

*"Meeting children where they are, while nurturing,
encouraging and allowing them to grow"*



Child-initiated and teacher-supported learning.

Parent Handbook

Welcome to Little Saplings Preschool



The following handbook was created to give families information about our program.

If you have any questions/concerns, please be sure to address them with the Director.

We're are looking forward to working with your family!

Philosophy

At Little Saplings Preschool we promise to make your child's learning, safety and happiness our number one priority. Our goal is to create an environment where children feel safe to explore, create and discover all the opportunities around them. Emphasis will be placed on developing each child's independence and self-esteem as well as acknowledging those around them. This pure and impressionable age is a window in which to teach children to be empathetic and show kindness towards others.

Little Saplings Preschool is a Play Based/ Nature inspired program where children engage and learn through the joy of playing!

Our program is both child-initiated and teacher-supported in learning. Little Saplings will borrow the jewels and treasures from these respected approaches; inspirations from Reggio, the Montessori model and the Waldorf influence.

Our teachers and staff know the importance of what typical development and learning at different ages and stages is a crucial for young children while focusing on what is individually and culturally important as well. Rest assured that throughout each day we help the children develop skills in language, pre-math and pre-writing, science, physical fitness and social and emotional development.

The Facility

Open Monday – Friday

7:45 am – 5:30pm

Little Saplings Preschool is located at the
John Ryan Youth center at
1653 J street in Eureka.

Little Saplings is a center-based program,
licensed for 24 children, ages 2 ½ - 5 years of
age. The center is licensed through the State
Department of Social Services,
Community Care Licensing.

Facility Number

125407413

Community Care Licensing Division of
Department of Social Services will regularly
visit to ensure we are in compliance with
licensing standards and note any
recommendations. These visits will be posted
near the parent info area for the following 30
days for parent viewing.

Parent and Staff Communication

Parents and guardians are always welcome to stop by and visit without notice or an appointment. Please check in with staff when dropping off or picking up your child each day. Teachers and/or director will try to check in with parents on a consistent basis. We will also communicate in writing in various ways to keep parents up to date on what is happening at the school and with their child. This may be in the form of individualized notes or emails as well as posted. We will post pertinent information and notices on the bulletin boards above the parent sign-in table in the main hallway. Notices and signs may also be posted on front door and in the classroom.

Weekly lesson plans and daily schedule will be posted in the classroom.



Behavior Education and Guidance

The goal at Little Saplings is to help guide the children to learn to solve their own problems and control their own behaviors. We will use the Enlightened Discipline Philosophy which employs the three core concepts of ***Safe, Kind and Clean*** with the use of Logical and Natural Consequences. Children will be guided and taught to use their words, rather than their bodies to express emotions. We use verbal cues and conversation to teach children the best method to correct behavior as well as modeling appropriate behavior. Our teachers work with children to remind them of being ***Safe, Kind and Clean*** throughout their day. When children work and play outside of these core values, our staff will remind them or assist them in correcting their behavior. Expectations will be explained and obtainable.

Staff will work with parents to create a smooth transition between home and school. If a child has an ongoing behavior issue the director will meet with the parents to create a behavior plan.

Our goal is to provide a healthy and safe environment for all children. Not all children are suited for group care. If we determine this is the case for your child, we will ask you to find alternative care.

Children's Rights

Children have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, to be given safe, healthful and comfortable classrooms that meet their needs and to be free from physical punishment, including but not limited to humiliation, intimidation and threats. Corporal punishment will never be used by staff.

Daily Schedule

7:45-8:30 Table and Floor Activities

8:30-9:00 Outdoor Play

9:00-9:30 Circle Time

9:30-9:45 Morning Snack

9:45-10:15 Focus

10:15-10:45 Outdoor

10:45-11:45 Social Play/Art

11:45-12:00 Music and Movement

12:00-12:30 Lunch

12:30-2:30 Nap

2:30-3:00 Outdoor Play

3:00-3:30 Afternoon Snack

3:30-4:15 Explore and
Classroom clean up

4:15-4:45 Outdoor Play

4:45-5:15 Story and Reflection Circle

5:15-5:30 Small World Play/Library



Parents Responsibilities

Signing In & Out of Program

Parents/Guardians are required to sign their child(ren) in and out each day using their full signature. Please ask if you need help locating the sign-in area.

Children's sign-in sheets will be placed in alphabetical order under FIRST name in the sign-in binder. Children will ONLY be release to those on the pick authorization. Please let those who may be picking up your child know that they will be asked to show a photo ID prior to the release of the child.

Emergency Forms

Emergency forms will be filled out at the time of enrollment. Please ensure the information is accurate and those listed as emergency contacts, know that they may be called. Additionally, anytime there is a change to contacts and/or phone numbers it is the parent's obligation to inform the director to make those changes. Please be sure that there is in addition to the parents , at least two authorized adults who can pick up your child if you can not be reached in the case of an emergency.

Late Pick Up

Any time after closing is considered Late Pick Up. Should an emergency arise, parents are to: Call the school and let the staff know that you are on your way or have arranged for someone on the emergency form to pick up your child. Little Saplings will charge a late fee for any child who is not picked up by 5:30. This fee is very high at \$2.00 for every minute (per child). It is due at the time of pick up. We charge this fee to discourage any late pick-ups.

For Part Time

If your child attends mornings, any time after 12:30 will be considered late pick up. The same policy applies, noted above. In all cases; if your child remains at the program with no contact from the parent/guardian, the staff will: Try and contact you at all numbers listed and then begin calling emergency contacts listed.

Parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from the program.

Safety

When you are at Little Saplings, please be aware of safety.

Walk with your child to and from the facility.

Do not allow your child to open or close the centers front door, adults only.

Check in with Director/Teacher when you arrive.

Let staff know if someone else will be picking up your child, ensure they are listed on the pickup authorization.

Ensure door is closed behind you when leaving.

Please do not use your phone while picking up/dropping off your child.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on or around preschool grounds.

Emergency Preparedness

The site and staff are prepared to handle emergencies should they arise. The site has an Emergency Preparedness Binder as well as a posted Emergency Disaster Plan.

Safety Protocol/Lockdown Procedure

Should an incident arise that necessitates a lockdown, staff will secure all exits and call 911. We will remain in a lockdown, until cleared by law enforcement.

Safety

Accidents & Emergency Care

All staff are certified in CPR and First Aid. Should an accident occur, parents will be notified and an accident report will be filled out.

The building is equipped with First Aid supplies. Should the program be on a field trip, staff will bring a First Aid kit with them.

If a child is having medical emergency; staff will do the following;

Call 911

Contact parent/guardian

If parent/guardian cannot be contacted, those on the emergency card will be called

******Minor everyday bumps and scrapes will be taken care of and parents will receive an “ouch report” at pick up.

Mandated Reporting

All staff at Little Saplings Preschool /Eureka Community Services Staff are mandated reporters.

Background Checks; All staff at Little Saplings Preschool /Eureka Community Services Staff have background checks done prior to starting employment.

Meals

Meal time is an important part of our program as it allows for conversation and language development as well as socialization, manners, fine motor and eye-hand coordination skills. Teachers will sit with children at the table in a family style atmosphere engaging and encouraging those developmental skills.

All families are required to pack a lunch and two snacks for their child each day. We trust that as parents you will send snacks and lunches that your child will enjoy and that are balanced and nutritious . Please keep the sugary snacks, treats and juices for home. Please do not send your child with food that needs to be reheated or cooked prior to serving.



Independently Toileting

Children must be independently toileting to be enrolled in Little Saplings Preschool. We do understand that from time to there will be potty accidents, so please be sure your child has clothes to change into in their cubby. A teacher will walk a child through the entire act of changing his or her clothes. Children will be actively involved in changing wet/soiled clothes, wiping their own bodies and cleaning any area where they have had an accident. This is aligned with our philosophy of teaching logical consequences. The teacher will use this as a teaching opportunity, making the child feel successful in attending to their own needs.

Health and Wellness

Immunizations

Children who attend Little Saplings are required to be up to date with their immunizations.

Exemptions

In order for a child to be exempt from immunizations, state law requires, written statement by a licensed physician stating: (CCR section 6051)

- (1) The specific nature of the physical condition or medical circumstance for which the licensed physician does not recommend immunization;
- (2) That the physical condition or medical circumstance is permanent; and
- (3) Each specific required immunization from which the pupil is permanently exempt.

Personal beliefs exemption (filed prior to 2016) in accordance with Health and Safety code section 120335.

Physical Exam

Prior to or within the first 30 days of attending Little Saplings, parents must provide Little Saplings with the child's complete physical exam. The exam must be less than 12 months old. Children must remain up to date on well child exam.

Child Illness

A child must be well to attend Little Saplings Preschool. In addition, we observe a 24-hour wellness policy. A child must be free of symptoms before returning to care. Should your child become ill during the course of the day a staff member will contact you to pick up your child. Be sure to have a back-up plan for alternative pick up. Until parent can arrive, the child will be isolated from the program (in office) to prevent further contact with other children and staff.

Please call and notify the school if your child is ill and communicate what symptoms your child may have.

Staff will do a wellness check each day at drop off to ensure children are well enough to participate.

When to keep your child at home

Lice or nits (need to complete at least one round of treatment before returning)

Temperature of 100 or more (child must be fever free for at least 24 hours prior to return)

Parasitic infection, i.e. pinworms or ringworm

Vomiting or diarrhea

Rash, i.e. scabies, impetigo or MRSA

Not well enough to participate in indoor and/or outdoor play.

Giving Medication at School

We do not administer medication at school. If your child has a prescription for an emergency inhaler or epi-pen; the following would be required;

The parent/guardian will provide the epi-pen or inhaler with the child's name, dosage and pharmacy printed on the inhaler or epi-pen. This will be kept in a safe location, out of reach of children.

In the event of anaphylactic reaction or instance of emergency inhaler needing to be used, Little Saplings staff will do the following;

Dial 911 to notify emergency services

Administer prescription inhaler or epi-pen as prescribed

Notify parent/guardian of incident

Wait for emergency services to arrive and assist the child

Sunscreen

If a parent would like for staff to apply sunscreen provided by the school to their child, they will acknowledge and initial on enrollment agreement. If using sunscreen provided by parent please label with child's name and fill out supplemental permission slip.

Alcohol Free Hand Sanitizer

Children from time to time may be offered Alcohol Free Hand Sanitizer, this will not replace washing hands with soap and running water. There may be times when we can not get to a sink in which case we will have the child use hand sanitizer. Parent will acknowledge and initial on enrollment agreement if they would or would not like their child offered alcohol free hand sanitizer.

What To Bring

Each child should have at least one complete change of clothes in their cubby at all times. Include socks, underwear and shoes as well. Children who are newly independently toileting should have a few extra pairs of underwear and pants for potty accidents that may occur. Teachers will assist children when they need to change clothes and help them put the wet/soiled clothes in a plastic bag which will be in your child's cubby for you to take home and launder.

During wet months be sure your child has rain boots and jacket.

Please remember to send you child in clothes that are appropriate for Playing at preschool! Not only will they get messy and dirty they also need to be able to move and maneuver!

****** If you have an event after school please be prepared to come a little earlier to assist your child with changing clothes.

If your child is staying all day and napping send a small blanket for the week and take home on Friday to launder. Please do not send a pillow or stuffed animals. Remember to bring back a blanket at the start of their week. Little Saplings will supply mat sheets and launder weekly.

Children should *Not* bring: Toys, food, candy, gum, Chapstick, over the counter medications, cough drops, lozenges, or jewelry. If child has pierced ears please make sure that they wear small studs.

Holidays and School Closures

January	New Year's Day
February	President's Day
March	Staff In-Service Day TBA
April	Spring Break (one week TBA)
May	Memorial Day
June	
July	Independence Day
August	Summer Break (one week TBA)
September	Labor Day
October	Staff Inservice Day TBA
November	Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving (Thursday & Friday)
December	Winter Break, Christmas Eve and Day, New Year's Eve

***We reserve the right to modify our holiday schedule from year to year as weekdays are impacted. Little Saplings will give 30 days notice to any holiday changes or closures.*

On Holidays that we do not observe or days before/after holidays we may post a sign up sheet for parents. These days are usually low attended. This gives us an accurate count to allow for enough teachers to staff or to offer days of to our teachers.