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PARENT HANDBOOK

Introduction

Our Mission is to provide high quality, safe and nurturing childcare for preschool and school aged children with a focus on developing a child's social, physical, and emotional health and wellbeing. Liberty Kids does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status.

General Manager: Jessie-Claire Henderson

Program Director: Hermilene Piverger

Liberty Kids Preschool and School-age program is a non-profit organization licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). EEC is located at 1250 Hancock Street, Suite 120-S Quincy, MA. For a complete compliance history parents/guardians may contact EEC by phone at [\(617\) 988-6600](tel:6179886600).

Program Calendar

We are open from 7:30am to 5:30pm - Monday through to Friday.

For the 2024 calendar year, Liberty Kids childcare will be closed on the following days (Please note these days are already taken into your account calculation for your weekly tuition):

- New Year's Day Monday January 01, 2024
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Monday January 15, 2024
- Washington's Birthday Monday February 19, 2024
- Patriots' Day Monday April 15, 2024
- Memorial Day Monday May 27, 2024
- Juneteenth National Independence Day Wednesday June 19, 2024
- Independence Day Thursday July 04, 2024
- Labor Day Monday September 02, 2024
- Columbus Day Monday October 14, 2024
- Veterans' Day Monday November 11, 2024



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- Thanksgiving Day Thursday November 28, 2024
- Day After Thanksgiving Day Friday November 29, 2024
- Christmas Day Wednesday December 25, 2024
- Day After Christmas Day Thursday December 26, 2024

Admissions and Tuition

The admissions process begins with a visit to Liberty Kids and a meeting with the director. Prior to enrollment parents/guardians and children are able to visit the program, upon request, and observe the activities the program provides. To complete the enrollment process all paperwork must be filled out and submitted to the director. All children must have an annual physical, updated immunizations and a lead screening test on file which will all be valid for one year and will need to be updated annually. A \$50 non-refundable registration fee and a 2 week tuition deposit, per child, will be needed to reserve a space in the program. The two weeks deposit will be held in escrow until the parent gives notice to unenroll the child permanently. If the child is removed from the program with immediate effect the 2 weeks in advance payment will not be refunded.

Tuition payments are due prior to the week of service. Parents/guardians are required to pay full tuition regardless of absences, days off or closures due to snow days or legal holidays. If planning on withdrawing from the program, parents must notify the center with a written four week notice and the date of the child's last day of attendance.

By signing this handbook you are releasing your rights to photo's we may take of your child to be used for My Liberty Kids. We share photo's of our children on social media and within the center to parents. You will need to let us know if there is a reason your child cannot have their photo on our social page or website.

Preschool (2.9 - 5 years)

Tuition cost is based off an annual fee which includes holidays and then this is separated into easy to manage weekly direct debit payments for your convenience.

Full Day 7:30am-5:30pm

2 Days | Tuesday & Thursday | \$150 Weekly | \$650 Monthly

3 Days | Monday, Wednesday & Friday | \$220 Weekly | \$953.33 Monthly

5 Days | Monday to Friday | \$340 Weekly | \$1473.33 Monthly

Part Day 9am-3pm



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2 Days | Tuesday & Thursday | \$130 Weekly | \$563.33 Monthly

3 Days | Monday, Wednesday & Friday | \$190 Weekly | \$823.33 Monthly

5 Days | Monday to Friday | \$310 Weekly | \$1343.33 Monthly

Toddler (15months - 2.9 years)

Tuition cost is based off an annual fee which includes holidays and then this is separated into easy to manage weekly direct debit payments for your convenience.

Full Day 7:30am-5:30pm

2 Days | Tuesday & Thursday | \$195 Weekly | \$845.00 Monthly

3 Days | Monday, Wednesday & Friday | \$299 Weekly | \$1295.66 Monthly

5 Days | Monday to Friday | \$440 Weekly | \$1906.66 Monthly

Transportation

Children will be transported to and from the program by a parent/guardian or an authorized person (at least 18 years old). Upon arrival the child must be accompanied into the building by an adult. Once greeted by a staff member the child will be signed into the program. When a child is to depart from the program they must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or authorized person. The staff member must acknowledge the departure of the child and the child will be signed out of the program. If someone other than the parent/guardian or authorized person are to pick up a child from the program, the parent/ guardian must notify the director, in writing, prior to the departure of the child.

Late Pick-Up Policy

A late pick-up fee of \$20 will be charged for each instance of pick up for any time 5 mins after the agreed pick up time. After 5 mins there will be a \$1 per minute charge. All late fees will be added to the parent's tuition bill. If a parent has not arrived to pick up their child and cannot be reached by phone within 10 minutes of the agreed pick up time, we will call the emergency contact(s) listed on their enrollment forms. If this occurs on multiple occasions Child Services may be contacted and potential unenrollment.

Child Guidance Policy



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At Liberty Kids our goal is to help children be successful as they grow and learn to manage their behaviors. As we recognize the different stages in a child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth, and how it relates to the attainment of skills and self-control, our teachers set realistic and positive expectations for our children. These expectations are implemented using individualized and developmentally appropriate strategies, such as:

- Providing direct instruction throughout the day
- Providing children with the space to take a "calming break" away from peers
- providing alternative choices and activities geared toward their interests
- teaching problem-solving techniques
- giving children opportunities to verbalize feelings and expectations
- providing self-calming activities
- redirecting children from inappropriate behaviors
- giving children the opportunities and the tools to communicate appropriately

We believe positive Guidance focuses on the positive aspects of children's actions and interactions with one another. We do not condone the use of punishment of any kind. We at Liberty Kids operate under the following policies:

- No child will be subjected to cruel, severe, or physical punishment or verbal abuse.
- No child will be shamed, frightened or humiliated.
- No child will be denied food, toileting, or rest privileges.
- No harsh or profane language or implied threats will be used.
- No child will be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Child Records

Information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential. Information in a child's record will not be released or distributed to anyone outside of the program without the written consent of the child's parent/guardian. The parent/guardian will be notified if a child's record is subpoenaed. Parents/guardians may access their child's record, to read or add information, by contacting the program director.

Parents/guardians may request copies of their child's record for their own use by contacting the program director. Anytime information from a child's record has been viewed or copied, by anyone outside of the program, it will be recorded on an access log that is only available to the parents/guardians and the person responsible for maintaining the record.



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Parent Communication and Progress reports

Keeping open and consistent communication with parents/guardians is a priority at Liberty Kids childcare. Liberty childcare uses multiple ways of communication with parent/guardian, such as, the parent app, email notifications, daily notes for preschoolers, verbal communication, social media sites, suggestion box, etc. Parents are welcome to visit the program unannounced at any time while their child is present.

Progress reports for preschoolers will be based from daily observations, done by a child's teacher, and will be completed and distributed every 6 months for preschool children and every year for school age children. Following the distribution of progress reports there will be opportunity for parents to schedule a parent-teacher conference to discuss their child's progress report. If there are any questions or concerns about a child's progress, parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher or the program director to request a meeting and discuss the concerns. A signed copy of the progress report will be added to the child's record.

Referrals

Whenever direct care staff are concerned about a child's emotional, social, cognitive or physical development or behavior and feels that further evaluation should be done, they are responsible for reporting concerns about any child to the Director. The Director will assess the information given to them, review the staff member's documentation, and review the child's record to determine what action needs to be taken and what agencies will be involved.

The Director will notify the parents/guardians of the concerns and schedule a meeting. A current list of resources in the community for children in need of social, mental health, educational or medical service will be provided as well as contact information for the early childhood coordinator of the child's home school district. The Director will also provide the parents/guardians with a written statement for recommending a referral for additional services, observations made by the child's educators related to the referral, and any other documented reports in the child's file. The Director will encourage parents/guardians to call or request in writing, an evaluation. If parents need extra support, Liberty Kids may contact the referral agency for them, with written consent from the parents/guardians. If the parents/guardians choose not to follow through with service plans or referral services provided during the meeting, Liberty Kids reserves the right to terminate the child from the program. All documentation of concerns, action taken and progress is filed in the child's file.

Termination and Suspension

Liberty Kids' goal is to maintain a safe environment for everyone at the program. Prior to sending a child home, Liberty Kids makes every effort to find alternative solutions for highly disruptive or potentially harmful behavior. Before a termination, as a result of challenging behaviors, can be executed, the director and the child's teacher will meet with parents/guardians to discuss options other than suspension or termination and offer referrals for evaluation. During the meeting, the director will also offer options for supportive services as well as develop a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program. Termination will only be the last option after every alternative course of action has been taken. A child may be terminated from Liberty Kids under the following circumstances:

- The health and safety of the child, while attending the program, cannot be assured.
- The child's developmental needs are not being met at the program.
- The health and safety of the other children and/or staff are in jeopardy due to the behavioral patterns of the child or parent/guardian.
- Lack of payment
- Lack of cooperation and/or respect from child or parent/guardian.
- No follow-up from parent/child following referral policy after 30 days.
- Consistent late pick-ups.

A child's enrollment may also be terminated with no refund provided if the parent's behaviour is deemed inappropriate, unsafe, harassing, rude to staff, parents or other children. We also reserve the right to allow a child to attend while not allowing a parent on the property due to the above reasons.

Health and safety policy

Medications

All medication will only be given to a child after the parent/guardian and the physician have given written consent via a Medication Consent Form. The form must be completed with all the appropriate information before any medication will be given to a child. Staff will not administer the first dose of any medication, except under extraordinary circumstances and only with parental permission.



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Prescription medication must be stored in their original container and labeled with the child's full name, address, the name of the drug, the name of the physician, the name and number of the pharmacy, and the directions for administration and storage. The prescription label may be accepted as the written consent of the physician.

Nonprescription medication must also be stored in their original container and will only be given to a child with written consent from the child's physician, which includes the name of the medication(s), the dosage and criteria for its administration. This written consent will be valid for one year,

Medication will be administered by trained staff. After every administration of medication, the staff member will record the child's full name, the date and time, the dosage, and their own full name via a Medication Administration form that will be added into the child's file.

Topical medications and sprays that are applied to wounds, rashes, or broken skin, will follow the written procedure for non-prescription medication which includes the written consent of the physician and the Medication Consent form signed by the parent, which will be valid for one year. Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, and bug spray, etc. to be used on non-open wounds will be administered to the child with written parental permission. All topical medications, ointments, and sprays must be in their original containers.

All medications must be given directly to a staff member by a parent/guardian and will be stored in a secure location, out of the reach of children, under appropriate conditions for sanitation and preservation. Emergency medication will be immediately available for use as needed. The first dosage of any medication must be administered by the parent/guardian at home in case of an allergic reaction. All unused medication will be returned to the parent/guardian.

Allergies

Parents/guardians must inform the center of a child's allergies during the enrollment process. An Individual Health Care plan, signed by a physician, will be created, and placed into the child's file. A current epi pen, with the prescription label, must be provided to the center. All allergies and other specific health needs will be posted in each classroom for each staff member to review, daily, upon arrival.

Abuse and Neglect

All staff members are considered mandated reporters under Massachusetts General Law C119, Section 51A. This means that if a staff member has a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child he/she must file a report with DCF and EEC. The procedures for filing a report are as follows:



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1. The staff member will first inform the supervisor of their suspicions and they will discuss the information and findings.
2. The staff member will then document any observations including the child's name, date, time, child's injuries, child's behavior, and any other pertinent information.
3. The supervisor or the staff member will make a verbal report to DCF, to be followed by a required 51 A written report.

It is *Liberty Kid's* commitment to protect all children in our care from abuse and neglect. The following are procedures for reporting suspected child abuse/neglect while in the care of our staff members.

1. Any report of suspected abuse or neglect of a child will be immediately reported to DCF and EEC.
2. Parents/ Guardians will be notified of allegations of abuse and neglect involving their child while in the care of the program.
3. A meeting will be held with the staff member in question to inform him/her of the filed report.
4. The staff member in question will be immediately suspended from the program with pay pending the outcome of the DCF and EEC investigations.
5. If the allegations of abuse and neglect are unsubstantiated, it will be the decision of the Program Director whether the staff member will be reinstated.

Child Abuse: Causing injury, death, emotional harm or risk of serious harm to a child. There are many forms of child maltreatment, including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation, and emotional abuse.

Child Neglect: Failure to provide needed food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision to the degree that the child's health, safety, and well-being are threatened with harm.

Sick policy

If a child becomes ill, the parent/guardian will be contacted so that your child can be picked up as soon as possible. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the persons listed as emergency contacts will be contacted next. While the child waits to be picked up, he or she will have a safe space to rest quietly, on a mat, away from other children.

Children who are mildly ill may remain at the center if they are not contagious and they can participate in the daily program, including outside time.



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To maintain the healthiest environment for all children, parents should refrain from bringing children to the center who exhibit symptoms of infectious diseases, such as gastro-intestinal, respiratory, and skin or direct contact infections. When a communicable disease has been introduced into the Center, parents will be notified by the Program Director. A child may be excluded from the center if it is determined that any of the following exist:

- A contagious or communicable disease
- A temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Heavy nasal discharge that is yellow or greenish in color
- A persistent cough
- Mouth sores
- Draining eyes, ears, nose or any open sore
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Lack of proper immunizations
- Inability to participate in play both indoors and outdoors
- Staff cannot provide sufficient care for the illness
- Strep throat
- Tuberculosis
- Unknown questionable rashes and impetigo, measles, chicken pox, etc.

Highly infectious conditions will require a physician's written approval before returning. Liberty Kids reserves the right to require a physician's written approval to return due to any illness.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a serious accident, injury, or symptoms of illness that require professional attention an ambulance will be called immediately by one staff member while another staff member stays with the child to provide immediate and appropriate first-aid. A staff member will accompany your child to the hospital in the ambulance. The parent/ guardian will be called as soon as possible to meet the child and staff member at the hospital. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the persons listed as emergency contacts will be contacted next. A first aid kit and emergency information, including contacts and telephone numbers, will be taken on all field trips.



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Emergency Contingency plan

Fire, natural disaster, or conditions requiring the evacuation of the building

Evacuation drills are held monthly during the school year and are sounded by an administrator. In case of emergency children will follow the appropriate evacuation plan, posted at every exit, to leave the building. The following information is marked on evacuation plans:

- Emergency exits
- Primary and secondary evacuation routes
- Locations of fire extinguishers
- Fire alarm pull stations' location
- Assembly points

All available staff will help the children to exit the building and walk to the designated safe location in the neighborhood. Educators are responsible for taking the designated emergency bag for their classroom which contains, first aid supplies, emergency medications and each child's emergency contact information. When everyone has safely arrived the designated safe location educators will take attendance of all the children, then an administrator will compare attendance lists to ensure all children have been safely evacuated. Administrators will use cellphones to contact the parents/guardians or the emergency contacts listed to come and pick up their children at the emergency location. If possible, a notice will be placed on the door of the center informing parents of the emergency location. Staff members will remain in appropriate ratios with the children until all children have been picked up.

Severe weather conditions

In the event of a thunderstorm, tornado, hurricane, etc. all children will be evacuated to a safe place within the building. The space should be away from large glass areas or large open spaces. The staff will check the attendance to make sure all children are accounted for and remain in the safe space until conditions improve. Parent/guardians will be contacted as soon as it is safe to do so.

Power outage, heat loss or water loss

An emergency includes conditions that prevent the compliance of health and safety regulations necessary for the appropriate care of children or that may impact the wellbeing of children and staff. These conditions include loss of utilities, and any other circumstances that compromise the safety and security of your child. In the event of the loss of utilities at the center administrators will contact the appropriate department to determine the cause. If the recovery time is more than 2 hours administrators will notify



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parents/guardians to pick up their child. If the situation does not require evacuation, children will be kept at the center, in a safe location.

Missing child

If a child is lost on a field trip or in the building, the missing child will be reported to the Director and the Director will oversee the search. Attendance records will be checked, and parents will be contacted to make sure that the child has not been picked up by parents or other special arrangements have not been made. Staff will write up a report that will include, but not be limited to, the child's name, age, last place the child was seen, and what the child was wearing. Emergency personnel will be contacted. During field trips staff members are equipped with cell phones so they can communicate in emergency situations. If a loudspeaker is available, the lost child will be called for and asked to report to a designated area. A search will be conducted of all areas and the search will continue until all children are accounted for.

[] I have read and understand the contents of the parent handbook.

Signature

Parent name

Child Name

____/____/20____

Date