



Parent Handbook

MISSION STATEMENT

Here at Little Learners we are dedicated to fostering education through creative enrichment opportunities for children of all ages and stages of development. Our hands-on curriculum is designed to stimulate young minds and encourage each child to discover and grow. We believe that encouragement and nurture are the basis for a safe and caring environment where your child will feel confident to explore, learn, and create!

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Little Learners was founded under the principle that education for preschool children is both imperative and necessary; however, that it should be exciting and encourage young ones to learn through hands on activities to keep learning fun. Our goal is to build a love of learning early on which will continue along with your child as they become elementary age students.

Here at Little Learners we realize the importance of learning through a hands-on interactive curriculum that provides learning experiences for all of the universal stages of children's development. We provide new opportunities for children to gain mastery as they move to new levels of ability.

The preschool admits all children regardless of gender, race, color, nationality, or religious preference.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday thru Friday
7:00 AM to 6:30 PM

HOLIDAYS

We observe the following holidays:

Martin Luther King's Day
President's Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
July 4th
Labor Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day (Thursday and Friday)
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
New Year's Eve
New Year's Day

If the holiday falls on Saturday - Facility will be closed Friday.

If the holiday falls on Sunday - Facility will be closed Monday.

OUR PROGRAMS

One's

During the toddler years, children are developing their language skills greatly. They are great observers and steadily build their vocabularies by absorbing the language around them. Here at Little Learners we encourage this exploration of language through songs, nursery rhymes, and books. We also encourage creativity through sensory exploration of art materials such as clay and paint.

Two's

During this stage of development children are highly curious and love to explore independently. Here at Little Learners two's learn through imaginative play as well as structured teacher lead activities. It is at this age that the foundation for reading and writing begin by reading books and allowing them to discover print through stories and alphabet activities. We enjoy playing with finger puppets, shaking rhythm instruments, creating art projects related to letter recognition and putting their motor skills to use. We also integrate a great amount of music into our daily curriculum through song and dance.

Three's

At this stage of development your child learns primarily through exploration using all of the five senses. They develop their logical reasoning skills as they play. They are able to sort, identify, and classify objects as well as many new academic abilities. At this age, it is important for your child to socialize with other children and form friendships with others. Little Learners provides great opportunities for social growth and independence. Structured educational programs introduce them to basic concepts in language arts, math, science and social studies. We have specifically designed learning centers for individual and group projects that encourage children to make discoveries about themselves, others, and the world we all share and live in.

Four's and Five's

Little Learners is well aware of the skills pre-kindergarteners must master before entering elementary school. While at school your four year old will be learning their letters, shapes, colors and numbers through creative hands on experiences developed specifically with them in mind. They will also be learning fine motor skills such as cutting, pasting, tracing, and writing in order to well prepare them for kindergarten. Creativity is encouraged and learning experiences are presented as a healthy mixture of fun and challenge at our learning centers.

Voluntary Pre-kindergarten

Our state funded VPK program is a three hour block of concentrated instruction with smaller class size and lower ratios. Inquire at the office about eligibility requirement and times offered.

Learning Centers

- Creation Station: Arts and Crafts
- Construction Corner: Wooden Blocks, Soft Brick Blocks, Table Blocks, Legos
- Writing: Magnet letters, chalk board table, magna doodles, alphabet games
- Table Toys: Puzzles, Games, Stacking Cups, Linking Toys, lacing beads
- The Book Nook: Books, Puppets, Felt Board
- Discovery & Exploration: Science, Nature, Health
- Imaginative Play: Housekeeping, Dramatic Play, Role Playing

Parental Involvement

Here at Little Learners we encourage parents to become active participants in school activities. When parents participate, children become enthusiastic and motivated feeling that they, as well as their school, are special. We encourage you to extend classroom lessons, such as the letter of the week, at home with your children. Learning is constantly taking place and parents should try to make educational connections to lessons taking place at school.

Time is the most important investment you can make. It is important to maintain open channels of communication with your child's teacher. Teachers are readily available for scheduled parent-teacher conferences in order to discuss specific needs of the child, academic progress or to simply assist with or answer any questions concerning your child. You may call or stop by at anytime of the day to check in on your child with the office staff or come in to discuss any concerns. *Covid Policy for anyone entering the building will apply.

Television Practices

We believe the role of television in the preschool environment is for educational purposes only. Therefore, educational television programs or videos may be used in the classroom for a period of 30 minutes in conjunction with the curriculum and/or holiday themes.

Meals

Breakfast may be brought and eaten at school; however, it will only be served until 8:30 a.m. A nutritional variety of snacks including, but not limited to, juice, fruits, cheese & crackers, puddings and raisins is provided by the school and served at mid-morning and mid-afternoon. You have the option to bring your child his/her own snacks.

Children may bring their lunch from home or buy a lunch from the school catering program. If you choose to bring your child's lunch from home, please keep the lunch box and thermos bottles labeled at all times. We ask that all hot food items are sent to school in a thermos.

There will be no heating up of food in a microwave. Prepare a meal which is nutritious and to the liking of your child. State of Florida H.R.S. holds the center responsible for overseeing that lunches served meet set quality standards. Please advise us if your child is **restricted** or **allergic** to any foods or drinks.

In the instance that your child does not bring lunch Little Learners will provide your child with school lunch and \$5 will be added to your account. If your child drops their lunch no fee will be added and a lunch will be provided to your child in the effort for the child not to go hungry. You agree to not hold Little Learners, Inc or any of its affiliates liable should your child have an adverse reaction to the meal.

Diapers, Wipes, and Diaper Rash Cream

It is each parent's responsibility to make sure your child has enough diapers, wipes, and diaper rash cream stored at school. Take into consideration that each child has an average of three to four diaper changes throughout the day and plan accordingly. As a convenience the teachers for the one and two year olds send home reminders of items needed. **Please note: only Pull Ups with tabs will be accepted at school for Toddlers who are potty training. Please do not bring Pampers Easy Ups for your child as they do not have tabs and require the teachers to fully undress the child, take off their shoes and redress the child.**

Drop Off / Pick-Up Policy

All children must be signed in and out by a responsible adult of 18years old or older who is listed on the registration papers. Proper I.D. is required. Our facility will not release a child to any adult who is believed to be intoxicated or impaired. It is every employee's responsibility to report all suspected child abuse to the proper authorities.

Uniform Policy

At Little Learners all students must adhere to wearing the proper uniform while at school. Uniform shirts can be purchased through the front office. Please place an order when registering your child. Uniform shirts are paid for in cash.

Acceptable Uniform Includes:

- Light blue polo with Little Learners Logo
- Navy Blue Bottoms
 - Pants
 - Shorts
 - Skirt
 - Dress

VPK Wrap Around Policy and Tuition Payments

VPK wrap around is the fee paid for extended hours after the VPK program. VPK follows the Broward County school board calendar however if your child is enrolled in the VPK Wrap Around Program they will attend school according to the Little Learners School calendar (check above for Holidays).

During non-VPK weeks (Thanksgiving Week, Winter break and Spring Break) there is a tuition change due to no VPK funding. The amount will change from the discounted vpk price to the current full tuition cost for the week regardless of any holidays etc. because these days are not funded by the government.

Vacation Policy

There will be NO credit applied for vacation, illness or school scheduled holidays.

Birthday Celebration Policy

You are welcome to have a fun celebration at Little Learners in honor of your child's birthday. We will work with you to make the day special for everyone.

- Please check with your child's teacher at least one (1) week in advance if you want to have a birthday celebration at school.
- Parties will be a half-hour and either at our morning snack (9:30 a.m.) or afternoon snack (2:30 p.m.).
- We will have birthday celebrations for your child inside. We do not want to draw any unwanted critters to our outdoor area.

You are welcome to bring in the following:

- one cupcake per child
- a birthday cake for the entire class
- another snack such as fruit or cut up vegetables along with juice for the entire class.

Birthday treats must be store-bought and packaged. Families must provide necessary cutlery/plastic ware, plates, cups, napkins, drinks, etc.

Little Learners encourages nutritious snacks and limits the children's intake of sweets. Please consider this when planning your child's in-school party.

Other items to remember:

- Please find out from your child's teacher if there are any food allergies in the class.
- Please limit your guests to immediate family only.
- School parties **DO NOT** require invitations and they will not be given out.
- Please **DO NOT** send in dressed up characters to school as they frighten many of the children.
- Please clean up any party supplies before you leave the school.

Health & Safety

Every child registered at Little Learners is required to have a copy of his/her State of Florida HRS Student Health Examination Form and Immunization Record on file. It is the parents' responsibility to keep it updated. We do accept religious exemption forms for vaccinations.

Please keep your child home if:

- Running a fever - 100°F or above
- Has any discharge from the nose, eyes or ears.
- Has diarrhea/vomiting.
- Has symptoms of possible communicable disease
- Generally not feeling like him/herself

Parents are required to inform the school of all illnesses or injuries the child may have sustained prior to arriving at the center. If your child has a communicable disease, please notify us at once. A doctor's note clearing the child from being contagious is required in order to accept him/her back to school.

While at school, if the child becomes ill with one of the following:

- fever 100°F or above
 - 2 diarrheas within the day
 - rash
 - vomiting
 - suspected pink eye
 - lice
 - discharge from the nose, eyes, or ears — or any other sign or symptom of illness
- he/she will be isolated and the parents contacted to make arrangements to pick up the child immediately (within 1 hour).

Children MUST be symptom free for 36 hrs. before returning to school.

A Doctor's Note WILL NOT override this policy.

Medications may be administered at the school for the length of time indicated by the physician. Bottles must be labeled with the child's name and dosage and are to be kept in a locked cabinet in the office.

Medications are not to be sent in the child's lunch box or backpack. The medication permission form must be fully completed and signed in the office prior to the medication being dispensed. There will be NO exceptions.

Our medication policy is as follows:

- Medications will be given one time during the day
- Medications such as antibiotics that must be administered twice a day must be given by parents outside of school hours.
- Prescription medicines must be in original containers with child's name and dosage on the label
- Non-prescription AND prescription medicines must be accompanied by signed parent authorization form found in the office. It is the parent's responsibility to call at the time the medicine is to be administered.

Vehicle Safety Tips

Getting in: Check Behind the Car

- Before getting in the car and starting the engine, walk around the car and check for kids, toys, and pets!
- Make sure there is nothing under or behind your car that could attract a young child.
- Pick up toys, bags, chalk, or any type of equipment behind the driveway so that these items do not entice any child to play.

Getting out: Check the backseat

- In just 10 minutes, a cars temperature can increase by 19 degrees
- Before getting out of your car, check the backseat...don't forget your child!
- Never leave your child alone in a car and call 911 if you see any child locked in a car!
- Place something in the backseat that you will need at work, school, or home (your laptop, your lunch).

Guidance Policy Agreement

At Little Learners we agree effective guidance should be an essential element of education at home as well as school. Self-discipline and character develop as a result of loving guidance and mutual respect. At times it becomes necessary to redirect a child in order to discourage behavior which is deemed destructive or unacceptable. We adhere to the regulations outlined in the State of Florida H.R.S. Child Day Care Standards Booklet which states:

- Discipline is not to be severe, humiliating or frightening.
- Discipline shall not be associated with food or toileting.
- Spanking or any form of physical punishment is prohibited.

Parents are expected to provide effective guidance to their child when unbecoming behavior persists. Children should be taught by parents to behave in a proper, socially acceptable manner. Good behavior is rewarded by immediate commendation or granting of special privileges. Unacceptable behavior is only handled by redirecting the child to an alternate activity. Whenever we encounter persistently poor behavior, a parent-teacher conference is scheduled in order to unite insights and provide the best possible resolution. For reoccurring aggressive behavior towards other children or staff members, the following actions **MAY** be necessary:

- Incident will be documented on an incident report form and signed by the parent
- Child will need to be picked up from school immediately.
- Child will be suspended from school the following day.
- In extreme cases, the child will be suspended from school for 1 week. (Parent is still responsible for tuition payment; however, a vacation week may be used if available.)

For the safety and welfare of all children, Little Learners reserves the right to suspend and/or remove a child from the facility. Therefore, if all strategies fail to cease the aggressive behavior, termination of enrollment may occur.

Toy Policy

Please do not send toys with your child to school. Little Learners is not responsible for the loss or damage of toys brought in from home.

School Guidelines and Policies

Here at Little Learners we love our families and appreciate all Parental participation and involvement. We do however have some guidelines as to appropriate parental interaction with students, teachers, and staff. Parents are permitted to drop off and pick up in the classroom, but are not allowed to linger and stay in the classroom for long periods of time as it becomes a distraction for both teachers and students. You may ask the teacher questions or concerns regarding your child but keeping the conversation to a minimum. If you should need to address a lengthy concern you may set up an appointment through the office staff.

Parents are not permitted to scold or yell at another child. If you have any concerns regarding the behavior of another child it needs to be communicated with the front office in order to address the issue at hand.

Parents are responsible to pay attention to notices regarding school events, dates the school is closed etc. Courtesy notices will be email/texted/ and posted on the door but you are responsible to keep up with your Parents Handbook or ask the front office if you have any questions or concerns regarding any upcoming events. If you have never received an email or text it is your responsibility to address that with the front office.

Current health records are required by licensing for continued attendance. Please make sure to always turn into the front office any current physical and immunization records the day your child goes to the doctor. At time of enrollment some children in care may not have current immunizations due to Religious Exemption from immunizations.

As the parent/guardian of my child and by enrolling my child as a student at Little Learners I am consenting child care personnel to have access to my child's records.

Meals/snacks are served to children present at scheduled meal times. If your child misses the scheduled snack/meal please plan accordingly before dropping your child off.

You are responsible to sign your child in/out of school on a daily basis using your fingerprint or password.

Little Learners Preschool reserves the right to discontinue enrollment for reasons of delinquency of payment, non-cooperate behavior, or the inability of a child or parent to adjust to the schools policies and/or programs, as determined by the director.

Physical Activity Policy

Students will engage in physical activity each and every day at school in the form of running, jumping, exercising, dancing, playing with balls, hula hoops, sliding, skipping, etc. both in the classroom and on the playground. Examples of indoor physical activity include parachute games, musical chairs, games, etc. Students will engage in a total of 90 minutes of physical activity per day.

Severe Weather Policy

Little Learners follows Broward County Schools emergency procedures.

If there is a public announcement that all Broward County Schools will be closed due to severe weather (hurricane, tropical storm) Little Learners Preschool will also be closed. Tuition is not prorated or based in the occurrence of any unexpected or unpreventable emergencies therefore the tuition for the week remains the same. If the school is closed due to severe weather on a Friday the tuition will be due the following business day.

Covid Policies and Procedures

- Parent Drop off/Pick up at the door. (Appropriate face coverings must be worn when approaching the door)
- Child's Temperature is taken in the reception. (will not be permitted to stay with a fever of 100.4 or more)
- Hands are sanitized.
- Anyone entering the school must answer health screening questions and agree to temperature check followed by sanitizing hands. Adults must wear a mask/face covering and can not present any cold/flu like symptoms.

Disciplinary/Expulsion Policy

Our program is committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment conducive for learning and growth for all our children. We strive to ensure all our children are set up for success regardless of their need or developmental level.

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reason we must expel a child from our program on either a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with the family of the children in order to prevent this policy from being enforced.

Every effort will be made to prevent the expulsion or dismissal of children from the program. However, Little Learners reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons, not limited to but including:

- Non-payment or excessive late payment of fees/tuition.
- Failure to adhere to policies and procedures as outlined in the program's Parent Handbook.
- The Child has needs which we cannot adequately meet with our current staffing patterns.
- The child's behavior threatens the health and safety of him/herself, the other children, or program staff.
- The parent/guardian exhibits behavior which is detrimental to the health and well-being of the children and staff in a classroom or negatively interferes with the normal functioning of the classroom and/or program. This includes but is not limited to vulgarity, intimidation, harassment, or violation of the child care licensing regulations.
- Failure of the child to adjust after reasonable amount of time.
- Bullying or hurting other children (pushing, kicking, punching, cursing, etc)
- Other - at the discretion of the Director

Proactive Actions that will be taken to Prevent Expulsion

- Staff will try to redirect the child from negative behavior
- Staff will teach the child appropriate skills to address challenging behaviors
- Staff will reassess the environment, activities, and supervision
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children
- Staff will celebrate appropriate behaviors
- Staff will maintain a positive connection with the child
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules
- Child and parent will be notified of disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion
- Director and parent will have a conference to discuss how to promote positive behavior