



Handbook of Policies and Procedures

Program Description

Little Leapers Preschool LLC provides a safe, fun, educational, and nurturing environment for each and every child. I strive to provide a positive atmosphere that is supportive and responsive to the emotional, developmental, and physical needs of all the children in my care. I believe a family home preschool setting offers a natural learning environment where a mix of structured and self-directed play offers children an opportunity for optimal growth and development. Little Leapers Preschool LLC offers: small class size (maximum of six children per day), a play-based curriculum which involves both child-initiated and teacher-supported learning, a print-rich environment to promote early literacy, flexible seating options which promote positive posture and increased focus, social/emotional awareness and problem solving techniques, open-ended art opportunities, daily sensory exploration and so much more...

As a parent myself, I understand the great deal of thought and consideration that is involved in your very important decision when choosing a preschool. In this handbook, I attempt to outline my program and policies so that you can feel confident that you have all of the facts before making your decision. If, at any time, you have any questions or concerns or you would like to discuss your child's specific needs or requirements, please do not hesitate to talk with me. The lines of communication are always open.

My Experience

I am a mother of two boys as well as a Lead Preschool Teacher with over twenty years of hands-on experience working with children in a variety of facilities including my own licensed Connecticut Childcare Center. I was also given the opportunity to hold the title of Lead Preschool Teacher in two amazing Massachusetts non-profit programs; WCAC Head Start and the YMCA Early Childhood Program.

My Education

I have earned my Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, as well as 18 credits in Early Childhood Education. I am certified as a Lead Preschool Teacher in both Connecticut and Massachusetts. In addition, I have completed the Connecticut Child Care course through the American Red Cross, which certifies me for both First Aid and CPR. I continue my education and broaden my knowledge in the field of early childhood education by attending ongoing trainings, seminars, and workshops.

Communication

I believe that a strong parent-teacher relationship is essential in order for your child to truly thrive in a preschool environment. Although face-to-face communication is preferred, there are times when this is not always possible. To supplement, I will use the following methods to communicate with you: I will send out monthly newsletters via email to convey information about current classroom activities and events. I will also be available via phone and/or email. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held 3 times during the school year (November, February and May).

Curriculum

Little Leapers Preschool LLC offers a full, developmentally appropriate play-based preschool curriculum which involves both child-initiated and teacher-supported learning. Opportunities will include free choice, gross and fine motor skill development, social/emotional awareness and problem-solving techniques, phonological awareness, letter and number recognition, circle time, storytime, arts and crafts, music, dance, writing opportunities, language development, beginning math concepts, sensory exploration, nature and ecology awareness, health education practices, cultural activities, and other fun educational projects. I believe that by providing the right kind of early childhood education, children will gain the foundation needed to be successful in both their schooling and beyond. Little Leapers Preschool LLC has an open-door policy for all parents and guardians. You may visit my program at any time during the program hours.

Individual Needs

Little Leapers Preschool LLC fosters an inclusive and supportive environment where every child feels valued and understood. Through patience, kindness, and empathy, the unique abilities and challenges of each student are recognized. By setting realistic expectations and offering personalized attention, students are encouraged to participate at their own pace and celebrate their progress, no matter how small. Activities and materials are adapted to meet individual needs, ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to succeed. This positive, nurturing approach helps build the child's confidence and self-esteem, promoting a sense of belonging in the classroom.

Enrollment

A child may be enrolled in Little Leapers Preschool only after an interview between the parent, the provider, and the child. A child's spot is not automatically guaranteed. It must be mutually agreed that the family-preschool relationship that is about to be established has the potential to be a beneficial situation for all involved. Once your child is offered a spot at Little Leapers Preschool, the following forms are required and must be completed prior to your child's first day:

- Child Enrollment Form
- Written Permission Form
- Early Childhood Health Assessment Record
- Little Leapers Preschool Contract
- Little Leapers Preschool Parent Questionnaire

A one-week deposit is required with all completed paperwork to secure a position for your child. This deposit will be applied to the child's last week of preschool and is non-refundable. Your child's first week's tuition is also due at this time.

Preschool Attire

Your child should be dressed appropriately for play in comfortable clothing that is suitable for the weather. Please be aware that your child's clothes WILL get dirty as he or she engages in the wonderfully messy activities of preschool. To foster independence in the classroom it is helpful for your child to be dressed in clothing that he or she can easily pull up and down or take off and put back on (i.e., you may want to avoid overalls). Little Leapers Preschool requires a full change of weather appropriate clothing be kept at school. Please remember socks and underwear, if applicable and replenish as necessary. Appropriate outdoor wear, such as snow pants, boots, mittens, and a warm hat will be needed in the winter. NO open toes shoes, flip flops, or high heels are allowed, as they are often the cause of toe, foot and ankle injuries. NO necklaces, as they can pose a choking hazard.

What to Bring to School

1. Backpack to be brought daily.
2. Extra set of weather appropriate clothes in a labeled Ziplock bag to be kept at school.
3. A supply of pull-ups (with side opening) and wipes for children not yet toilet-trained or are prone to have accidents.
4. A pair of slippers with rubber bottoms to be kept at school. Please note shoes are not permitted in the classroom.
5. A water bottle filled with fresh drinking water for use throughout the day.
6. A blanket for rest time.
7. A family photo on first day of school to be displayed in the classroom for the entire school year. This will help comfort children missing home.

What NOT to Bring to School

Gum and candy are not allowed in the preschool classroom. Children are also asked NOT to bring toys from home. An exception to this rule includes items for scheduled show-and-tell and special school activities. Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated. Parents take full responsibility for any loss or damage to toys that are brought from home. I am not responsible for replacing any lost or broken toys.

Meals and Snacks

Little Leapers Preschool LLC is a participating member of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and will provide a nutritious snack and a nutritious lunch for your child each school day. Gluten free and dairy free alternatives will be provided if needed for children's individual dietary needs. Children will participate in snack time at 9:15am and lunch at 12:15pm. Children will be encouraged to eat at these times but NEVER forced.

Birthday Treats

Little Leapers Preschool will provide a special allergy-friendly birthday treat during our scheduled snack time on your child's birthday or the next closest school day. If your religion or personal beliefs do not include the celebration of birthdays, please inform me of this during enrollment.

Drop-off and Pick-up

Upon arrival, I ask that your child remove your shoes in the hallway and put on slippers before entering the classroom in order to keep the floor as safe and clean as possible. Please share information with me at this time regarding any changes in your child's life that may affect their behavior whether it's a late night, house guests, or a significant change to family dynamics. The more I know about your child, the more I can accommodate his/her needs. I have found that quick drop-off times are the least stressful for all involved. When picking up your child, please check his or her cubby for take-home items, art projects, soiled clothing, etc. Also please check the parent bulletin board for any notices and/or updates. Upon pick-up, please be respectful of your scheduled, contracted hours and my business closing time, as I uphold them strictly.

Release of Children

If someone else will be picking up your child, you must notify me in advance. If this person is not named on your child's enrollment form, a separate, written notice must be provided by you in advance. This person must provide a form of photo identification upon first pickup and should have proper child restraints installed correctly in their vehicle for transportation. In the situation where parents have joint custody of a child, it is my legal responsibility to follow whatever is stated in a custody order. Unless you can furnish me with a custody order specifically stating that a child's parent has no legal rights to your child, I cannot deny release of a child to that parent. The same holds for separation cases and restraining orders.

No child will be released to any person smelling of alcohol or obviously under the influence of drugs. If any parent or alternate pickup person attempts to pick up a child while under the influence, someone else will need to be called to pick up the child, or the authorities will be notified.

Fire and Emergency Evacuation Plan

In the case of an Emergency, I will administer necessary first aid and call 911. Your child will be transported to the nearest hospital via ambulance. You will be notified immediately if an ambulance is called to transport your child. The cost of the ambulance and all medical related expenses will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. In case of fire or other emergencies requiring evacuation, we will assemble at our designated "safe place," take attendance and give aid and comfort as needed. Parents will be contacted via cell phone. An emergency fire/evacuation drill will be practiced monthly.

Mandated Reporting

Please be aware that, as a licensed family provider, I am bound by law to report all incidents of real or suspected child abuse. Should abuse or neglect be suspected, it is my professional and legal duty under state law to notify the Department of Children and Families.

Behavior Management

Positive behavior guidance provides the opportunity to enable a child to develop self-control. Role-modeling and social-emotional books/lessons will be a part of our daily routine. When a child is having a difficult time following directions or treating others or property without respect, developmentally appropriate guidance techniques will be used. These techniques include the following: Children will be given the opportunity to solve conflicts, problem solve and find resolutions to a wide range of situations- on their own or in conjunction with their classmates, under teacher guidance. During varying phases of the above-mentioned intervention strategies, I will discuss with the child the behavior that they have demonstrated and offer alternatives that they can use the next time a similar situation arises. In certain circumstances, such as aggressive behaviors, violent outbursts or when a child loses control completely, they will be redirected to another area of the classroom to calm down and regain self-control.

My first priority is to ensure the emotional and physical safety of all the children in my care. If a child causes significant harm to other children, self, or property 3 or more times in a given day, the child's parent or guardian will be contacted to immediately remove the child from my home for the remainder of that day (the full day tuition rate still applies). In the rare instance a child displays chronic disruptive behavior, a conference with the child's parent/guardian will be required. During this conference, goals will be established and the parent will be involved in creating approaches toward solving the problem. I will exhaust all available options and resources before a student will be considered for termination from the program.

Toilet Training Policy

Each child is an individual and develops at his or her own rate. There is no set age at which toilet training should begin. When a child shows signs of readiness and the parents are ready to begin toilet training at home, I will discuss plans to begin toilet training with the child's parents. Communication between the teacher and family is very important during this time. We will discuss what words will be used to describe body parts, urine and bowel movements, what type of training pants the child will wear and the routine at home and preschool for taking the child to the bathroom. However, please note, portable potty chairs will NOT be permitted in the school. Children have access to the classroom bathroom, equipped with child-sized toilet seat and step stool, throughout the day. By working together, we can create a positive and supportive environment that helps children succeed in their toilet training journey, promoting confidence and independence.

Daily Schedule

Little Leapers Preschool offers 3 attendance options based on availability:

2 days a week (Tuesday and Thursday only), 3 days a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday only), or 5 days a week (Monday through Friday).

9:00am Arrival Routine - Students enter the hallway, remove shoes, put on slippers and put away their belongings. Once a child enters the classroom, they sign-in on designated clipboard and choose to participate in table activity or go to reading area.

9:15am Snack Time – (Provided by Little Leapers Preschool).

9:30am Circle Time - Students will engage in class discussion, a theme-related read-aloud, music and movement, calendar activity, and morning exercises. Classroom rules and daily schedule will also be reviewed at this time.

9:50am Centers - Students will self-select areas in the classroom they wish to explore. Centers include art, blocks, dramatic play, reading, math, science, sensory and writing. This time also offers me the opportunity to work with children individually or in small groups to help them meet their individual goals.

11:15am Group Time - Students will practice basic phonics (letter sound recognition) as well as practicing writing the letter of the week. Each child will also be assigned a sharing day in which they will bring in 3 objects from home that begin with the letter of the week to be shared at this time, during their assigned day.

11:30am Gross Motor - Students will self-select areas on the playground they wish to explore. During this time students are exercising their gross motor skills by running, jumping, hopping, swinging, balancing, and more. On inclement weather days gross motor group activities will be available indoors.

12:15pm Lunch – (Brought from home).

12:45pm Story Time - During this time we will read stories on a variety of topics including but not limited to: feelings, kindness, community helpers, famous artists. We will also explore opportunities to make up our own stories through the use of “story stones” and our own imaginations. Social-emotional awareness, conflict resolution and role-modeling will also be incorporated.

1:00pm Rest Time - During this time students will be asked to rest quietly on their individual cot while relaxing music is played. The students who wish to stay awake will be given quiet items/activities (books, magna doodles, etc.) to use quietly on their cot. Naps are not required; however, children who choose to remain awake are asked to be quiet and respectful for their classmates who still do need a nap.

2:00pm Gross Motor - Students will self-select areas on the playground they wish to explore. During this time students are exercising their gross motor skills by running, jumping, hopping, swinging, balancing, and more. On inclement weather days gross motor group activities will be available indoors.

3:00pm Dismissal

House Rules

- No smoking is permitted on my property at any time, including outside.
- Please be respectful of my hours of operation which are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- Violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in my home. This includes hitting, spitting, pinching, biting, pushing, grabbing, and spanking.
- Eating is to be done sitting down at a table.
- Please remove shoes in hallway, before entering classroom.

Pets

Koda, our family pet, is a miniature poodle/bichon mix. He is an indoor dog, is neutered, and is up-to-date on his rabies vaccination. He has been raised with children and is an intelligent, gentle, loving dog. His breed is also considered hypoallergenic for those with pet allergies. If you ever have any questions or concerns regarding Koda, please do not hesitate to talk with me about it. Koda will be spending his day upstairs (not in the classroom).

Hours of Operation, Tuition and Other Fees

Little Leapers Preschool is open year round, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., except for the following holidays and school vacations:

**New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
President's Day
Good Friday
April Vacation
Memorial Day
Labor Day
Indigenous Peoples' Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving and the Friday after
Christmas Vacation
Summer Break (4 weeks/generally the last 2 weeks in June
and first 2 weeks in July)**

***Please see school calendar for exact dates.**

Early Drop Off at 8:00am will be offered for an additional fee.

Regular tuition applies to all student absences, provider's allotted 4 personal days per school year, inclement weather days, and holiday closings, excluding Summer Break. Tuition will NOT be required for the 4 weeks of summer break however, on the Friday before summer break, tuition will be due for the week we return after summer break. There is no discount, refund, or other allowances for absences due to illness, vacation, holidays, school closures, or any other reason. Tuition is due each Friday by 3:00pm for the following week of school. If a holiday happens to fall on a Friday, tuition is due on your child's last day of attendance prior to holiday closing. Payment will be accepted in the forms of cash, check, Venmo, or Cash App.

Personal Days – The provider of Little Leapers Preschool LLC will be allotted 4 paid personal days per school year. As much advanced notice as possible will be given to families regarding these days.

Inclement Weather - Little Leapers Preschool LLC will follow the Woodstock Public School protocol for weather related closings and delays. If there is a delay, Little Leapers Preschool will open at 10:00am. Regular tuition applies in both instances of a delay or a closing.

Late payment fee - A late payment fee of \$25 will be added to the weekly tuition charge. In the event that tuition becomes a week overdue, your child will not be allowed to stay in the preschool program until tuition is paid in full.

Late pick-up charge - If a child is not picked up after their scheduled dismissal time, a fee of \$25 will be charged and will accumulate at a rate of \$5 for every 5 minutes after the initial 15 minutes late (ex. Dismissal time is 3:00pm; 3:15pm = \$25, 3:20pm = \$30, 3:25pm \$35, etc.) This late fee will need to be paid on the child's next day of care.

Returned check fee - A charge of \$25.00 will be added to weekly tuition amount the following week. If for any reason your check is returned a second time, you will be required to pay for your services in cash or Venmo.

Sibling discount - A 20% sibling discount is available to full time (5 days a week) families only. This discount will be applied to the oldest child enrolled.

Security deposit - A security deposit, equal to one weeks tuition, will be due upon enrollment. This security deposit will be credited to your child's last week tuition payment. This deposit is non-refundable.

Summer Program

The summer program will consist of 6 themed weeks and will run from 9:00am-3:00pm (2, 3, and 5 day options will be available). Currently enrolled parents will have the option of selecting which of the 6 weeks they would like their child to attend if they choose to participate in the summer program. During the summer program tuition will only be due for the weeks pre-selected. Parents must select weeks by June 1st of each school year.

Medication

Although I am certified to administer medications to students, this includes prescription medications as well as over-the-counter medications and ointments, I prefer not to administer medication with the exception of EMERGENCY use medications to prevent life-threatening anaphylactic reactions (ex. Epi-pen) and EMERGENCY oral medication (ex. Benadryl). Sunscreen must be applied prior to coming to school. Any medications your child needs will have to be given by the parents/guardians. I also request that I be informed of any medication or topical application and possible side effects of such medication, that you have given your child up to 24 hours before bringing him/her to school. This is for your child's safety. I will need to monitor your child throughout the day for side effects and will only be able to do that if I am aware of medication given and what to look for.

In the event that your child is prescribed an EMERGENCY medication, the parental responsibilities include providing me the proper medication authorization form, and the medication. The medication administration form must be signed by the authorized prescriber and parent/guardian giving me authorization to administer the medication. This form is available on the school website.

The medication authorization form must include information, such as:

- The child's name, address, and birthdate
- The date the medication order was written
- Medication name, dose and method of administration
- Time to be administered and dates to start and end the medication
- Relevant side effects and prescribers plan for management should they occur
- Notation whether the medication is a controlled drug
- Listing of allergies, if any and reactions or negative interactions with food or drugs
- Specific instructions from prescriber how medication is to be given
- Name, address, telephone number and signature of authorized prescriber ordering the drug
- Name, address, telephone number, signature and relationship to the child of the parents giving permission for the administration of the drug

Please note that there are many variations of the medication administration form that medical providers have access to. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the medication administration form clearly states that it is for licensed childcare centers. Please understand that your child may not be able to attend if he/she does not have the proper authorization.

All medications must be in their original child resistant safety container and clearly labeled with child's name, name of prescription, date of prescription, and directions for use. Except for non-prescription medications, pre-measured commercially prepared injectable medications (ex. Epi-pens), glucagon and asthma inhalant medications, all medications will be stored in a locked container and, if directed by a manufacturer, refrigerated.

I will keep accurate documentation of all medications administered including, but not limited to the following:

- Name, address and date of birth of the child
- Name of the medication and dosage
- Pharmacy name and prescription number
- Name of authorized prescriber
- The date & time the medication was administered
- The dose that was administered
- The level of cooperation of the child
- Any medication errors
- Food and medication allergies
- Signature of the staff administering
- Any comments.

Parents will be notified when/if a child has been administered any prescription medication. All unused or expired medication shall be returned to the parent/guardian or disposed of if it is not picked up within one week following the termination of the order, in the presence of at least one witness. I will keep a written record of the medications destroyed which shall be signed by both parties.

Sick Policy

Children will be visually inspected for signs of illness which could include cough, flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing without recent physical activity, fatigue, or extreme fussiness. If there are signs of illness, the child will not be allowed to attend for the day. He/She can return to school after 24 hours without symptoms. In order to protect the health of all children in my care, I will notify you to pick up your child within one hour if he or she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- A fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Vomiting
- More than one undiagnosed episode of diarrhea
- An undiagnosed skin rash
- Consistent complaints of ear or stomach pain
- Bleeding other than minor cuts and scrapes

If you cannot pick up your child within the hour, you are responsible for contacting an alternate pickup person for your child who can be here within an hour. Although it may seem inconvenient when your child is sent home, you will appreciate knowing your child's exposure is minimized when other children become ill. In the event that your child is sent home due to one of the above conditions, he or she will not be allowed to return until accompanied by a signed note from your child's doctor, or 24 hours after all above symptoms have disappeared.

I must be informed of all contagious conditions your child encounters as soon as the illness has been diagnosed. I have the right to refuse care of a sick child if I feel the other children in my care would be jeopardized. Should a health problem persist, I reserve the right to request that the child be seen by a physician prior to returning to preschool.

The following is a list of contagious conditions that children may encounter along with the appropriate length of time required before your child can return to my home:

- Conjunctivitis, infectious (Pink Eye): 1 day with treatment
- Strep Throat or Scarlet Fever: 1 day with treatment
- Lice: 2 days with repeat treatment
- Impetigo: 1 day with treatment
- Ringworm: 1 day with treatment
- Influenza: 1 day of normal temperature without the use of fever reducer
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV): 1 week from confirmation and treatment
- Pertussis (whooping cough): 1 week from confirmation and treatment
- Chicken Pox (varicella): 6 days or until all sores have scabbed over
- COVID-19: Fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications. It is strongly recommended that children wear a mask for a period of five days upon returning to school.

As a parent, you know when it is more appropriate for your child to be comforted at home, rather than sending them to school. Please understand that the goal of my sick policy is to protect the health of all children in my care, including yours.

Parents are required to keep their children's immunizations up-to-date and to furnish a completed Early Childhood Health Assessment Record annually.

Please note that the State of Connecticut requires at a minimum one dose of influenza vaccine for school entry, each year between August 1st and December 31st, for all children aged 24 months – 4 years 59 months.

Withdrawal/Termination of Child

I require a two week written notice prior to your child's last day of care. I reserve the right to terminate services for the following reasons, but is not limited to:

- Non-payment or excessive late payments.
- Not observing the rules outlined in the handbook.
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of children or my family by parent or child.
- Continuous late pick-up of child.
- For any additional reason I feel will negatively impact the Quality of Care and Education for which I provide.

This handbook may be revised often, with revisions being accepted by your signature.