of 2 weeks or more, they will be unenrolled, and their spot may be filled if not previously arranged.

## **Severe Weather and Emergency Closings**

If, for any reason, we need to close the center due to Severe Weather or another Emergency, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child(ren). If there is a current danger or threat that requires us to shelter in place, I will first ensure that all children in my care are safe before reaching out to parents. If you would like to see a copy of our Emergency Preparedness Plan, please let me know and I would be happy to share that information with you.

Closings and delays follow the Jeff Tech lead, and you will see them on local television channels. You will also be notified via the Brightwheel Parent App or SMS text message. Please be diligent in checking these locations daily to be sure you are aware of any unexpected changes.

## **Meals**

* Child meals are provided by the center for breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks. All meals follow USDA guidelines for nutrition and portioning. While we permitted packed lunches in the past, we no longer do so. Children tend to feel slighted when one child has a packaged meal or extra treats and they do not. We treat all children equally. The only time that outside meals are permitted is during parties or if a specific allergy or dietary requirement is documented. Children are permitted to have second helpings once all of the children have been fed depending on the availability.
* Children are encouraged to try at least 2 bites of every item on their plate. This increases their exposure to new foods and promotes healthy balanced meals. Parents can help introduce this using the free Two Bite Club book from the USDA <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/TwoBiteClub.pdf>

You may send treats into school for special holidays or birthday celebrations. We will notify all parents of potential allergies prior to these activities so that we can prevent any reaction issues.

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## **Special Dietary Needs**

If your child has food allergies or is on a special diet, please discuss these needs with me and make sure they are listed on the Health History and Emergency Care Plan enrollment form. I will do my best to make accommodations.

## **Health & Safety Procedures and Drills**

**Allergies**

Please notify me of any food, animal, or environmental allergies your child has by completing the Health History and Emergency Care Plan.

**Medications**

If your child is taking any medications or needs an asthma inhaler or epi-pen, I am required to have a completed medication authorization form (available upon request) and medication in the original container with the prescription label attached. Additionally, if you’ve administered medication(s) prior to drop-off, please notify me.

**Communicable diseases**

I will notify you in writing if your child is exposed to a communicable disease while at

Little Viking Childcare Center A completed Pennsylvania Childhood Communicable Disease Chart can be found at <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Reporting-Registries/Pages/Reportable-Diseases.aspx>

**Drills**

We will practice monthly fire and tornado drills (during tornado season). We participate annually in active shooter and emergency shelter in place drills as we are located in a public high school building. Prior to these specific drills, the parents will be notified so that they may determine whether or not their child will attend that day. Our emergency plan is available for all parents to view both at our center and via the Brightwheel app.

## **Early Drop-Off & Late Pick-Up Fees**

Our hours of operation are 6:30 am – 5:30 pm. Staff is not present at the facility until 6:30 and early drop-off is not possible. If you pick your child up after 5:30 pm there is a $1.00 per minute late fee assessed due to requiring staff to stay past their scheduled hours.

## **Parking**

Parking is located in the Jeff Tech lower parking lot. Please be sure that you are not obstructing the flow of traffic for regular school activities. Short term drop off parking may utilize the area connected to the cross-walk. Do not at any time pull up to the curb to drop off children. This is a Jeff Tech rule as it may cause an accident with school traffic coming and going.

**Drop Off/Pick Up Procedure**

* Ring the daycare buzzer at door “O” and wait for admission.
* Sign in using the Brightwheel app time clock.
* All individuals listed to pick up your child will have their own code. If someone other than the documented individuals must pick your child up, we will need verbal confirmation from you and the photo identification of the individual picking up. Your child will not be released without this.
* Any individual who appears impaired due to drugs or alcohol will not be permitted to sign your child out regardless of who they are.

## **Parent Engagement and Involvement**

You are your child's first and most important teacher. Below is a list of the many ways I keep families up to date on their child's progress and activities:

* Daily logs
* Phone calls and/or texts
* Parent Communication Board
* Parent-Teacher Conferences

Instructions for using the Brightwheel Parent Engagement App:

Brightwheel is a software tool used by childcare providers to assist with the daily operations and requirements of a full-service childcare center. Once your child is put on our waitlist or contacts the center requesting enrollment you will receive an email or SMS message to join Brightwheel. The following is the sign-up procedure, and it is a requirement for enrollment in our center.

Once the center has invited a student contact, they will receive an email or text (*depending on which contact method is added*) with the subject: **[Action Required] [School Name] has invited you to their brightwheel community**. The easiest way to complete the sign-up process is to click the **"Connect to STUDENT NAME"** button directly from the message, simply enter a password, and click **Create Account**.

If the message cannot be located, a new account can be created manually. Here's how:

1. Navigate to the [brightwheel signup page](https://schools.mybrightwheel.com/sign-up)
2. Click the **Parent** option
3. Complete the signup form and click **Get Started**
4. Click **Create your Account**
5. A verification code will be delivered to the contact used, with the subject line: **brightwheel verification code: XXXXXX**
6. Enter the confirmation code and click **Confirm**



Errors and Troubleshooting

It is possible for student contacts to run into trouble signing up due to administrative mistakes. The issues below are the most common and quite simple to fix.

**Parent contact does not have access to billing or messaging**

This indicates that the student contact was added as a **Family** contact type rather than a **Parent** contact. To correct this, reach out to the center’s administrator. The administrator must **edit/update** the current contact record to the new contact type.

**Contact is not seeing students that should be visible to them**

If the student contact can see one of their children but not all of them, the contact may have duplicate accounts with different login information. This can happen if the center has added them more than once with mismatched information or the contact mistakenly created duplicate accounts, one with their email address and one with their phone number.

The center’s administrator can click **+add a new contact** under the contact section on the student profiles that the contact **cannot** see and add the contact record as a **New** contact for that student with the contact method that the parent's correct account is under (email/phone).

***Please Note****: If contacts can see one child at a program but not another, they will need to be added as an* ***Existing*** *contact to the child they* ***cannot*** *see.*

**Contact sees duplicate/inactive student profiles**

An administrator can fix this by removing the contact record from this extra profile:

1. Log in to brightwheel on the web
2. Click **Students** under **My School**
3. Clear the default **Enrollment Status** filters by clicking the "x" next to 'Active' and 'None'
4. Click the teal **Apply** button to show all results regardless of Status
5. To further filter the roster, type the student's First or Last name to find and select the profile in the **Student Name** field
6. Select the duplicate/inactive Profile
7. Scroll down to **Contacts** and click **Edit** > **Remove** so the contact is no longer associated with that extra profile

**Contact has created a brightwheel account but does not see any students**

This means the information used to create the account did not match the information added to the student’s profile or that the contact simply has not been added to the student’s profile in brightwheel. Users should reach out to the child's program and request their email or phone be added to the student’s account or provide the student’s specific 10-digit invitation code.

**Online Enrollment:**

Brightwheel is assisting our center with the enrollment process. This allows you to enroll in different programs from home and also update your information as needed. Keep an eye out for new program enrollment links as we move forward.

**Timeclock:**

As a parent, you will also interface with Brightwheel as you check your child in/out for the day using the Brightwheel Timeclock. There is a QR code posted at the door for parents to check in and check out. We do require families to clock their child in and out each day.

Each parent must download Brightwheel and create an account (invitation will be sent at the point of contact) This app includes the following:

* Daily updates

Real-time feed of activities throughout the day.

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Photos

Watch your child’s day unfold with snapshots delivered to your mobile device.

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Stay connected

Stay in touch with your teacher and strengthen school learning with activities at home.

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Digital check-in

Easy digital check-in with personal passcodes. Add approved adults to pick up your child, and see when your child is checked in or out.

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Paperless billing

Digital payments directly from your bank account or credit/debit card. Paperless invoices and email receipts.

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Your child's community

Invite grandparents, nannies, and friends – with control over what they can do and see on brightwheel.

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with state family child care licensing regulations, child care services are available without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

I am mandated by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect. Parenting can be stressful, even overwhelming at times. Please reach out to me if you’re in need of information or support regarding positive parenting techniques, mental health support, financial assistance, etc. If I can’t help, I may be able to provide you with other resources that can.

## **Smoke and Drug Free Environment**

Little Viking Childcare is considered tobacco-free and smoking is prohibited everywhere on the property. We maintain a drug-free and alcohol-free environment and do not tolerate the illegal use of drugs or alcohol during the hours of operation. This includes field trips and after-hours family events.

## **Covid 19**

Our center, as well as schools and centers across the State of Pennsylvania were impacted by the mitigation efforts for Covid19. Because our center is located within a school building, it is not only the department of human services that regulates our operation but also the department of education and Jeff Tech policy as well.

 In the event that schools are closed due to COVID19 or other infectious disease, we will also be closed until the schools are permitted to reopen. While some childcare providers can operate under a waiver, we cannot due to the building requirements. This poses a significant concern for families enrolled in our program who are deemed “essential workers.”

 Upon reopening, the following CDC guidelines will be followed unless otherwise changed by the CDC or the department of health:

* All families will have scheduled pick up and drop off times and a staff member will meet them at either the O entrance of the building or at the Main entrance depending on the time of day. Temperatures will be checked upon arrival individuals with a temp of 100.4 or above will not be allowed to enter. No non-essential individuals will be permitted in the center.
* PPE will be utilized if social distancing is not possible.
* All children will wash their hands at the sink next to the main entrance of the center as soon as they enter the building and frequently throughout the day.
* Soiled clothing will be changed as soon as it is dirtied.
* Staff assigned to each childcare group will remain exclusively with that group to keep consistency.
* Children will remain with their designated groups during the day and will not be mixed for activities.
* All nap mats will be spaced at least 6 feet apart and children will be placed in a head-toe formation to further reduce the possibility of contact.
* A strict cleaning and disinfecting schedule will be followed daily
* Please do not bring items from home such as blankets, pillows, stuffed animals or other toys. If you would like to have an item at the center for the child, it can be brought one time, disinfected at the center and it must remain there.
* If anyone in your household is exposed to a confirmed case of COVID19, your child may not attend the center for 14 days to prevent possible contamination.

As this is a continuously evolving situation, additional guidance may be added at any time and you will be notified of any changes.

**We look forward to seeing you and your family at Little Viking Childcare Center!**