

LEICESTER EARLY LEARNING CENTER
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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Leicester Early Learning Center!

We wish to extend a warm welcome to you and to your child. We look forward to a cooperative adventure in fostering your child's growth and development in these important years.

We value your opinion and request that you take an active part in your child's program.

Please use this handbook as a reference, it should clarify any questions that you may have. Our director is always available to discuss any concerns or further questions you may have.

Sincerely,

The Leicester Early Learning Center Staff

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Statement Of Purpose

The Leicester Early Learning Center exists to provide child care for all children ages two months to eight years of both genders in the Greater Leicester Area. Our ultimate goal is to offer these children a safe, healthy, environment where they feel secure, comfortable and happy.

The program is child-centered with an emphasis on the socio-emotional development. This is a structured program where through instructional technique and well planned curriculum the child will foster in their development of social skills, self-esteem, language, creative and cognitive thinking.

Leicester Early Learning Center shall not discriminate in providing service to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, martial status, disability, national origin, sexual orientation or potty training status.

We are licensed by **Department of Early Education and Care** with a specific license designed for the care and development of Pre-school-aged children. If you ever have questions and/or concerns about the quality of your child's care and you feel the center has not addressed these adequately you can contact our licensing agency (413) 788-8401.

- * The teachers are screened to see that they do not have a criminal record.
- * Teachers are certified in CPR and First Aid.
- * We follow a strict Health Care Policy, to ensure the health and safety of your child.
- * Fire drills are done the first week of every other month.
- * Teachers attend at least one educational seminar, a month, to keep up with current changes in Early Childhood Education.
- * The teachers are lawfully and morally obligated to report anything unusual with your child or anytime they suspect your child is being abused or neglected.

CHILD INTAKE PROCEDURE

When a parent calls to inquire about one of our programs, they are given information over the phone. They are then encouraged to set up an appointment with the director.

During this meeting parents are given a copy of all the center's policies and procedures to keep. The director goes over each and every one of the policies giving the parent opportunity to ask questions.

The parent is then encouraged to observe in the program and if possible they are introduced to the teacher(s). They then receive the Enrollment Forms and are asked if they have any further questions.

On the child's first day of school, we encourage the parent(s) to stay as long as it may take for that child to adjust to their new environment.

Transitions and Separation Policy

Successful transitions have enormous benefits for children, including enhancing self-confidence, allowing them emotional security, helping with their ability to bond with care givers and to trust other adults and children.

Transitioning into the center

At orientation you will receive a pamphlet titled "So Many Good-byes". This is filled with ideas to help with transitioning your child to our center.

All of our teachers realize the importance of the child bonding with the care giver and will make sure to give your child the comfort, security and time they need for a healthy transition. However, at times some children need more. If you or your child's teacher notice that your child is having difficulty with separation then the director will be notified. The director will discuss with parents and teachers' ideas and techniques to try here and at home to help the child.

Transitions to a new program within the center

When parents and/or a teacher feel that a child is developmentally ready to move to another classroom, a discussion with the parent, director, and teacher will take place. All must agree that they feel the child is ready. We allow for these children time to meet the new teacher by having her visit the child's current classroom. The child will also have time to visit in the new program for a couple hours a day. We will slowly transition the child into the next program over a week or two and then assess the child's adjustment. Children can always stay in the program they are in regardless of age if they are not emotionally, socially or cognitively ready. Readiness will be determined in collaboration with the parent, teacher, and director. When a child moves into the next program their portfolio and evaluations will move with them so that the new teacher can continue with the child's next educational goals.

Transitions out of our center into new setting

Parents are encouraged to sign a release of the child's file so that the new setting has information about the child's educational goals etc. We will allow the child time to say good bye and we will encourage them in a positive way about their "New School". We will assist parents and children anyway we can to help the child's transiting into their new setting.

**Leicester Early Learning Center
Fee Schedule**

TUITION- For year round program

Full-time students receive a week free tuition for vacation

School-Aged Children and Children who have started Kindergarten

School Year

Tuition is \$18.00 dollars per day for after school only

Tuition is \$24.00 dollars per day before and after school

Tuition is \$ 8.00 dollars per day before school only

Tuition is \$5.00 per hour for early release and delay days

Full day school closings (summer and school vacation weeks, snow days etc.)

Tuition is \$190.00 dollars a week.

\$40.00 per day

\$45.00 per day for 9-11 hours

Full Day/ Pre-school (children ages 2 yrs.9mths. to when they begin kindergarten)

\$190.00 per week 6-9 hours per day

\$210.00 per week for 9-11 hours per day

\$ 42.00 per day for 6-9 hours

\$47.00 per day for 9-11 hours

\$ 32.00 part-day (*up to 5 1/2 hours a day*)

Toddlers – (15 months until transition to preschool, no sooner than 2 years 9 months)

\$235.00 per week for 6-9 hours per day

\$255.00 per week for 9-11 hours per day

\$50.00 per day for 6-9 hours

\$55.00 per day for 9-11 hours

Infants – (2 months to 15 months)

\$250.00 per week for 6-9 hours

\$270.00 per week for 9-11 hours

\$55.00 per day for 6-9 hours

\$60.00 per day for 9-11 hours

*Leicester Early Learning Center
759a Main Street
Leicester, MA 01524
(508) 892-3168*

Payment Policy

All children are on a weekly set schedule. Payments are expected in full each week, regardless, if your child attends or not; no discounts for illness, holiday closure, snow or unavoidable emergency closures. No discounts for more than one child!

All Payments are expected in full, for the upcoming week on Friday prior to services

If payment is received more than 7 days late, a \$25 late fee will be applied.

If payment is more than 21 days late, your child will be terminated for non payment without notice. You will be billed for services rendered with accrued late fees.

All checks returned for insufficient funds will be a \$25.00 addition fee. If your check is returned you must pay for the check in cash including the \$25.00 service fee with in two days of us receiving the check back.

Checks should be dropped into the Check Box located on the wall inside the office. Cash can be given to your child's teacher but a receipt must be taken by you. Without one, we have no record of receiving this and nothing will be applied to your account.

No discounts for vacation weeks unless

- 1. The child is full time or in the after school program, year round and is paying full time tuition on non school days.**
- 2. Have no outstanding balance due.**
- 3. Notify us at least three weeks prior**
- 4. The week vacation must be taken during the summer months**

NO EXCEPTIONS !!!!

If the above applies, and the child does not attend for the week, you will receive one week, tuition free.

A two week notice must be given prior to your child's withdrawal from the program or if there is a decrease in services. If a two week notice is not given you will be required to pay.

HOURS OF OPERATION

We are open year round from 7:00 a. m. to 5:30 p. m. **Subject to change**

Arrival time for the morning is **no earlier** than 7:00 a. m.

Dismissal time is **no later** than 5:30 p. m.

We will be closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Memorial Day
Fourth Of July	Labor Day
Thanksgiving	Day After Thanksgiving
Christmas	

Snow and Inclement Weather Policy

We will be closed if the State of Massachusetts, for this area, declares a "State of Emergency" or if 10 or more inches of snow is due to fall during that work day. If and when bad weather is a factor, the center will try to email you in advance or you can call the center and a voice message will be there for you. If you are not planning to bring your child when we are open, as always, please call the center to let us know.

Late Policy

If a parent is later than 5:30 p.m. in picking up a child and the parent does not contact the center the following procedures will be followed:

Note that, the length of the tardiness has an impact on the procedures.

The teacher would try to get in touch with the parent(s) either at work or at home.

If the parent(s) cannot be reached, the teacher would refer to the emergency card, or child's file. She would then try to get in touch with the people listed on the card to have them come and get the child.

If none of these people can be reached after several attempts, and the parent does not call, then the teacher would get in touch with local agencies, such as, Police Department, Emergency Rooms, etc.. to locate parent(s).

If by 7:00 p. m. the teacher has still not contacted parent(s) or someone on the emergency list, the Department of Social Services will be called to pick up the child.

*******If a parent shows up to get their child after 5:30 p.m., regardless of which steps the teacher is involved, an additional \$1 per minute late fee, will be immediately expected as compensation for care, during your tardiness.*******

PHILOSOPHY

It is the philosophy of the Spencer Child Care Centers, Inc that the environment is safe, healthy, and emotionally secure, which invites learning and affirms individuality and a child's self worth.

We believe that the children are our main purpose for being here, and should set the tone for activities which are prepared by the staff.

We believe that each child learns at his/her own pace, and that they should be taught that this is appropriate and unique to them. We believe that children should not be pushed to increase their cognitive development at expense of emotional security.

We believe that health and safety are our primary responsibilities, that when those conditions are provided we may teach social skills and emotional health, and that only when this is accomplished should we be concerned with cognitive skills.

We believe that children should have a non-competitive environment here, and that their accomplishments should not be compared to those of other children. Each child is unique and is to be valued for his/her unique characteristics.

We believe all children should be provided with instructions and activities that are fun, interesting, challenging, and rewarding.

We believe that the work of the child is play, and that children learn best through play activities.

We believe that if children cannot learn the way we teach, then it is our responsibility to teach the way they learn.

We believe that children should be encouraged to display their full range of emotions. That there are times when excitement, silliness, joy, fear, and anger are appropriate, and that is all right to cry. Also, that there are appropriate ways to deal with emotions.

We believe that sexism is inappropriate, that by limiting activities according to gender, we limit both boys and girls in the fulfillment of their potentials.

Finally, we believe that children have a right to be here, that we are to treat them just as if their parents were present, and that we bear a great responsibility to children in care and their families.

THE PROGRAM

A. Developmental Approach

Programmatically, the Center is structured to allow children time and opportunity to grow cognitively, socially, creatively, physically, and emotionally. The child has a choice of many varied activities, group and individual, designed to allow his/her own pace and to experience education as a successful, ego-developing endeavor.

We emphasize three important aspects of our program:

Emotional Security- Our goal is for children to develop a positive self image, so that they feel secure and comfortable with their own abilities. Also, that children enjoy school, learning, and experiencing new things.

Social Skills- Our goal is for children develop self-help, following direction, listening, vocalization and problem solving skills. We would also like them to feel comfortable and enjoy being in a group, sharing, and working with others.

Academic Exposure- Through hands-on, fun, and interesting activities, we would like for children to develop writing, reading, math, science and social studies concepts.

B. Curriculum Plans-

“The Creative Curriculum for Preschool and Infant- Toddlers” and “The Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Standards and Guidelines for Pre-school” guide our curriculum planning and evaluation.

The program is planned weekly by the teachers of the program. The teachers take into account any special needs of the classroom as well as individual needs and the individual goals of the children. We use our assessment and documentation to help guide and determine these goals and areas where children need to be learning and growing. Weekly lesson plans are posted in each room.

C. Evaluation and Progress

Assessments and screenings will be performed by lead teachers that have been trained in the use of the “Teaching Strategies”, “Creative Curriculum for Preschool” or “Infants, Toddlers and Two’s Developmental Continuum Assessment” programs.

Growth and development is measured in a multi-facet way. We meet with parents one month after the child begins the program to discuss mutual goals for the child for the future. Children are assessed with in the classroom setting daily through using observations, checklists, rating scales and work sampling. We document and observe children on going and adjust curriculum plans for optimal individual growth. Teachers and parents will set up conferences to establish mutual goals based on their child and their development.

Formal evaluations are completed on each child, every three months. Should we feel that your child has a special need, an educational plan will be set up by you and your child's teacher. If necessary, referrals for testing or additional services will be discussed with you so that together we can make the best decisions to meet your child’s needs.

Parents are always encouraged to discuss their child’s progress on a daily basis and to schedule meeting when they see a need.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00-7:30

Arrival, breakfast, and quiet activities

7:30-8:30

Activity choices- quiet learning centers

8:30-9:00

Music and Movement

9:00-9:20

1st circletime (calendar, weather, weekly story and thematic activities)

9:20-9:45

Morning group snack

9:45-11:00

Learning centers with planned activities around theme including math, science, art, social studies etc.

11:00-12:00

Outside or inside grossmotor activities

12:00-12:30

Lunchtime

12:30-1:00

Story, bathrooming, brushing teeth, group games

1:00- 2:30

Naptime

2:30-3:00

Wake-up, bathroom, and story

3:00-3:20

2nd circletime (pre-reading and writing skills)

3:20-4:00

Learning centers with snack choice

4:00-5:00

Outside time or inside grossmotor activities

5:00-5:30

Group games and parent pick-up

*This schedule is subject to change.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Discipline means more than making a child behave for the time being. It is the process by which a child develops a conscience and learns to make his/her own decisions about actions.

Similarly, discipline means more than controlling children. The goal of discipline is to assist and guide children in the development of self-control.

Child management is to be consistent and based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of the child. All discipline is to be directed toward the goal of maximizing the growth and development of the child and toward protecting the group and the individuals within it.

Staff is to endeavor to provide a positive approach to child guidance by:

Loving the children regardless of their actions.

Teaching them what they need to learn.

Protecting them when they need protection.

Guiding them to make positive decisions, when they seem at a loss to do so alone.

Helping them when they need help.

Freeing them when they need freedom.

No child shall be subjected to abuse or neglect, cruel, unusual, severe, or corporal punishment including:

Any type of physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body.

Punishments which subject a child to verbal abuse, ridicule, or humiliation.

Denial of food, rest, or bathroom facilities

Punishment for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Punishments related to eating or not eating food.

Staff is to use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, anticipation and elimination of potential problems, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison or criticism. Consistent, clear rules will be explained to children and understood by adults.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

As parents, you have been responsible for the early teachings of your child and will always be the most important teachers in your child's life. Here are a few ways in which you can help your child here, and then later on in the public schools.

At your convenience, visit the program and observe.

Give input to the development of the program and its policy.

Attend and request parent conferences.

Read and answer all notes attained in the newsletter and in the "cubbies" promptly.

Keep up with what is happening in the program.

Read bulletins that are posted on various boards throughout the center.

Talk with staff members about ideas and suggestions.

PARENT GRIEVANCES

We are dedicated to always improving our program. If you ever have a concern with any aspect of the center; curriculum, behavioral methods, safety issues, teachers, administration etc. we need to know in order to address it and fix it.

There are several way that parents can discuss grievances;

*You may always call the director or a classroom teacher during the day between 9-4:30. If they cannot speak to you then, they will schedule a time to meet that is convenient for you.

*The assistant director is here at 7:15 everyday and the Director is here at closing at least 2 days a week.

*The payment box also serves as a suggestion box for you to drop off a suggestion, comment or concern.

All Grievance are confidential, appreciated and respected. You will be provided an explanation of how things were handled and how things can be changed to ensure the problem does not arise again. This will be done with a phone call or in writing to you with in three days.

--PARENTAL RIGHTS

As a parent, you have the right to:

- Visit and view the programs and our center prior to your child's admittance and **any** other time you choose.
- Have a meeting with the director prior to admittance. At which time you will receive all of our center's written policies and be given time to ask questions about them.
- Give input in the development of the center's policies and programs. We shall provide an explanation in writing to you with in two days, when suggestions made by you are not adapted.
- Receive a written report of your child's progress at least once every 6 months; Infants and children with special needs at least once every 3 months.
- Have staff bring special problems or significant developments to your attention as soon as they arise.
- Have staff available for individual conferences at your request.
- Have your child's records be confidential. We shall not release information contained in your child's file to anyone without written request from you. Your child's file will be allowed to be viewed by the Office For Children and/or anyone at our center who is directly involved in implementing your child's program only.
- *Due to the licensing process, upon request of an authorized Office for Children employee who is involved in the regulatory process, the director can and shall make your child's records and other materials listed required by the regulations available to them.
- *Authorized employees of the Office for Children shall not remove identifying case materials from the center premises and shall maintain the confidentiality of individual records.
- To be notified if records are subpoenaed.
- Have free access to your child's records immediately upon request.
- Have your child's records transferred in whole or in parts to you or another party. However, in order for the transferral of originals or copies, you must give a written request. Also, the party they are being released to must sign a log maintained by the center. **Note: We need to keep all of the originals while your child is in our care. Copies will be given at no cost to you.**
- Add to any of the information contained in your child's records.
- Have an individual conference with the director if you feel information contained in your child's file should be amended or deleted. Then, within one week have a written response from the director as to whether or not the information can be deleted or amended and the reasoning for that decision.

EXPECTATIONS

Parents can expect from the Leicester Early Learning Center:

To be welcomed each and everyday.

To be respected as a member of the center's community.

To have all staff treat their child in a positive manner.

To have well planned activities for their children each day, which emphasizes their individual differences.

To be confident that their child's concerns are the primary ones of the staff.

To be assured of leaving their child in a safe environment.

An immediate verbal report of any concerns the staff may have about their child.

To give allowances for the child to grow and learn at their own pace.

Teachers will expect parents:

To share information about their children to help staff know them better.

To have completed all required forms and update them as needed.

To be willing to participate in the program in whatever manner is best for the particular family.

To inform staff of any suspected illness or signs which indicate a difference in child's routine (sleepless night, fever, change in bowel movement,).

To keep a complete set of clothing at the center and to remember to replace items which are used.

To pick up child before closing time.

To respect staff as important people in their child's life.

To keep lines of communication open between home and school, developing a sense of community support.



GOOD FOOD HABITS AND IDEAS FOR NUTRITIONAL LUNCHES

Good nutrition is necessary for healthy development in all-small children. The key is for children to learn how to eat a broad, well-balanced diet. Here are a few suggestions.

- (1) Set a good example – If you are seen enjoying a variety of foods, your child will learn to enjoy them. Don't expect your child to do otherwise if you snack on junk food or skip meals.
- (2) Vary textures – Serve soft, creamy, crunchy, chewy, mashed, and crisp foods. Use a variety of colors also to catch the child's interest.
- (3) Provide a relaxing atmosphere – children are slow eaters allow plenty of time for meals. Do not encourage or urge children to eat when they are tired, excited, or continuously hungry.

The staff provides all the suggestions mentioned above on a daily basis to your child through morning and afternoon snacks. It is up to you the parent to provide a well-balanced meal for your Childs lunch. Working together we can be sure your child will develop good eating habits.



NUTRITIOUS LUNCHES

Children need a well-balanced lunch such as, a cold meat sandwich, a piece of fruit, and some type of snack. This helps the children maintain a level of energy and alertness. What isn't a "nutritional lunch" may surprise you. Did you know Lunchable packs, Ravioli, and Beefaroni (have no nutritional value)? I have listed the calorie, fat calorie, and sodium levels in each one of these products. They are all high in calories but the sodium level is what bothered me the most. When sodium is compared to salt in a saltshaker, eating a lunchable is like eating a 1/2 shaker full of salt it is very unhealthy. Please try to refrain from sending these types of lunches with your child. Many of you send these types of lunches on a daily and this needs to stop.

	LUNCHABLES	RAVIOLI	BEEFARONI
Calories	430	230	260
Fat Calories	160	60	80
Sodium	1410mg. 59%	1140mg. 48%	1020mg. 43%

FOR YOUR CHILDREN-AND FOR YOU, TOO!

Since all kids-and adults, too- eat snacks, serve the best! A well-balanced lunch must contain snacks as well. Sending in a 1/2 of a sandwich in a bag is not enough.

BREAKFAST

Fresh fruits
Muffins
Bagels
Un-sweetened cereal
Pancake/waffles
Granola/nutri-grain bars
Oatmeal

LUNCHES

Cold meat sandwiches (ham, turkey, tuna)
Sliced pepperoni and Cheese
Salads (garden, chef)
Yogurt

HEAT-UPS * must be prepared and placed in a Microwave able container. *

Leftovers from the night before
Hotdogs (Turkey or All Beef)
Macaroni and cheese
Soups

SNACKS

Fresh Fruit/vegetables with dips (peanut butter, cream/cottage cheese, or dressings)
Dried fruits
Jell-O
Pudding
Crackers
Applesauce
Yogurt
Nutri-Grain / Granola bars

**** Popcorn is not an appropriate snack for children under three ****

HEALTH CARE POLICY FOR PARENTS:

Emergency numbers are posted near each telephone.

Our nearest health care facility is Saint Vincent Hospital

Our emergency procedure, depending on the situation, is to either call an ambulance and then the child's parent or to contact the parent and ask to come and get their child. If parent cannot be reached, we will call the emergency numbers provided by you.

Emergency contact is responsible for picking up the child. In the event that emergency contact cannot be notified in an emergency situation, your child will be transported to the hospital by ambulance.

No smoking shall be permitted.

If a child is injured at the center, you will receive an accident report, in writing, stating the cause of accident, who witnessed it, what happened and if any first aid was applied.

Mildly ill children will rest on mats in the office until parent arrives.

Children exhibiting symptoms for infectious diseases, will not be allowed to return to the center until 48 hr.. have passed or with a doctor's note.

If communicable diseases are present in one of the children at the center, a note will be sent home to all parents within 24 hrs. outlining the disease.

No children will be allowed to enter the center if they display any symptoms of an infectious or communicable diseases.

In order for medication to be given, you need a written parental authorization or written order of a physician. Prescriptions that are current can be accepted as a written order of a physician. The dose and how to administer must be included. Medication must be in original prescription bottle.

All children need to have updated immunizations and physical examinations prior to enrollment.

Emergency phone number's and medical release forms must be submitted by the parents and include where they can be reached while the child is here. They will be kept here and must be updated by the parent as necessary.

Our Health Care Policy is posted in each room and a non-condensed version is available upon your request.

SICKNESS POLICY

When dropping off your child in the morning, please consider the other children. You would not appreciate your child being exposed to someone else's illness, so under the same consideration, please do not bring your child in if you suspect your child may be ill.

Also, we are very aware of any physical or emotional changes in your child. It is very important that you keep us aware of the changes prior to dropping them off.

You will not be allowed to leave your child with us if they display the following symptoms upon arrival. Also, if we notice any of these symptoms throughout the day, we will **call** you and **expect** you to pick up your child within **ONE HOUR**.

The following symptoms are:

Inflamed or swollen eyes

Chills

Fever above 99.0

Severe headache

Persistent or croupy cough

Diarrhea (twice)

Red or swollen glands

Listlessness

Earache with fussiness

Nausca

Sore throat without doctor's note

Unexplained skin rash

Or any symptoms of an infectious communicable disease.

Children will be excluded from returning to the center for at least 24 hours;

If they were sent home with Active Diarrhea or Vomiting or if the child is not well enough to participate in the daily routine.

All children who have a communicable disease may not return without a doctor's note.

If your child is mildly ill, a quiet area for them to rest will be provided. Also, books and other quiet playing materials will be given to the child. You will be informed that your child is not feeling well.

If a child is going to be absent, due to a sickness or other reasons, please call the center to inform them that your child will not be in and specify why.

TO AVOID ILLNESS, WE WILL STRICTLY ENFORCE THE PROCEDURES MENTIONED IN THIS POLICY.

Medication Policy

We will administer medication to your child under the following Office For Child Care Services guidelines. There are no exceptions to these rules.

Prescription Medications

We must have a medical consent form signed by the parent.

The medication must be in the regular prescription bottle with the prescription still attached. It must include directions for administration, a current date and the child's name.

Non-Prescriptions -Non Topical

These are over the counter medications that the child takes orally -by mouth. These include Tylenol, Benedryl, cough syrup, cough drops etc.

We must have a doctors note.

This means that in order for teachers to give your child Motrin, you must have a doctor's note for Motrin (not Tylenol).

These notes are good for one year and **must be specific**. They must include the directions for administration as well.

If you would like for us to administer cough medicine, aspirin etc. you must bring in a doctors note and a bottle of the medication that has been verified by your child's doctor so we will have it at the Center in the occasion that your child needs it. We will label it with your child's name and store it until needed. Before administrating the medication to the child we will try contacting the parent a work for verbal consent.

Non-Prescription Medications-Topical Medications

These are over the counter medications that are applied to the skin. These include sun screen, insect repellent, petroleum jelly, ointments etc.

(We DO Not need a letter from the doctor for these types of medications)

We will apply these products with parental consent. The parent must purchase the product to be left or brought here when needed. We will label it and store it as needed.

SOCIAL SERVICE REFERRAL PLAN AND COLLABORATION

The procedures for referring parents to appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services for their child are as follows;

In the event that a staff member identifies a need in which a child might be remediable through intervention, said staff member shall inform the director. She will then conduct an observation and assessment of the child, review the child's file, and contact the parent to schedule a meeting.

During the meeting, parents will be given copies of our assessment and an explanation of our concerns. They will also receive a program plan which outlines our efforts to better meet the needs of the child here.

If the director and/or parents feels it is necessary, the parent can contact our Community Family and Community Engagement coordinator. She can assist them with receiving outside testing. This person can discuss with the parent which outside additional services can be accessed and how to go through the referral process. The parent will also receive a list of all agencies that can help.

Collaboration

Whenever a child displays a need, we collaborate with many agencies to help the child, the family and the teacher. We have access to behavioral specialists and special need consultants that can help the teacher in the classroom work with specific children. If a child referral is made, the center will assist the parents any way possible. We encourage Early Intervention to come to the center to service children under 3 and we collaborate with the schools to offer a link between them and us. We will attend IEP meetings and even hire a special needs advocate to assist the parent with determining the best placements for the child.

Once the child is being serviced, we will do what ever is necessary to better meet the needs of the child here.

If it is determined that the child is not in need of services from this agency, or is ineligible to receive services, the center will review the child's progress once every three months to determine if another referral is necessary.

All observations, evaluations, assessments and social service referrals, including parent conference results will be maintained at the center by the director.

Termination And Suspension

A child may be terminated or suspended from the center under the following circumstances:

- a. Continual or repeated instances of serious disruption
- b. Physical abuse of other children or staff;
- c. Damage to center equipment;
- d. Physical, emotional, psychological situations or a developmental need in which the center is not equipped to handle;
- e. Continual, repeated, or serious instances of parental non-cooperation;
- f. Non-payment
- g. Difficult situations which arise as a result of parents fighting;
- h. Other situations which impair the health, safety, emotional well-being or education of others in the center.
- i. The health and safety of the child cannot be assured, or when the child poses a risk to their own safety

All incidents will be documented by the classroom teacher and put into the child's file. Incidents of a serious (or potentially serious) nature will be documented on an incident report, placed in the child's file, given to the parent and discussed with the parent. Repeat offenses or a very serious incident may result in the parent being called and required to remove the child from the center for the day and/or a day **suspension**. Repeated offenses will finally result in termination of the child from care, with written reasons to be given to the parent (s).

Above-named offenses which occur in the walkers line will be viewed in a stricter light, given the potential for serious injury. Children who misbehave while walking to or from school, will receive only one warning prior to suspension for a day, a third infraction in one years time will result in loss of morning care for the remainder of the school year.

In the event that a child is terminated, effort will be made by the agency to refer the family to appropriate social service agencies.

Any child who is terminated will be terminated consistent with the child's ability to understand.

Reporting Child Abuse:

We at the center document every mark that we see on a child in their file. No-one has access to your child's file without your written permission or unless there is a court order.

As your parental right, you may have access to your child's file at any time if requested by you to the director. If center staff feel that documentation and/or the child's immediate safety warrants a report to DSS, the director will also notify the parent that we plan to file or have already filed and why.

The Department of Social Services is the agency that if a child is suspected of being abused or neglected we report to:

Telephone # is 1-800-949-0113 - Ask for a case worker.

Any teacher or teacher aid is considered a mandated reporter.

All mandated reporters must file a report if they have reasonable cause to believe that:

- a. a child is suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him/her, including sexual abuse.
- b. a child is suffering from neglect, including malnutrition
- c. a child is physically dependent upon an addictive drug at birth.

"Reasonable cause" means that after all the facts in a particular situation, most people with similar training and experience would also suspect abuse.

If a mandated reporter fails to report known or suspected instances of child abuse, they may be punished by a fine of up to \$1,000. Failure to report may also result in civil liability if a child is harmed after the reporter gains knowledge of abuse fails to report.

In knowing these facts at our center certain procedures should be followed:

-In the event that a staff member suspects that a child has been abused or neglected that staff member will make an immediate report to the director. They will then document the findings and decide upon further action, which may result in a report to DSS parents may also be contacted.

-When a report is necessary, a call to DSS will be made. Within 48 hours of the telephone call a written report will be sent.

-If DSS cannot be reached after business hours etc., call the Child At Risk Hotline at 1-800-792-5200. If you feel a child is in immediate danger call the local police.

In the event that there is suspicion of child abuse or neglect on the part of a staff member while at work, said staff member shall not be permitted to work with children until the conclusion of an investigation which results in a finding that the allegations are unproven, or for such further time as the Office for Child Care Services requires. This center will cooperate fully with an investigation conducted by an authorized agency.

Lines of Authority

The Board of Directors incorporated with the Spencer Childcare Center Inc. holds overall responsibility for the operation of the center. Day to day responsibility for the operation of the Leicester Early Learning Center will be as follows:

Patricia Shevory (Director) and Jessica Garneau (Assistant Director) with the help of Viola Mulhern, shall be responsible for business management and record keeping; agency representation in all forms, including parent contacts; staff hiring, firing, supervision, development and training; personnel matters; staff files; social service referral; and policy follow through and changes.

All other responsibilities will be shared by Patricia Shevory and Jessica Garneau and the teacher in charge of each program, including but not limited to, program and curriculum planning which will also include children with disabilities when needed; parent involvement; field trips; child files; and daily program functioning.

In the absence of the directors, Debbie Malvey will assume responsibility for the above listed duties. In the absence of all, Julie Yaskoski will assume administrative duties.

Lead teachers are directly responsible for the teacher assistants within their classroom.

Things Parents Need to Bring:

Clothing

A complete change of clothing should always be available for your child. All clothing should be marked with your child's name. Extra clothing should include: underpants, a pair of socks, shirt and pants appropriate to the season. If soiled during the day, we will send clothing home. Please remember to replace it the next day.

Lunches and our NO Nuts! Policy

You will need to provide a nutritious lunch daily. We strongly suggest that you limit the amount of empty calorie foods, such as cookies, cupcakes, and/or candy. We provide two snacks and beverages throughout day. One snack in the morning and one later in the afternoon.

Please send such things as yogurt, crackers and cheese, crackers, fresh fruit and vegetables, cheese cubes, hard boiled eggs, sandwiches, soup, leftovers from supper. To ensure a balanced nutrition, a lunch should include two fruits and/or vegetables, a bread product, and a protein (meat, cheese).

Yes- we will heat things up- so your child does not need to eat a cold lunch every day.

We would appreciate it if your child does not bring in anything containing nuts. We know that children can have severe allergic reactions to nuts and we do not want to be the first one to expose children to nuts.

Field Trips

Field trips will be scheduled whenever possible. We do ask for parent volunteers. A note with a permission slip will be sent home in the newsletter and will need to be signed and returned in order for your child to attend. A small fee may be required for these trips.

Parties and Treats

Your child's birthday will be celebrated at school. If you would like to bring in a small treat on that day, please do so. Also, please remind us about your child's upcoming birthday so that we will be able to include something special for your child that day.

Naptime

Please bring in a small security type blanket, labeled with your child's name. It is your obligation to bring the blanket home once a week, for proper cleaning, and returned on the following school day.

Cubbies

Your child's cubby will be located in the side entrance hallway. **Please**, check your child's cubby. Your child worked very hard and put a lot of effort in their work, and its good motivation for the child to bring home their work.