

Little Explorers Nature Center Preschool Employee Handbook



The information in this handbook reflects the terms and provisions
in effect as of March 2019

Table of Contents

Welcome	4
 Section 1: The Way We Work	
A Word About This Handbook	6
New Employee Orientation	7
Job Classifications.....	7
Teacher Break	7
Job Descriptions	8
Anniversary Date	8
Provisional Period	8
Personal Hygiene and Dress Code.....	9
Attendance and Punctuality	9
Parking	10
Keys.....	11
Visitors	11
Office Supplies	11
A Word About Our Employee Relations	11
Suggestions and Ideas	12
Talk to Us	12
 Section 2: On the Job	
Curriculum/Lesson Plan	14
Positive Guidance	14
Holidays and Celebrations	15
Parent Communication	15
Greeting Children and Parents	15
Meals and Snacks for Children	16
Safe Arrival/Departure of Children	17
Roll Call	18
Transition From Teacher to Teacher	18
Toilet Learning	19
Health and Safety Standards	19
Daily Health Checks	20
Medical Emergencies/Children	21
Allergy Prevention	22
Food Allergies	22
Nut-safe Policy	22
Medication Policies/Children	22
First Aid	23
 Administration of Personnel Policies.....	 23
Standards of Conduct	23
Outside Employment.....	24
Protecting LE Information	24
Recycling and Waste Prevention	25
Care of Equipment	25
Cell Phones/Personal Telephone Calls	25
Internet Usage	25
Acceptable Use of Electronic Communications.....	26
Client and Public Relations	28

Confidentiality of Client Matters	28
Care of Client Records and Property	28

Section 3: Your Pay and Progress

Recording Your Time	30
Direct Deposit	30
Paycheck Deductions	30
Social Security	31
Garnishment/Child Support	31
Performance Reviews	31
Pay Raises	31
Promotions and Transfers	31
Bonus Plan	31
Employee Referral Bonus	32
Child Care Tuition Discount	32
Workers Compensation	32
Certification, Licensing and Other Requirements	32
The Registry	32
Child Abuse and Neglect	32
Reference Checks	33

Section 4: Time Away From Work and Other Benefits

Employee Benefits.....	35
Medical Insurance	35
Dental Insurance	35
COBRA Insurance	36
Aflac Supplemental Insurance	36
401(K) Qualified Retirement Plan	36
Paid Time Off	37
Holidays	37
Illness Policy	38
Maternity/Paternity Leave	38
Jury Duty	38
Bereavement Leave	38
Access to Personnel Files	39
Changes in Personal Data	39
If You Must Leave Us.....	39
Professional Development	40

Section 5: Safety in the Work Place

Personal Property.....	42
Construction/Maintenance Precautions.....	42
Medical Emergencies/Staff	42
In an Emergency (other than Medical)	42
Emergency Contact Information	43
Emergency Closing	43
Weather Related Policies.....	43
Fire/Tornado Evacuation and Drills	44
Missing Child	45
Good Housekeeping	45
Weapons in Regulated Child Care Settings	45

Workplace Violence	45
Smoking in the Workplace	46
Substance Abuse	46
Equal Employment Opportunity	46
Americans with Disabilities Act.....	47
Non-Harassment	47
Sexual Harassment	48
Driver’s License/Driving Record	49
Immigration Reform and Control Act	49
Receipt of Employee Handbook Signature Page and At-Will Statement	50
<i>Paid Time Off Acknowledgement Page</i>	<i>Separate Page</i>

“

Welcome to Little Explorers Nature Center Preschool!

Starting a new job is exciting, but at times can be overwhelming. This Employee Handbook has been developed to help you become acquainted with Little Explorers Preschool and answer many of your initial questions.

As an employee of LE, the importance of your contribution cannot be overstated. Our goal is to provide the finest quality services to our families and to do so with professionalism and the best quality of care we can give. By satisfying our family’s needs, they will continue to do business with us and will recommend us to others.

You are an important part of this process because your work directly influences LE’s reputation.

We are glad you have joined us, and we hope you will find your work to be both challenging and rewarding.

A Word About This Handbook

This Employee Handbook contains information about the employment policies and practices of LE. We expect each employee to read this Employee Handbook carefully, as it is a valuable reference for understanding your job and LE. The policies outlined in this Employee Handbook should be regarded as management guidelines only, which in a developing business will require changes from time to time. LE retains the right to make decisions involving employment as needed in order to conduct its work in a manner that is beneficial to the employees and LE. This Employee Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior Employee Handbooks and any inconsistent verbal or written policy statements.

Except for the policy of at-will employment, which can only be changed by the owners of LE in a signed written contract, LE reserves the right to revise, delete and add to the provisions of this Employee Handbook at any time without further notice. All such revisions, deletions or additions to the Employee Handbook must be in writing and must be signed by the owners of LE. No oral statements or representations can change the provisions of this Employee Handbook.

The provisions of this Employee Handbook are not intended to create contractual obligations with respect to any matters it covers. Nor is this Employee Handbook intended to create a contract guaranteeing that you will be employed for any specific time period.

LE IS AN AT-WILL EMPLOYER. THIS MEANS THAT REGARDLESS OF ANY PROVISION IN THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, EITHER YOU OR LE MAY TERMINATE THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP AT ANY TIME, FOR ANY REASON, WITH OR WITHOUT CAUSE OR NOTICE. NOTHING IN THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK OR IN ANY DOCUMENT OR STATEMENT, WRITTEN OR ORAL, SHALL LIMIT THE RIGHT TO TERMINATE EMPLOYMENT AT-WILL. NO OFFICER, EMPLOYEE OR REPRESENTATIVE OF LE IS AUTHORIZED TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT—EXPRESS OR IMPLIED—WITH ANY EMPLOYEE FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR A SPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME UNLESS SUCH AN AGREEMENT IS IN A WRITTEN CONTRACT SIGNED BY THE OWNERS OF LE.

This Employee Handbook refers to current benefit plans maintained by LE. Refer to the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions if you have specific questions regarding the benefit plan. Those documents are controlling. Likewise, if a written contract is inconsistent with the Employee Handbook, the written contract is controlling.

New Employee Orientation

Upon joining LE, you were given this copy of our Employee Handbook. After reading this Employee Handbook, please sign the receipt page and return it to Administration. You will be asked to complete personnel, payroll and benefit forms. If you lose your Employee Handbook, or if it becomes damaged in any way, please notify your supervisor as soon as possible to obtain a replacement copy.

Attached as Exhibit A is the Staff Orientation Checklist regarding the Policy/Procedures of LE employees, which should be completed in the first week of hire.

Your Director and Administrator are responsible for the operations of LE. (S)he is a good source of information about LE and your job.

Job Classifications

The following are job classifications at LE. At the top of each job description, it will state which classification an employee falls under.

REGULAR FULL TIME EMPLOYEES: Employees regularly working 35 or more hours each week, for fifty-two (52) weeks per year. Regular full-time employees are usually eligible for the full compensation package.

REGULAR PART-TIME EMPLOYEES: Employees regularly working less than 35 hours each week, for fifty-two (52) weeks per year. Regular part-time employees are usually eligible for most of the compensation package, some of which will be prorated and dependent upon the number of hours worked.

LIMITED FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES: Employees regularly working more than 35 hours each week, for less than twenty-six (26) weeks per year. Limited full-time employees will not be subject to a provisional period and are not eligible for the compensation package, except holiday pay for hours normally worked.

LIMITED PART-TIME EMPLOYEES. Employees regularly working less than 35 hours per week. Limited part-time employees are not eligible for compensation package.

~~~~~

**NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES (HOURLY):** Employees which are entitled to overtime pay as required by applicable federal and state laws.

**EXEMPT EMPLOYEES (SALARIED):** Employees who are not entitled to overtime pay and are not subject to certain deductions from his/her salary, pursuant to applicable federal and state laws.

## **Teacher Break**

A 60-minute, unpaid meal break should be taken each day (unless pre-approved by Owners/Director).

## **Job Descriptions**

LE maintains a job description for each position in LE. The job description outlines the essential duties and responsibilities of the position. When the duties and/or responsibilities of a position change, the job description is revised to reflect those changes. If you have any questions or wish to obtain a copy of your position's job description, please see administration.

### **Anniversary Date**

The first day you report to work will be recorded in LE's records as your anniversary date. This date may be used to calculate many different LE benefits. If you have any questions regarding your anniversary date, please see Human Resources.

### **Provisional Period**

The first sixty (60) days of employment are considered a continuation of the employment selection process, and the new employee is hired on a "trial" basis during this time. The provisional period allows LE the opportunity to observe and evaluate the abilities of the new employee. The observation/evaluation examines the new employee's:

- ability to satisfactorily perform the essential functions of the position;
- work habits;
- professional conduct;
- attendance; and/or
- relationship with coworkers and superiors.

The employee is expected to meet or exceed the initial demands of the position during the provisional period and for the entirety of their employment at LE.

Concluding the provisional period, a new employee will have a "progress evaluation". A progress evaluation provides a foundation for what expectations LE has of an employee's future job performance, position potential and professional development. At that time, the new employee will be presented with any "higher expectations" and a timeframe to accomplish any further expectations, if applicable. The employee will be given a signed copy of the progress evaluation, and it will be placed in the employee's file.

If an employee does not meet all the expectations during the provisional period, LE may terminate employment, with or without cause and with or without notice. This provisional period is not a term of employment and is not intended, nor does it impact, the at-will nature of the relationship between LE and the employee.

Employee benefits will be available after the 60-day provisional period.  
Exception: Employee childcare discount will begin immediately.

Short-term employees will not be subject to a provisional period and are not eligible for any employee compensation package except holiday pay which occurs during employment periods.

In all instances, continued employment with LE is solely at the discretion of LE.

## **Personal Hygiene and Dress Code**

Teachers and Admin personnel are expected to be well groomed and professional in appearance when coming to work. You represent LE with your appearance, as well as your actions.

The following is the personal hygiene policy for all employees:

- Hair. Hair should be clean, combed and neatly arranged.
- 
- Fragrance. Recognizing that employees and visitors to the workplace may have sensitivities or allergies to fragrant products, we ask that you wear these substances with restraint.

The following is the dress code policy:

LE's dress code for teachers and Admin personnel is business casual. Employees should wear clothing that is neat and clean, loose-fitting and not overly revealing (i.e., under garments should not be exposed). For all other staff, the dress code will be outlined specifically on your individual job descriptions.

Unacceptable attire:

- Ripped jeans
- Blue jeans (unless on Friday)
- Sweat pants
- Short skirts or dresses (5" above the knee) (including slits extending past 5")
- Short shorts (must be at least a 5" inseam)
- Leggings (acceptable if your bottom is covered by a long shirt)
- Graphic t-shirts
- sweatshirts
- Crop tops
- Spaghetti strap tank tops
- Cutoffs
- Open back shirts
- V-necks showing any cleavage.
- Sports team apparel (unless designated day)

**Violations.** Employees wearing inappropriate attire may be sent home to change clothes (off the clock and unpaid) and will be expected to return to work. The employee will receive a verbal warning for the first offense. A progressive disciplinary action will be followed if a dress code violation continues in the future.

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

Each employee is an integral part of LE's team. Attendance and punctuality are two important traits needed to achieve a team-oriented environment. Timely and regular attendance is an expectation of all employees to ensure adequate staffing, positive employee morale and to meet

expected work standards in the organization; and each employee will be held accountable for adhering to his/her schedule.

Repeated absence or tardiness may result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include reduction of yearly raise.

In the event an employee is unable to work his/her entire scheduled shift—arrives or leaves early, is tardy or absent or has requested accrued paid time off—the employee must state it in writing (on appropriate form) and have it preapproved.

**Work week/Work Day.** The work week starts on Sunday and ends Saturday of each week. A normal workday for a non-exempt employee is eight (8) hours, with forty (40) hours being a normal work week. An exempt employee generally works the same number of hours, but may be required to work more hours as work dictates. While a non-exempt employee may generally be expected to work the number of hours stated above, LE does not guarantee she/he will actually work that many hours in a given day or week and will only be paid for the hours actually worked; however, a non-exempt employee may use accrued PTO time for any hours not equaling forty (40) hours per week.

**Clocking In/Out.** All employees are to record actual hours worked. Every employee is to clock in/out of ProCare for each shift; however, an employee is not to punch in more than one (1) minutes before his/her scheduled work time. Employees are to take care of any personal needs **Before** clocking in.

**Overtime.** You are expected to work only necessary and approved overtime (i.e. when requested to: come in early or stay late, attend staff meetings or open house, etc.). Non-exempt employees will receive time-and-half pay for time worked exceeding forty (40) hours in any given work week. Exempt employees are not entitled to overtime pay. All overtime payments will be made in the pay period following the period the overtime was worked.

**Tardiness.** An employee is deemed to be tardy when s/he:

- ✓ Fails to report for work at his/her scheduled work time (including clocking in late for work one or more minutes); or
- ✓ Leaves work prior to the end of his/her scheduled work time without preapproval; or
- ✓ Takes an extended meal or break period without preapproval.

**Absence.** An employee is deemed absent when she/he is unavailable for work as scheduled and such time off is not scheduled or preapproved.

If an employee is going to be tardy or absent due to an unforeseen issue, the employee is to call in (not text) one hour before their scheduled start time **but not before 6:00 a.m. and not after 9:00 p.m.** to 608.692.2832. Employees calling during the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. should call the main office line of 608.837.6100. Employees are expected to follow proper notification procedures if she/he will be late for work, will not be at work or is requesting planned time away from work.

## **Mandatory Attendance**

There will be certain times/days of the year that an employee will be expected to be present and time off may not be approved. Those days include the following: staff meetings, professional development day, transitions. However, on mandatory attendance days (times), any time requested off will be dependent on the needs of each classroom, or on the circumstances, and the employee may be granted time off with the Director's approval.

## **Parking**

Staff members are provided parking spaces in the parking lot next to the building, and in the half circle parking lot. All traffic should move to the right at five miles per hour.

Handicapped parking spaces are reserved for those employees who display the universal handicap place card in their vehicle or symbol on their license plates.

LE is not responsible for loss, damage or theft of your vehicle.

## **Keys**

You may receive keys to the facility. The loss of a key should be reported immediately to the Administrator. Keys are the private property of the agency and cannot be loaned to others or copied. No employee is allowed in the building after hours or on the weekend unless given permission by the owners.

## **A Word About Our Employee Relations Philosophy**

We are committed to providing the best possible climate for maximum development and goal achievement for all employees. Our practice is to treat each employee as an individual. We seek to develop a spirit of teamwork; individuals working together to attain a common goal. In order to maintain an atmosphere where these goals can be accomplished, we provide a comfortable and progressive workplace. Most importantly, we have a workplace where communication is open, and problems can be discussed and resolved in a mutually respectful atmosphere. We consider individual circumstances and the individual employee. We firmly believe that with direct communication, we can continue to resolve any difficulties that may arise and develop a mutually beneficial relationship.

A staff member who believes he/she has been treated unfairly may take his/her concerns directly to the Owners. The staff member may submit a written statement of grievance and schedule a conference to discuss the grievance in person. The Owners will review the grievance and attempt a resolution with the staff member. All decisions made by the Owners are considered final.

## **Suggestions and Ideas**

We are always interested in your constructive ideas and suggestions for improving our operations. Your suggestions should be submitted to your supervisor.

After we investigate your suggestion, you will be notified whether it is feasible to be put into practice.

## **Talk to Us**

We encourage you to bring your questions, suggestions and complaints to our attention. We will carefully consider each of these in our continuing effort to improve operations.

If you feel you have a problem, present the situation to your Director so that the problem can be settled by examination and discussion of the facts. We hope that your Director is able to satisfactorily resolve most matters.

If you still have questions after meeting with your Director, or if you would like further clarification on the matter, request a meeting with Darlene.

Your suggestions and comments on any subject are important, and we encourage you to take every opportunity to discuss them with us. Your job will not be adversely affected in any way because you choose to use this procedure.

If at any time you do not feel comfortable speaking with your Director or the next level of management, discuss your concern with any other member of management with whom you feel comfortable.

**On the Job**

**2**

---

## Curriculum/Lesson Plan

Little Explorers offers children unique learning opportunities and utilizes focused teaching strategies to maximize your child's learning potential, create a disposition for learning, and expand your child's understanding of and appreciation for the world around them.

**By creating an exciting and stimulating learning environment, Little Explorers harnesses your child's natural curiosity to learn and explore. With this motivation, along with the structure and guidance from degreed teachers, we provide the opportunities for your child to become an educated, skilled, well mannered, and self-confident child.**

Little Explorers utilizes an integrated curriculum that focuses on three main areas of development:

- Nature Experiences and Education
- Social/Emotional development combined with character traits.
- **Academic and cognitive development using a combination of teacher led instruction and child driven collaborative project work.**

Our goal at Little Explorers is to develop a well-rounded, capable child; one who is a critical thinker, is competent socially, and has an appreciation for the world around him/her.

### Positive Guidance

Little Explorers Preschool believes and promotes basic respect for the individual child. Young children are striving for understanding, independence and self-control. Children learn by exploring, experimenting and testing the limits of their environment and experiencing the consequences of their behavior. In this way they begin to understand how the world works, their own limits, and appropriate assertiveness. Children are helped to learn self-control and how the world works in a relaxed, positive atmosphere of support and understanding that recognizes the child's struggle.

Discipline is viewed by LE faculty as an important aspect of teaching and learning. Through positive guidance of behavior and modeling, teachers should help children to feel good about themselves and to behave in responsible ways. In our approach we do not use time-outs, instead:

- Expectations are limited to what is realistic for the developmental level of the child, and they are clarified for children so that they understand what is expected of them;
- A developmentally appropriate environment is created, which enhances and encourages children's positive behavior;
- Teachers model appropriate behavior;
- Teachers encourage children's efforts to build feelings of self-worth;
- Children are given alternatives, which enable them to turn destructive situations into constructive ones;
- Natural and logical consequences are used to motivate and empower children to make responsible decisions about their behavior;
- Behaviors such as cooperating, helping, negotiating and problem solving are encouraged.

The following methods of discipline are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment, including spanking;

- Shaking children;
- Shaming, humiliation, or verbal abuse;
- Labeling: i.e., indicating a child is a “bad” girl/boy, or otherwise implying that he/she, rather than the behavior, is the problem;
- Using false threats or false choices;
- Withholding of food or unrelated activities as punishments;
- Retaliating or doing to the child what he/she did to someone else;
- Punishment for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

If a member of LE staff suspects physical, verbal, and/or psychological punishment is being used within the program employees should immediately report suspected abuse to Dane County Child Protective services and/or consult a member of administration to assist them in reporting.

If an employee is found guilty of violating this policy suspension or termination will take place depending on the severity of the violation.

This policy will be reviewed with staff every two years or more frequently if necessary.

## **Holidays and Celebrations**

Holidays and celebrations are an opportunity for learning about various traditions and the values of our families. We strive to provide a learning environment that is non-biased and reflective of our community’s ethnic, cultural and economic diversity.

## **Parent Communication**

Parents are welcome into our school at any time. Parents are encouraged to spend time in their child’s class. If a parent would like to volunteer to work in a classroom, he/she must complete a background check and volunteer orientation.

Daily communication with parents is necessary and is handled in a variety of ways. Morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up serve as a good time to exchange general information. Daily notes home help teachers to communicate with parents about their child’s day in class. Monthly newsletters help keep parents informed of their child’s upcoming activities and development.

Concerns and questions requiring more than a few minutes can best be handled when a teacher is available and can give the parent the attention their concerns deserve. This requires good communication skills and shows the parents that you value their concerns and want to give them your undivided attention. You can suggest times during the day when being away from the class are most convenient. The Director will help staff with arranging coverage for the class to free you for conferences if necessary.

## **Procedure for Referral of Children for Special Services**

*Teachers work with families to consistently communicate the needs of the children in our care. When a teacher is concerned about a child’s development or challenging behaviors it is important to follow a standard procedure of operation.*

**1. Begin Written Documentation with Dates and Times.** Document the behaviors including teacher's approach to assisting the child with expected behaviors. Include record of any adaptations made by teachers such as one-on-one supervision, visual supports, timers, changes in expectations etc.

**2. Email, CC administration, and inform the child's family of concerns.** Within a month of attendance, detail specific behaviors, including what is expected versus what the child is exhibiting. Explain clearly and with compassion. Ask parents to describe their child's time at home including their methods for supporting their child and any routines or behaviors their child is struggling with. Include what you are doing as a teaching team to best support the child in reaching goals you have for them as an individual.

**3. Administration will Assist.** Communicate with administration if concerns for the child continue, either staying the same or escalating within several weeks. Administration will observe child behaviors, documenting, and providing support to teaching staff as needed.

**4. Administration will schedule an in-person meeting.** The family and teaching team will establish a plan of action if a behavior or need has not improved. This plan may include a referral to a pediatric visit, special education services, and/or disenrollment to the discretion of the administrative team.

## **Greeting Children and Parents**

Greeting all families with a smile and friendly words of welcome/departure at drop off time or pick up time is absolutely expected. It is always a hard transition for parents and children. We should do anything we can do to alleviate stress and help them feel welcome and cared about. Using names of parents and children is always a great way to let parents know you care enough to know their name and using it in conversation shows professionalism. In return, children's drop offs will be less stressful and more manageable because of the warm friendly atmosphere they will be welcomed into.

## **Meals and Snacks for Children**

Meals and snacks are critical to a child's health and development. They are also an important part of the Center's curriculum. When meals are provided by the Center, they are carefully planned to provide children with the necessary nutritional content. Every effort is made to ensure that mealtimes are enjoyable for children.

Each afternoon the children are provided with a healthy snack. Each teacher should know if any child has special dietary needs or food allergies. All snacks provided by families must be commercially prepared with ingredient label intact.

Children will eat in their assigned classrooms. A copy of the menus will be posted on the kitchen's bulletin board, in each classroom and in the Parent Resource Center.

Requests for special diets not required by a medical condition will be honored if the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian supply the foods necessary to ensure compliance with the diet if the foods differ from those of the Center menu(s).

Meals will include the following food groups:

Breakfast - breads/grains, vegetables/fruits, and milk;  
Lunch - breads/grains, two vegetables/fruits, meat/protein and milk  
Snack - breads/grains, vegetables/fruits, meat/protein and milk.

Portions will be served to comply with Appendix B and/or C of the DHFS 46 Licensing Rules and Regulations.

All food will be served and stored using BPA-free plastic dishes or containers.

The chef will plan the menu one month in advance and will comply with all State regulations regarding nutrition. Each snack and meal will meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture childcare food program minimum meal requirements. Meals and snacks will support diversity.

Fruits and vegetables will be thoroughly washed in order to avoid possible consumption of pesticides.

Children under the age of 2½ will not be offered foods that are considered dangerous or choking hazards such as popcorn, uncut hotdogs, grapes, etc.

Teachers will sit with the children at all snack and mealtimes to encourage conversation. Teachers will encourage children to try new foods but will not force any child to eat. Mealtimes are used as a time to encourage autonomy and will include children in the serving and clean-up process.

Food of any kind may not be forced upon or taken away from a child for use as either a reward or punishment. Food is for the sole purpose of nutrition and health for the child.

All meals and snacks will be planned so that no child will ever go without food for a period of time longer than three hours. We will serve breakfast from 9:00-9:30 a.m. We will serve our lunch between 12:00-12:30 p.m., and our afternoon snacks will be served between 3:00-3:30 p.m. Breakfast and lunch will be served family style, with a teacher sitting at the table with the children. Children will not be rushed or hushed during meals and snacks. There shall always be time for limited socialization during meals and snacks. All food handling, nutrition and kitchen sanitation policies will follow State regulation.

### **Cooking and Drinking Regulations to Avoid Lead Exposure**

To avoid possible lead exposure:

- Old or handmade pottery will not be used.
- Only cold water is used for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula.
- If water source used for cooking and/or drinking goes unused for six hours or more, it must be run for 30 seconds prior to use.

### **Safe Arrival/Departure of Children**

To ensure that each child is always safe and under supervision and to foster daily communication between families and Faculty, The Parent(s)/Legal Guardian must accompany each child to the classroom and ensure the child is accounted for by the teacher before leaving the premises. Children arriving after 9 am should be marked “in-late” on transition sheet.

As a second step, Teachers utilize an additional checks-and-balances system throughout the day by doing roll calls. Families must re-enter the Center when picking up the children and checking out. Families are responsible for their children once they are signed out.

Children will be released only to a parent/ legal guardian or to a person whose name is listed on the Child Release Form. Families should advise the Center office in advance, in writing, if an alternate or a person not listed on the original form is to pick up their child. For the safety of each child, photographic identification will be requested of all authorized persons picking up children. We spend a lot of time building the trust of the children in our care; for that reason, we will not release children to a person they do not know.

Little Explorers cannot legally deny access to the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian unless there is an active restraining order on file or a specific schedule of Court-ordered visitation rights that prohibits us. If the situation is unclear, we request that the family go back to Court to resolve their differences. Little Explorers will act in a way that ensures the safety of all children and Faculty.

Families or other authorized persons are responsible for transporting their child to and from the Center in an appropriate child restraint system. If someone other than yourself will be picking your child up from the Center, please make sure you leave your child's car seat or that the individual has an appropriate car seat for your child.

At Little Explorers, we value the safety and well-being of our enrolled children. Although we do not have the legal right to detain a child from his/her Parent(s)/Legal Guardian, we do not feel it would be safe to release a child to an intoxicated person or person impaired by drugs for transportation. If we feel that an adult is intoxicated or impaired by drugs, we will make an attempt to persuade the adult to contact another person to transport themselves and the child to their destination and politely insist that the adult in question not remove the child from the Center (reminding the adult of our written policy).

If the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian insist that he/she takes the child, then Little Explorers will call the local police with the make, model, color, license plate number of the vehicle and name, home address and direction of travel of the adult driver.

Immediately following the incident, Little Explorers will make a written report of the names, date, time and any other matters relating to the incident. This incident may cause termination of the family's enrollment at the facility.

## **Roll Call**

Roll call should be done periodically in the classroom throughout the day. At all times, you should know exactly how many children you have in your care and that number should always match your attendance sheet. Roll call should always be done whenever you walk through a door and as soon as you get to your destination.

**Example:** You are going to the playground. You will line the children up in your classroom, do a face to name roll call and count the children. Once you get everyone out in the hall, lined up, you will do another roll call. When you go outside, you will again line up and do another roll call. Again, when your group makes it to the playground, you should be counting children as they enter the playground. In order to do this, you must have control of your group of children. Children should be going on to the playground area one at a time as they are being counted. Children should remain in your sight at all times. When it is time to go inside, do a face to name roll call and count the children. You should never go in a door until all your children are lined up near that door. Do not let any of the children start going inside until all the children are lined up outside the door. Once inside the door, you need to be sure all the children are lined up inside the door, do a face to name roll call and again count the children. You are not to be the door holder; you need to have all your attention on the children. For teachers with smaller children, you should always have one teacher in the front of the line and one in the back of the line. No child should ever be in front of the lead teacher. As a single teacher, when going around a corner, you should stop at the corner and wait until all the children are close, and then proceed around the corner.

### **Transition From Teacher to Teacher**

Whenever you are transitioning your classroom over to another teacher, you must be sure your attendance sheet is correct. By this, I mean, all students are signed in or out. You must then do your own face to name roll call. Let the teacher who is taking your place know what children you have, how many, and any other pertinent information they need.

**Example:** Hi Shelly, you can go home now. **Shelly** - Thanks, I have five children, their names are ... Please remember Tom's Mom will be picking him up early tonight and she really likes his diaper changed before she picks him up.

### **Toilet Learning**

Little Explorers' toilet learning procedures follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and State regulations and work with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

### **Health and Safety Standards**

Little Explorers Preschool takes health and safety very seriously. LE accepts its responsibility for providing a healthy and safe working environment. Employees are expected to take responsibility for performing work in accordance with safe standards and practices. Health and safety will only be achieved through teamwork. Everyone must join together in promoting health and safety by taking every reasonable measure to assure safe working conditions.

Please observe the following precautions:

- Notify any Admin team member of any emergency you witness. If you or a child becomes injured (no matter how small) or sick, you need to inform a person on the Admin team as soon as possible.
- Know the locations, contents and use of first aid and fire extinguishers.
- Wear protective equipment in accordance with the job you are performing.

- Use, adjust or repair machines and equipment only if you are trained and qualified.
- Use proper lifting procedures and ask for help when lifting or pushing heavy objects
- Comply with OSHA standards and/or applicable state job health and safety standards in relation to: (1) blood; (2) body fluids, secretions and excretions (except sweat), regardless of whether they contain blood; (3) non-intact skin; and (4) mucous membranes.

### **Classroom Cleaning Schedule**

#### **Daily cleaning tasks performed by teachers:**

- Bathrooms and diaper changing areas are cleaned after each change or upon obvious contamination
- Floors are cleaned upon obvious contamination
- Recyclables are taken to outside recycling bin

#### **Weekly cleaning tasks performed by teachers:**

- Bedding is laundered
- Dress-up clothes and stuffed animals are laundered

#### **Daily cleaning tasks performed by hired cleaning company:**

- Classrooms are disinfected
- Bathrooms are disinfected
- Floors are sanitized
- Area rugs are vacuumed
- Trash is removed

#### **Cleaning tasks performed by onsite handyman:**

- Rugs and carpeted areas are steamed on scheduled classroom cleaning days (twice a year) or upon contamination

**Infection Control.** All staff are trained in proper hygiene practices, which include handwashing, diapering and toileting procedures (posted in the classrooms), general infection control and safe food handling.

Teachers and kitchen staff must ensure that certain equipment, items and surfaces are sanitized using soap and water followed by a disinfectant on a regular schedule. The disinfectant can be either a bleach solution or a commercial disinfectant registered by the EPA.

**Hand Washing.** All employees should make a point of washing their hands regularly to prevent the spread of disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that hand washing should be done:

- Before, during and after food preparation
- Before eating (i.e., when entering the kitchen, wash hands before touching anything in the kitchen);
- Before and after looking after someone who is ill;
- Before and after treating a cut or a wound;
- After using the washroom;
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the bathroom;
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing one's nose;
- After cleaning up after a child who's nose has been wiped;
- After petting, playing with or touching an animal;
- After handling pet food or treats;

- After touching garbage;

If soap and water is not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be used to clean the hands until hands can be washed with soap and water. Recommended hand sanitizers should contain at least 60 percent alcohol to be effective. Wet wipes are not an acceptable substitute for hand washing.

**Diapering.** Diaper changing areas and/or supplies have the potential to spread germs and disease. Following proper procedures will reduce the contamination of the setting (hands, furnishings and floors) and decrease the risk of the spread of illness. All staff involved in diaper changing will be trained on proper hand washing and diaper changing procedures.

LE teachers must ensure:

- To follow the diaper changing procedures posted at each changing table;
- The diaper changing table is always sturdy and the pad is in good repair (no cracks);
- All soiled clothing is properly placed in a bag (properly sealed) and sent home;
- To dispose of all diapers and gloves correctly;
- The diaper changing area is always cleaned and sanitized after each use;
- All diaper changing supplies are stored in a locked area inaccessible to children;
- Diaper changing table is not be used to store any items other than diaper changing items;
- The child is never left alone on changing table.

### **Daily Health Checks**

If a child appears to be ill when brought to the Center and cannot be made comfortable, a teacher will request a member of the Admin Team to assess the child's wellness. Should the Admin Staff feel a child can stay in attendance at the Center, a teacher will monitor the child symptoms throughout the day and update Admin as necessary. If the child's illness seems to progress, the admin will follow the Center Illness Policy.

**Protective Precautions.** Employees must always take precautions when there is a risk of exposure to pathogens from bodily fluids. Here are some suggestions employees can follow:

- Wear protective gloves if hands may potentially be in contact with blood or other bodily fluids.
- Wear protective gloves when administering any topical ointment, sunscreen, etc. to a child and dispose of gloves after each child and before administering to the next child.
- Dispose of needles and any other fluid-touched items in the proper containers. For instance, needles always go in a designated sharps container and other items such as blood-stained clothing should go in a plastic bag.
- If a needle or another breakable item (such as a drinking glass) that's contaminated falls to the floor and breaks, use a broom and dustpan to pick it up. Do not use your hands, even if you are wearing gloves.

Injuries and illnesses involving sharp objects and needle sticks that have been contaminated by someone else's blood or another potentially infectious material should be reported to an Admin team member. Employees should follow-up with a health care professional, if necessary.

### **Medical Emergencies/Children**

Upon enrollment, Parents/Legal Guardians will give Little Explorers written permission to obtain emergency treatments for their child.

In the case of an on-site medical emergency, the child's Parent(s)/Legal Guardian will be notified immediately following the assessment of the child's medical needs; these needs may be a result of an injury, allergic reaction or medical anomaly.

In the event that an injury, allergic reaction or other medical affliction requires immediate medical attention by a trained medical professional, 911 will be called for Madison EMS service. The family will be immediately contacted by another staff member, Director or Administrator. If possible, the Administrator or Director will accompany the injured or ill child in an ambulance to the family preferred emergency medical care facility. In the case where there is no time to reach the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian first, the child will be transported to Meriter (608-417-6000) (our hospital preference).

In the occurrence of an injury, allergic reaction or other medical affliction, the teachers and staff will follow First Aid and/or CPR procedures. All injuries and other medical occurrences requiring First Aid or CPR will be documented in the Accident Log. All injuries will be reported to the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian of the injured child via notification document and/or phone call. A copy of the notification will be kept in the child's file.

In the case of an off-site emergency the same procedures (as outlined above) will be followed. The Administrator and/or Director will be notified immediately and will send additional assistance to the offsite location and medical facility (if needed). The Administrator and/or Director will contact the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian immediately.

Incidents/Accidents that require professional medical attention will be reported in writing and by phone call to the DHFS Licensing Specialist for our facility within 48 hours of the incident.

Once a month, the Administrator and Director will review and evaluate all recorded injuries to determine cause factors and the preventable measure that can be taken to prevent such injuries from occurring.

In the case of a severe injury involving a staff member (either on-site or off), the employee's emergency contact will be notified immediately following the assessment of the adult's medical needs and after 911 has been called to contact the Madison EMS service. One of the stand-by (within five minutes of the facility) emergency staff members will be called to replace the staff member at the Center. If possible, the Administrator or Director will accompany the injured or ill employee in an ambulance to the employee's preferred emergency medical care facility. In the case where there is no time to reach the employee's emergency contact first, the employee will be transported to Meriter (our hospital preference).

### **Allergy Prevention**

Families are expected to notify the Center regarding children's food or environmental allergies. A list of children's allergies is posted in the child's classroom, and a Center list of children's allergies is posted in the kitchen. Faculty are trained to familiarize themselves with the allergy lists and to consult the lists as appropriate to avoid the potential of exposing a child to substances to which he/she has known allergies.

Families with special needs will be asked to schedule a special needs intake with Management and Faculty to ensure positive communication, education and teamwork.

## **Food Allergies and Preferences**

Children with food allergies, or follow special diets for religious reasons, will be provided with alternate food from our kitchen or by their parents. Alternate food for children with special diets due to food preferences (not food allergies), will need to be provided by the parent(s). Exception: soy milk will be provided on request. Parents who bring food from home must bring the food in a container that has the child's name and date on it. This container may be taken to the kitchen upon arrival if refrigeration is necessary. The kitchen staff and teachers will have a list of all food allergies and special dietary requests posted in their classrooms.

## **Nut-safe Policy**

We recognize that peanut or other nut products represent a health and safety hazard which can have serious consequences for those who have such an allergy. To protect those children, families, staff, and other visitors of Little Explorers preschool from an environment that may be harmful to them, any products containing any type of nut or any products that were manufactured in a facility that processes nuts, will be prohibited. Food brought into the center for special occasions must contain the original food label showing it is compliant with this policy.

## **Medication Policies**

The Administrative Staff, who have received training in administration of medications, will administer medication to children with a signed State Licensing authorization form from Parent(s)/Legal Guardian (for non-prescription meds) and a written order from the parents/ legal guardians and the child's physician (for prescription meds). Rescue medications will require written instructions including the signs and symptoms in which to use the medication.

Parents/legal guardians will demonstrate use of the medication and any special after care instructions that are necessary. If a device is changed or instructions of use are changed parents/legal guardians must inform the administration of these changes.

You must administer the first dose of medication to the child. You may come to administer subsequent doses of medication during the day, or an Administrative Staff member can administer subsequent doses. You will need to complete an Authorization for Administration of Medication form for any/all types of medicine to be administered.

Medication will be stored in the Administrator and/or Director's offices in a locked cabinet not accessible to children. Medication requiring refrigeration will be kept in a separate, locked container in the office refrigerator, clearly marked "medication."

All unused, expired medicine will be returned to the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian.

The Administrative Staff, who have received training in the administration of medications, will administer the medicine and make appropriate entries into the on-site medical log. All medications that are administered will be documented with the date, time, dosage, child's name and administering staff member. The Administrator Staff and Director will review the medical log once a month to ensure proper procedures are being followed.

Post administration of medication, children are monitored for adverse reactions to medication.

## **Medications (Prescriptions)**

Prescription medications require a note signed by the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian and a written order from the child's physician (this may include the label on the medication). The medication must have a current pharmacist's label that includes your child's name, dosage, current date, times to be administered and the name and number of your physician.

All medication must be in the original container. (Many pharmacists will fill your prescription in two labeled bottles so that one can be left at the Center.) You will need to complete the Authorization for Administration of Medication form, specifying the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication. A medication spoon (for liquid medication) should be provided and have the child's name written on it. A new note is necessary each time a medication is prescribed.

## **Medications (Non-Prescriptions)**

Non-prescription medications require a note signed by the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian (not to exceed a three-day period) on the day that the medication is to be given, specifying dose, time, and reason for administration. If the medication is not recommended for the age of the child and/or you are requesting that we administer a higher dosage than what is recommended, we will need a written order from the physician. Non-prescription medications exceeding a three-day period will require a written order from the child's physician, including the child's name, dosage, current date, times to be administered, duration of administration, and the name and number of the physician.

All non-prescription medication must be in the original container (labeled with your child's name) with a legible manufacturer's label and a valid expiration date. You will need to complete an Authorization for Administration of Medication Form specifying the dosage and the time to be administered. A medication spoon (for liquid medication) should be provided and have the child's name written on it.

## **First Aid**

Our facility can provide only the basic kind of first aid in case of an accident. We are allowed to use soap, water, ice and bandages. All accidents must be recorded on a report form that will be signed and turned into the office. Parents will receive a copy of this report.

If a more serious injury is indicated, parents will be notified immediately, and the facility will take the usual precautions for the comfort of the injured and the prevention of further injury. A first aid kit is available in each classroom. The staff is trained in CPR and first aid techniques.

## **Administration of Personnel Policies**

**Admin Team:** The owners and administrative team shall be responsible for the general administration of the personnel policies. This Admin Team will review the personnel policies as conditions change and will adopt/modify new policies as needed.

Administrative Structure:

|                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Owners:                   | Darlene Davis and Bob Davis |
| Administrator:            | Darlene Davis               |
| Director:                 | Liz Hilgers                 |
| Assistant Director:       | Becca Chars                 |
| Administrative Assistant: | Jaclyn Davis                |

**Emergency Contacts: Darlene Davis 608.234.8867 (c) Jaclyn Davis 608.630.7187 (c)**

## **Standards of Conduct**

Each employee has an obligation to observe and follow LE policies and to always maintain proper standards of conduct. If an individual's behavior interferes with the orderly and efficient operation of LE, corrective disciplinary measures will be taken. Disciplinary action may include a verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, and/or discharge. The appropriate disciplinary action imposed will be determined by LE. LE does not guarantee that one form of action will necessarily precede another.

The following may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge: violation of LE's policies or safety rules; unauthorized possession, use or sale of weapons, firearms or explosives on work premises; theft; dishonesty; physical harassment; sexual harassment; performing "outside" work or use of LE property, equipment or facilities in connection with outside work while on LE time; poor attendance or poor performance; any type of physical, mental or emotional abuse of a child and/or adult participating in LE's program; misrepresentation or falsification of records, time sheets, leaves requests, or official records; unauthorized possession, duplication, distribution and/or release of confidential information; possession, consumption and/or abuse or narcotics or other illegal drugs or alcohol, during working hours with LE; insubordination to an immediate Supervisor, the Admin Team and/or the Owners; verbal or physical aggression or threat to any staff member, child, family member, visitor or other individual during or connected with the performance of the employee's job duties; any use of corporal punishment; leaving children unattended; sleeping on the job; and any violent behavior; gossiping; failure to inform administration within 24 hours that employee has been or is being investigated by any Governmental Agency for any act, offense or omission, including charges related to abuse or neglect of a child or other client, or misappropriation of property. These examples are not all inclusive. We emphasize that discharge decisions will be based on an assessment of all relevant factors.

## **Conflict Resolution Policy**

Little Explorers strives to resolve workplace conflicts and disputes in a fair, respectful, and constructive manner. This policy is designed to foster a positive work environment and promote effective communication and conflict resolution.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a structured approach for addressing and resolving conflicts among employees.
- Promote open communication and collaboration to prevent and manage conflicts
- Facilitate the use of mediation as an alternative resolution method.

## **Conflict resolution procedures**

- Informal resolution: Employees are encouraged to resolve conflicts informally by discussing concerns directly with the individuals involved or with their immediate supervisors. Communication should be open, respectful, and focused on finding a mutually acceptable solution.
- Formal resolution: If an informal resolution is not successful, employees may bring their conflict to a member of Administration where a formal resolution process may be initiated.

## Code Of Ethics

Little Explorers believes that educators play a critical role in shaping the future of our students and society. This Code of Ethics serves as a guide for the professional conduct of all educators within our school, ensuring that every student receives a quality education delivered with integrity, respect, and a commitment to their well-being.

Educators at Little Explorers shall prioritize the educational, emotional, and physical well-being of their students. They must create a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment that encourages all students to reach their full potential. Educators are expected to respect their dignity, worth, and unique needs of each student.

Educators must conduct themselves with the highest level of integrity and honesty in all interactions with students, colleagues, parents, and the community. This includes being truthful in communication, maintaining transparency in grading and assessment, and avoiding any interactions that could undermine trust or the educational process.

Educators must treat all students fairly and equitably, without bias or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, or any other protected characteristic. They must strive to provide equal opportunities for all students to succeed.

**Gossip.** LE will not tolerate workplace gossip. This type of activity not only drains and distracts an employee's job performance and satisfaction but may also tarnish the reputation and name of another employee. In order to create a more professional workplace, LE is imposing strict guidelines that every employee will be required to follow:

- An employee will not speak or insinuate another person's name when that person is not present unless it is to compliment his/her work.
- An employee will refuse to participate in any conversation when another person mentions a third person, not present, in a negative light. Each employee will attempt to change the subject and will not engage in any conversation regarding any person not present.
- An employee will speak with the Owner, Director or Assistant Director when she/he believes another person has done something unethical, incorrect, against procedure or is disruptive. The employee will not discuss the matter with any other co-workers or other Admin Team members not listed above.

***Nothing in this policy is designed to modify our employment-at-will policy.***

## Outside Employment

We hope that you will not find it necessary to seek additional outside employment. However, if you are planning to accept an outside position, you must notify any LE council member in writing.

Outside employment must not conflict in any way with your responsibilities within LE. You may not work for competitors, nor may you take an ownership position with a competitor.

Employees may not conduct outside work or use LE property, equipment or facilities in connection with outside work while on LE time.

### **Social Media Policy**

Every employee has the responsibility to maintain and enhance the Center's public image and to use the Internet in a responsible manner. Employees must maintain professionalism at all times in all communications (in-person, written, or online) with the Center community. Additionally, all staff must be aware of the possibility of online content being shared with extended family, coworkers, and parents and staff from other classrooms within the Center, as well as others outside the Center community. Therefore, all information disseminated will be consistent with the professional standards of the Center as expressed within this Social Media Policy and the Center's Handbook.

Employees may be held responsible for any online behavior or content that connects them to the Center or implicates the Center in that behavior. Employees may also be held responsible for any statements, posts, communications, or other online behavior or content that is not consistent with the Center's mission and philosophy.

### **Media/Photography Policy**

The publication of photos, images, or artwork of students at the Center, whether online or otherwise, is generally prohibited without prior approval from the Director. Some families at the Center have chosen to restrict photograph permissions of their child(ren), and it is expected that all employees will be aware of, and abide by, those restrictions. Employees must consider and respect the privacy of the students, faculty, staff, and administrators of the Center in all online activities. The posting of confidential and/or identifying information about the children, parents, or staff at the Center on social media (including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and so forth) is strictly prohibited. The posting of non-confidential information (promotional materials and the like) shall be restricted to official channels of communication (the Center's website/Facebook page, etc.) unless prior written approval from the Director has been obtained.

### **Protecting LE Information**

Protecting LE's information is the responsibility of every employee, and we all share a common interest in making sure information is not improperly or accidentally disclosed. Do not discuss LE's confidential business with anyone who does not work for us.

All personnel files of LE's employees are also confidential. All files are in locked cabinets in the Owner/Administrator's office.

All telephone calls regarding a current or former employee's position/compensation with LE must be forwarded to Darlene Davis or Jaclyn Davis.

LE's address shall not be used for the receipt of personal mail.

### **Care of Equipment**

You are expected to demonstrate proper care when using LE's property and equipment. This includes all books, toys and equipment in classrooms. No property may be removed from the premises without the proper authorization of management. If you lose, break or damage any property, report it to any LE administration member at once.

### **Lead, PVC, and Phthalate Free Toys and Teethers**

When purchasing toys, administration examines product labels to ensure that all toys purchased are lead-free to prevent exposure. Administration will also examine labels on soft plastic and teething toys prior to purchasing them to ensure they are PVC-free and phthalate-free. Teachers will also redirect children to appropriate sensory chew necklaces if necessary to discourage children from placing toys made of soft plastic in their mouth.

### **Recycling and Waste Management**

LE is committed to the environment and its future. Therefore, recycling containers are located throughout the building for the collection of recyclable materials. Waste of time, materials and utilities is costly to LE. If you have any waste prevention ideas, please advise any LE council member in writing.

### **Pest Control**

To prevent pests from entering our center, non-toxic measures will be taken initially. These measures include but are not limited to proper storage of food, daily removal of trash, promptly repairing and drying any leaks, sealing cracks around windows and doors, as well as use of other natural deterrents. In the event that pesticides must be used, families and employees will be notified. The least toxic option will be applied by a trained pest control technician and the area will be dry before children are exposed.

### **Disposal of Toxic Materials**

Undiluted chemicals, cleaning supplies, mercury-containing items, and other toxic materials are safely stored and disposed of according to the manufacturer's instructions. Batteries and fluorescent light bulbs are disposed of in a separate bin that is taken to a hazardous waste facility.

### **Cell Phones/Personal Telephone Calls**

It is important to keep our telephone lines free for client calls. Although the occasional use of LE's telephones for a personal emergency may be necessary, routine personal calls should be kept to a minimum.

**Personal cell phones are NOT allowed in the classrooms during your scheduled working hours.** You may use your cell phone in the building during your break times, but NOT in any of the classrooms. Cell phones are not to be kept on your person while clocked in, unless approved in advance by an admin member. Before clocking in cell phones must be stored out of sight. Exception: Admin Staff and Maintenance.

All e-mail and voice mail passwords must be made available to LE at all times. Please notify the Director if you need to change your password.

For business purposes, management reserves the right to enter, search and/or monitor LE's private e-mail and voice mail systems and the files/transmission of any employee without advance notice and consistent with applicable state and federal laws. Employees should expect that communications that they send and receive by LE's private e-mail and voice mail systems will be disclosed to management. Employees should not assume that communications that they send and receive by LE's private e-mail and voice mail systems are private or confidential.

**Violation of the above policy may result in disciplinary action. Repeat violator may be discharged.**

### **Internet Usage**

LE's policies against sexual and other types of harassment apply fully to Internet usage, including the use of instant messaging programs. Violations of those policies are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Therefore, employees are also prohibited from displaying, transmitting and/or downloading sexually explicit images, messages, ethnic slurs, racial epithets or anything that could be construed as harassment or disparaging to others.

Consistent with applicable federal and state law, the time you spend on the Internet may be tracked through activity logs for business purposes. All abnormal usage will be investigated thoroughly.

Employees learning of any misuse of the Internet must notify a member of management.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

### **Acceptable Use of Electronic Communications**

This policy contains guidelines for Electronic Communications created, sent, received, used, transmitted, or stored using company communication systems or equipment and employee provided systems or equipment used either in the workplace, during working time or to accomplish work tasks. "Electronic Communications" include, among other things, messages, images, data or any other information used in e-mail, instant messages, voice mail, fax machines, computers, personal digital assistants (including Blackberry or similar text messaging devices), pagers, telephones, cellular and mobile phones including those with cameras, Intranet, Internet, back-up storage, information on a memory or flash key or card, jump or zip drive or any other type of internal or external removable storage drives. In the remainder of this policy, all of these communication devices are collectively referred to as "Systems."

Employees may use our Systems to communicate internally with co-workers or externally with customers, suppliers, vendors, advisors, and other business acquaintances for business purposes.

All Electronic Communications contained in company Systems are company records and/or property. Although an employee may have an individual password to access our Systems, the Systems and Electronic Communications belong to LE. The Systems and Electronic Communications are accessible to LE at all times including periodic unannounced inspections. Our Systems and Electronic Communications are subject to use, access, monitoring, review, recording and disclosure without further notice. Our Systems and Electronic Communications are not confidential or private. LE's right to use, access, monitor, record and disclose Electronic Communications without further notice applies equally to employee-provided systems or equipment used in the workplace, during working time, or to accomplish work tasks.

Although incidental and occasional personal use of our Systems that does not interfere or conflict with productivity or LE's business or violate policy is permitted, personal communications in our Systems are treated the same as all other Electronic Communications and will be used, accessed, recorded, monitored, and disclosed by LE at any time without further notice. Since all Electronic Communications and Systems can be accessed without advance notice, employees should not use our Systems for communication or information that employees would not want revealed to third parties.

Employees may not use our Systems in a manner that violates our policies including but not limited to Non-Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Equal Employment Opportunity, Confidentiality of Client Matters, Care of Client Records, Protecting Work Information, Solicitation and Distribution, E-Mail Monitoring, Voicemail Monitoring, and Internet Usage. Employees may not use our Systems in any way that may be seen as insulting, disruptive, obscene, offensive, or harmful to morale. Examples of prohibited uses include, but are not limited to, sexually explicit drawings, messages, images, cartoons, or jokes; propositions or love letters; ethnic or racial slurs, threats, or derogatory comments; or any other message or image that may be in violation of company policies.

In addition, employees may **not** use our Systems:

- To download, save, send or access any defamatory, discriminatory or obscene material;
- To download, save, send or access any music, audio or video file;
- To download anything from the internet (including shareware or free software) without the advance written permission of the Systems Supervisor;
- To download, save, send or access any site or content that LE might deem "adult entertainment;"
- To access any "blog" or otherwise post a personal opinion on the intranet;
- To solicit employees or others;
- To attempt or to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to computers, equipment, networks, or systems of LE or any other person or entity;
- In connection with any infringement of intellectual property rights, including but not limited to copyrights; and
- In connection with the violation or attempted violation of any law.

An employee may not misrepresent, disguise, or conceal his or her identity or another's identity in any way while using Electronic Communications; make changes to Electronic Communications without clearly indicating such changes; or use another person's account, mailbox, password, etc. without prior written approval of the account owner and without identifying the actual author.

Employees must always respect intellectual property rights such as copyrights and trademarks. Employees must not copy, use, or transfer proprietary materials of LE or others without appropriate authorization.

All Systems passwords and encryption keys must be available and known to LE. Employees may not install password or encryption programs without the written permission of our systems Supervisor. Employees may not use the passwords and encryption keys belonging to others.

Numerous state and federal laws apply to Electronic Communications. LE will comply with applicable laws. Employees also must comply with applicable laws and should recognize that an employee could be personally liable and/or subject to fine and imprisonment for violation of applicable laws.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge **as well as possible civil liabilities or criminal prosecution**. Where appropriate, LE may advise legal officials or appropriate third parties of policy violations and cooperate with official investigations. We will not, of course, retaliate against anyone who reports possible policy violations or assists with investigations.

If you have questions about the acceptable use of our Systems or the content of Electronic Communications, ask any LE administration member for advance clarification.

### **Client and Public Relations**

LE's reputation is built on excellent service and quality work. To maintain this reputation requires the active participation of every employee.

The opinions and attitudes that clients have toward LE may be determined for a long period of time by the actions of one employee. It is sometimes easy to take a client for granted, but if we do we run the risk of losing not only that client, but his or her associates, friends or family who may also be clients or prospective clients.

Each employee must be sensitive to the importance of providing courteous treatment in all working relationships.

### **Confidentiality of Client Matters**

Our professional ethics require that each employee maintain the highest degree of confidentiality when handling client Confidentiality of Client Matters.

To maintain this professional confidence, no employee shall disclose client information to outsiders, including other clients or third parties or members of one's own family.

Questions concerning client confidentiality may be addressed with any LE administration.

### **Care of Client Records and Property**

The impression that clients have of LE is based, in part, on the way we care for their records and their child's personal property. If we are careless with their property and records, clients may conclude that we have the same attitude toward our care of their children. As professionals, we must respect the confidence in which we are entrusted and ensure that client files and their property are handled with care. When a family brings in supplies from home, we should be sure they are all labeled and put away properly right away. Children's cubbies must be labeled before arrival on the first day of care.



## **Recording Your Time**

All employees must record their hours on the computer and are required to accurately record all time worked.

The workweek starts on Sunday and ends on Saturday.

You will be paid bi-weekly.

Please review your paycheck for errors. If you find a mistake, report it to Human Resources immediately and any steps necessary will be taken to correct the error.

## **Direct Deposit**

LE is paperless for its payroll. You must have a bank account for direct deposit of your pay through our direct deposit program.

## **Paycheck Deductions**

LE is required by law to make certain deductions from your paycheck each pay period. Such deductions typically include federal, state and Social Security (FICA) taxes. All deductions and the amount of the deductions are listed on your pay stub. These deductions are totaled each year for you on your Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement.

It is the policy of LE that exempt (salaried) employees' pay will not be "docked," or subject to deductions, in violation of salary pay rules issued by the United States Department of Labor and any corresponding rules issued by the state government, as applicable. However, LE may make deductions from employees' salaries in a way that is permitted under federal and state wage and hour rules. Employees will be reimbursed in full for any isolated, inadvertent, or improper deductions, as defined by law.

Thus, exempt employees may be subject to the following salary deductions, except where prohibited by state law, but only for the following reasons:

- Absences of one or more full days for personal reasons, other than sickness or disability; or
- Absences of one or more full days due to sickness or disability, if there is a plan, policy, or practice providing replacement compensation for such absences; or
- Absences of one or more full days before eligibility under such a plan, policy, or practice or after replacement compensation for such absences has been exhausted; or
- Suspensions of one or more full days for violations of safety rules of major significance; or
- Suspensions of one or more full days for violations of written workplace conduct rules, such as rules against sexual harassment and workplace violence; or
- Payment of actual time worked in the first and last weeks of employment, resulting in a proportional rate of an employee's full salary; or
- Any unpaid leave taken under the Family and Medical Leave Act; or
- Negative paid-time-off balances, in whole-day increments only.

If questions or concerns about any pay deductions arise, employees may discuss and resolve them with Human Resources.

## **Social Security**

During your employment, you and LE both contribute funds to the federal government to support the Social Security program. This program is intended to provide you with retirement benefit payments and medical coverage once you reach retirement age.

## **Garnishment/Child Support**

When an employee's wages are garnished by a Court Order, LE is legally bound to withhold the amount indicated in the garnishment order from the employee's paycheck. LE will, however, honor federal and applicable state guidelines that protect a certain amount of an employee's income from being subject to garnishment.

## **Performance Reviews**

Your performance is important to LE. Once each year, you and your supervisor will review your job progress within LE.

Our performance review program provides the basis for better understanding between you and your supervisor, with respect to your job performance, potential and development within LE.

New employees will generally be reviewed at the end of their introductory period.

## **Pay Raises**

Annual adjustments in your pay may be made in accordance with the following: LE's profitability and job performance. Pay adjustments are at the sole discretion of the Owners.

## **Promotions and Transfers**

We believe that career advancement is rewarding for both the employee and LE. We will promote qualified employees to new or vacated positions whenever possible. In addition, Darlene Davis is available to discuss transfer opportunities with you.

Job openings may be announced verbally. If you are interested in applying for one of these positions, notify Darlene Davis.

## **Bonus Plan**

Employees may receive bonuses from time to time. These are based on individual merit, LE profitability and any other factor(s) deemed significant by LE. Whether or not bonuses are granted and the amounts granted are within the sole discretion of LE Administration.

## **Employee Referral Bonus**

LE will pay a referral bonus of \$50 to any employee who refers an applicant to LE who is ultimately hired by LE to a full-time position. The bonus is payable upon completion of the newly hired employee's introductory period. The referring employee must still be employed with LE at the time the bonus is to be given. Employee referrals must be directed to Darlene Davis.

## **Childcare Tuition Discount**

Little Explorers Preschool offers Full-time employees childcare for their first child (natural born, adopted, or guardianship) at 100% off the weekly tuition rate. Subsequent children will receive 50% off the weekly tuition rate. The enrollment fee will be waived, and enrollment will be offered as space allows. All staff parents and grandparents will be required to adhere to the policies found in the parent handbook.

Part-time employee's childcare discount only applies to the days and times they are working. Days a part-time employee's child attends outside of their scheduled worktimes will be charged at the regular tuition rate.

Example: Margaret is scheduled to work Mondays and Tuesdays. Her child attends full-time. Her 100% tuition discount is applied for Mondays and Tuesdays, but she will be charged the regular tuition rate for Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

## **Workers Compensation**

On-the-job injuries are covered by our Workers' Compensation insurance policy. This insurance is provided at no cost to you. If you are injured on the job, no matter how slightly, report the incident immediately to LE Administration. Consistent with applicable state law, failure to report an injury within a reasonable period of time could jeopardize your claim. We ask for your assistance in alerting management to any condition that could lead to or contribute to an employee accident.

## **Certification, Licensing and Other Requirements**

You will be informed by your supervisor if there are any licensing, certification or testing requirements for your job. Failure to qualify or to maintain a certification or license may be sufficient cause for termination.

## **The Registry**

*The Registry*, Wisconsin's Recognition System for the Childhood Care and Education Profession acknowledges and highlights the training, experience and professionalism that is vital to quality childcare. Depending on the type of application selected, *The Registry* awards a certificate verifying that individuals have met all State of Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services entry level and continuing education requirements. Training above and beyond those requirements along with experience and professional contributions are represented by the levels and stars of *The Registry's* career ladder. All training is quantified by core knowledge areas as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

All employees working directly with children must obtain their *Registry* certificate within three months of hire.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

All employees of LE are responsible for reporting suspected abuse and neglect to Dane County Child Protection Services at 608.261.KIDS. Employees must see the Director immediately upon suspicion.

All employees will complete Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development Systems training and will renew this training every two years.

### **Reference Checks**

LE will not honor any oral requests for references. All requests must be in writing and on LE letterhead. Generally, we will only confirm our employees' dates of employment, salary history and job title.

Under no circumstances should an employee provide another individual with information regarding current or former employees of LE. If you receive a request for reference information, please forward it to Darlene Davis or Jaclyn Davis.

**Time Away From Work and Other Benefits**

**4**

## **Employee Benefits**

LE has developed a comprehensive employee benefits programs to supplement our employees' regular wages. Our benefits represent a hidden value of additional income to our employees.

This Employee Handbook describes the current benefits plans maintained by LE. Refer to the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions if you have specific questions regarding the benefit plan. Those documents are controlling.

LE reserves the right to modify its benefits and Holiday schedule at any time. We will keep you informed of any changes.

### **Medical Insurance**

Eligible employees (30 hours or more per week) may enroll in an employee, an employee plus dependent(s), an employee and spouse or a family contract on the first of the month following 60 days of employment. Information and enrollment forms may be obtained from Human Resources.

To assist you with the cost of this insurance, LE pays a portion of an employee, an employee plus one dependent, an employee and spouse or a family contract. You are responsible for paying the balance through payroll deduction.

Participating employees are also covered under our medical insurance plan's prescription drug program. A booklet containing the details of the plan and eligibility requirements may be obtained from Human Resources.

Refer to the actual plan document and summary plan description if you have specific questions regarding this benefit plan. Those documents are controlling.

Upon termination you may be entitled to continuation or conversion of the group medical insurance plan in accordance with the terms of the policy and/or applicable state and federal law. For more information contact Human Resources.

### **Dental Insurance**

Eligible employees (30 hours or more per week) may enroll as an employee, an employee plus one dependent, an employee and spouse, or a family contract on the first of the month following 60 days of employment. Information and enrollment forms may be obtained from LE Administration.

You will be responsible for the full cost of this insurance through payroll deduction.

A booklet containing the details of the plan and the eligibility requirements may be obtained from LE Administration.

Refer to the actual plan document and summary plan description if you have specific questions regarding this benefit plan. Those documents are controlling.

Upon termination you may be entitled to continuation or conversion of the group dental insurance plan in accordance with the terms of the policy and/or applicable state and federal law. For more information, contact LE Administration.

## **COBRA Insurance**

You and your covered spouse and/or covered dependent(s) will have the opportunity to continue medical and/or dental benefits for a period of up to 18 months (36 months under certain circumstances) under the provisions of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) when group medical and/or dental coverage for you and your covered dependents would otherwise end due to your death or because:

- your employment terminates, for a reason other than gross misconduct; or
- your employment status changes due to a reduction in hours; or
- your child ceases to be a "dependent child" under the terms of the medical and/or dental plan; or
- you become divorced or legally separated; or
- You become entitled to Medicare.

In the event of divorce, legal separation, or a child's loss of dependent status, you or a family member must notify the plan administrator within 30 days of the occurrence of the event.

The plan administrator will notify the individuals eligible for continuation coverage of their right to elect COBRA continuation coverage.

For more information regarding COBRA, you may contact LE Administration.

## **Illinois Mutual Supplemental Insurance**

Eligible employees may obtain Illinois Mutual Supplemental Insurance immediately upon hire.

Information and enrollment forms may be obtained from LE Administration.

You will be responsible for the full cost of this insurance through payroll deduction.

A booklet containing the details of the plan and the eligibility requirements may be obtained from LE Administration.

## **401(k) Qualified Retirement Plan**

LE provides eligible employees with a 401(k) Qualified Retirement plan, which is an excellent means of long-term savings for your retirement. You are eligible on the first of the month following 60 days of employment. LE's contribution, if any, is determined by the employer on an annual basis.

You can obtain a copy of the Summary Plan Description which contains the details of the plan including eligibility and benefit provisions from LE Administration. In the event of any conflict in the description of any plan, the official plan documents, which are available for your review, shall govern. If you have any questions regarding this plan, see the plan administrator.

## **Paid Time Off (PTO)**

Immediately upon hire, all full-time employees are eligible to begin accruing paid time off (PTO). Employees may use accrued PTO following 60 days of employment. Part-time employees regularly working 25 or more hours per week will be eligible for PTO based on the number of hours actually worked. All other (limited) employees are not eligible for paid time off.

Employees may schedule time off within the first 60 days of employment without the required use of PTO for appointments or dates approved upon hire. Requests must be made to Jaclyn at least two weeks in advance.

Eligible employees accrue paid time off depending upon the date they were hired, the length of time employed, and the number of hours worked biweekly. PTO is calculated on a calendar-year basis (January 1 – December 31).

Teachers will be required to use PTO for vacation, illness, appointments, leaves of absence, and for all other circumstances where a teacher works less than their scheduled hours. Forgoing daily break time to make up for time away from work must be approved by a member of administration. On days when children are absent, employees are expected to work a regular 8-hour day unless approved off in advance. PTO must be used if an employee works less than 8 hours.

PTO does not need to be used when the administrative staff offers a teacher the opportunity to leave early due to teacher/staff ratios. Any exceptions to this policy will be at the discretion of the Owners and Director.

All employees are to submit PTO requests (excluding sickness) to Jaclyn first to make sure the employee has enough PTO for time requested. Days off may not be scheduled without having accrued PTO time to cover the hours requested off. Employees will be required to attend their shift that was previously approved off if they do not have enough PTO by the day due to call ins or other unscheduled days off. She will approve or deny the request based upon availability and previous requests by other employees. If an employee calls in sick on a day a request off was denied, a doctor's note may be required.

PTO pay is not granted in lieu of taking the actual time off. However, 64 hours of PTO can be carried over to the following year. Any PTO not used in excess of 64 hours shall be forfeited.

If an employee is absent from work without having the PTO to cover this time, PTO will be zeroed out and they will only accrue on the hours they actually worked for that pay period.

PTO does not accrue once resignation is given, and PTO may not be used the final two weeks of employment. Upon termination of your employment with LE, any accrued, unused paid time off is forfeited. Any amount taken beyond the current accrual will be withheld from your final paycheck.

## **PTO Chart**

Paid Time Off Chart for full-time employees, part-time employees PTO will be prorated according to the number of hours worked in that pay period:

## PTO

|                                         |                               |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Year 1 through year 4 of employment     | 144 hours accrued during year |
| Year 5 through year 9 of employment     | 160 hours accrued during year |
| Year 10 through year 14 of employment   | 176 hours accrued during year |
| Year 15 through remainder of employment | 192 hours accrued during year |

## Leave Of Absence

In the event of an extended leave, some benefits may be affected.

- For leaves of absence exceeding 90 days employees will be converted to group health insurance COBRA plan on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month or may choose to terminate coverage.
  - If coverage is terminated, employees must satisfy the probationary period before their coverage is reinstated.
  - If converted to COBRA coverage, employees may immediately reinstate their original plan upon return to work.
- Accrual of PTO will discontinue when leave begins, and resume upon return to work.
- Employees will **not** receive holiday pay while on leave.

## Holidays

LE normally observes the following holidays during the year:

New Year's Day  
Independence Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas Eve Day

Memorial Day  
Labor Day  
Friday after Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas Day

Full-time, Limited Full-time and part-time employees are eligible for holiday pay 60 days after hire. Limited part-time employees will not be eligible for holiday pay.

Part-time employees will be paid for holidays based on their regularly scheduled hours. In order to receive holiday pay employees must regularly work the day of the week the holiday falls on.

Example: Lisa is a part-time employee who works every Friday, and occasional Mondays. New Years Eve falls on a Monday. Lisa will **NOT** receive holiday pay... 4<sup>th</sup> of July falls on a Friday. Lisa **WILL** receive holiday pay for 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

If a paid holiday falls on a weekend, LE management reserves the right to declare either Friday or Monday closest to the Holiday as a paid holiday for eligible employees.

In order to be paid for the holiday, non-exempt employees must work their scheduled workday before and after the holiday, unless approved off in advance. All other circumstances will be reviewed by Darlene.

## Illness

Sometimes it is necessary for a teacher to be away from the Center to reduce the transmission of illness. Teachers should stay home for the following reasons (this list covers most common illnesses, but is not inclusive for exclusion):

- **Fever:** A temperature of 100° under the arm or in the ear;
- **Vomiting;**
- **Diareha of unknown cause;**
- **Impetigo:** Until 24 hours after treatment has begun;
- **Strep throat:** Until 24 hours after treatment has begun;
- **Head Lice:** Until treatment has begun;
- **Scabies:** Until 24 hours after treatment has begun;
- **Chickenpox:** Until all lesions have dried and crusted [usually six (6) days];
- **Pertussis (Whooping Cough):** Until five (5) days of treatment with appropriate antibiotics;
- **Hepatitis A Virus:** Until one (1) week after onset of illness, after immune globulin has been administered.

You may return to work: 1) When you are fever-free for a full 24 hours without medication; or 2) When you have been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours. If you have been ill, LE may require proof of your ability to safely return to work.

## Maternity/Paternity Leave

In accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act, Little Explorers Preschools allows teachers to take 12 weeks away from work for maternity/ paternity leave and adoptions. The 12 weeks begins on the first day of an employee's designated leave. The employee will meet with Human Resources before the leave, to discuss details of the leave.

If maternity/paternity leave exceeds 12 weeks some benefits may be affected (Refer to section titled "Leave of Absence").

### **Jury Duty**

Employees summoned for jury duty are granted unpaid leave (or may use PTO) in order to serve. Exempt employees may be provided time off with pay when necessary to comply with state and federal wage and hour laws. Make arrangements with Administration as soon as you receive your summons.

We expect you to return to your job if you are excused from jury duty during your regular working hours.

### **Bereavement Leave**

Full-time employees (and part-time employees working more than 30 hours) are eligible upon completion of the probationary period, for three paid days for the death of an immediate family member. Members of the immediate family include spouses, parents, brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren, grandparents and parents-in-law.

Full-time employees (and part-time employees working more than 30 hours) are eligible upon completion of the probationary period for one paid day to attend the funeral of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and grandparents-in-law.

Requests for bereavement leave should be made to the Director as soon as possible. LE reserves the right to request written verification of an employee's familial relationship to the deceased and his or her attendance at the funeral service as a condition of the bereavement pay.

### **Access to Personnel Files**

Upon written request, employees may inspect their own personnel files up to two times a year. Requests will be granted within seven working days of the request. Inspections will be held during working hours and reasonably near the employee's place of employment. If employees disagree with any data in the records and no correction can be agreed upon, employees may submit an explanatory statement that will be attached to the records. The right to inspect does not apply to certain information as allowed by State law, such as records of investigation of criminal offenses and reference letters. Employees have the right to receive a copy of the records and LE may charge a reasonable fee for time/copies.

### **Changes in Personal Data**

To aid you and/or your family in matters of personal emergency, we need to maintain up-to-date information.

Changes in name, address, telephone number, and marital status, number of dependents or changes in next of kin and/or beneficiaries should be given to Human Resources promptly.

## **If You Must Leave Us**

Should you decide to leave your employment with us, we ask that you provide any LE administrative member with at least two weeks' advance written notice. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated and will be noted favorably should you ever wish to reapply for employment with LE.

Employees who are rehired following a break in service, other than an approved leave of absence, must serve a new initial introductory period whether or not such a period was previously completed. Such employees are considered new employees from the effective date of their reemployment for all purposes, including the purposes of measuring benefits.

LE does not provide a "letter of reference" to former employees. Generally, we will confirm upon request our employees' dates of employment, salary history and job title.

Additionally, all resigning employees should complete a brief exit interview prior to leaving. All LE property, including this Employee Handbook, must be returned upon termination. Otherwise, LE may take action to recoup any replacement costs and/or seek the return of LE property through appropriate legal recourse.

You should notify LE if your address changes during the calendar year in which termination occurs so that your tax information will be sent to the proper address. This is each employee's personal responsibility.

## **Professional Development**

Professional development and/or continuing education and training (hereafter "professional development") is the ongoing education or training designed to increase a staff member's skills and knowledge or to gain new competencies in early childhood education. All professional development is intended to satisfy continuing education hours required by state licensing regulations and accreditation. All administrative, teaching and kitchen staff are required to fulfill the minimum annual professional development expectations outlined by the state regulations and accreditation by their anniversary date.

Acceptable professional development may be offered at staff meetings, on-the-job training, lectures, workshops, conferences or by distance-learning through self-guided study or instructor-led communities of practice. Professional development may result in college credits, continuing education units (CEUs) and competency education credits (CECs). Any outside training must relate specifically to the age group or role in which the staff member is employed. Little Explorers Preschool recognizes the importance of encouraging and supporting its employees in pursuit of professional development which is necessary to maintain quality staff, and which contributes effectively to Little Explorers Preschool's mission and goals.

To facilitate an employee's participation in professional development, Little Explorers Preschool may approve: flexible work options such as alternate work schedules; periods of paid or unpaid leave; partial or full payment or reimbursement of training expenses.

It is the responsibility of each employee to provide written proof of all continuing educational training that shall become part of the employee's permanent file. If continuing education

documentation is not received by the date it is due in your file according to state regulations, administration will require that you take unpaid time off to complete your continuing education requirements before you may return to work.

Discussions about each employee's professional development goals will occur during the performance review. Fulfillment of those goals will be a determining factor regarding raises. The supervisor and employee will jointly formulate an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to work collaboratively to build on the employee's effectiveness in performing their current position and/or prepare the employee for future positions.

## **Safety In The Work Place** **5**

## **Personal Property**

LE is not responsible for loss or damage to personal property. Valuable personal items, such as purses and all other valuables should not be left in areas where theft might occur.

## **Interior Temperatures and HVAC maintenance**

The inside room temperature will be kept at a minimum of 65 ° F and at a maximum of 80° F. Appropriate heating and cooling measures will be engaged to ensure the proper temperature is kept.

HVAC filters are changed and cleaned at least every three months or more often if indicated by the manufacturer's guidelines.

## **Mold and Mildew prevention**

Precautions will be taken to prevent the growth of mold and mildew including but not limited to, maintaining proper humidity levels, properly ventilating the classroom, and drying moisture due to spills, leaks, etc.

**Construction/Maintenance Precautions.** Whenever maintenance staff is to perform some type of construction and/or maintenance in the school or on the grounds:

- There must be some type of barrier (i.e., door, fence, gate, etc.) between any maintenance work that is being performed with a vehicle, heavy equipment or machinery, power tools or any other work that would be considered dangerous to an enrolled child. An adult cannot be considered a barrier.
- If the 4-wheeler is being used on the nature trails when enrolled children are present, there must be a distance of 50 yards or more between the enrolled children and the 4-wheeler.
- Maintenance will be responsible for not starting any projects when an enrolled child is present and there is no barrier in place between the work being performed and the enrolled child.
- Teachers/staff members will be responsible for not bringing enrolled children into any area where work is already in progress unless there is a barrier in place.

When maintenance staff is using power tools, heavy machinery, equipment, etc., the employee:

- Must follow the supervisor's safety instructions and wear protective equipment (i.e. safety glasses, steel-toed work boots, ear plugs, masks, etc.).
- Is expected to use all equipment properly (i.e. using all guards, restraints and other safety devices must be used at all times. Equipment may not be used for any other than its intended purpose.

A violation of any health and/or safety precaution is in itself an unsafe act. A violation may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

## **Medical Emergencies/Staff**

In the case of an on-site medical emergency, the employee's emergency contact will be notified immediately following the assessment of the employee's medical needs; these needs may be a result of an injury, allergic reaction or medical anomaly.

In the event that an injury, allergic reaction or other medical affliction requires immediate medical attention by a trained medical professional, 911 will be called to contact the Madison EMS service. The emergency contact will be immediately contacted by another staff member, director or administrator. If possible, the administrator or director will accompany the injured or ill employee in an ambulance to the employee preferred emergency medical care facility. In the case where there is no time to reach the emergency contact first, the employee will be transported to UW Hospital (our hospital preference).

### **In an Emergency (other than Medical)**

Little Explorers has policies and procedures in place to properly address all of the following emergency situations:

- Bomb Threat
- External/Internal Hazardous
- Gas Leaks
- Intruder.

In the event that a site evacuation is needed, you will be notified via telephone, text message or Facebook as to the location of your child or where you are to go to wait for further information.

Little Explorers will do its best to follow all the procedures we have in place for emergency situations. If you would like to view a hard copy of the emergency procedures we have in place, please stop in the front office to review.

### **Emergency Contact Information**

At least one owner or administrative team member is available at any time if the need arises.

|               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|
| Darlene Davis | 608-234-6687 (cell) |
| Jaclyn Davis  | 608-630-7187 (cell) |

### **Emergency Closing**

In the event of a natural or environmental emergency resulting in the temporary closing of Little Explorers, reasonable and adequate notice will be given, if possible, under any given circumstance. The Owners will evaluate the situation and will make the decision to close and will inform the employees. The Administrator, Director and Teachers will be responsible for notifying the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian by phone if the facility is already in session. If the facility is already closed, the notification may be by posting or by phone call. Such closings can be caused by, but not limited to, dangerous and/or hazardous weather, chemical or biological hazards, loss of heat, phone outages, water safety and electrical outages. Tuition is non-refundable for these closings.

### **Snow Policy**

Little Explorers Preschool follows the Madison Metropolitan School District for determining when to close for a snow day or a snow delay.

If Madison Schools close due to snow, Little Explorers will do the same.

If Madison Schools have a delayed start due to snow, then Little Explorers will follow the same hourly delay. If they list a specific time to open, then Little Explorers will open at that time.

**Cold Policy:** Little Explorers Preschool will remain open if the temperature is above 35 degrees below zero, factoring in wind chill. The temperature will be decided by what is posted on Channel 3000. If the temperature is colder than 35 degrees below zero, or if the Governor declares a state of emergency due to the cold, Little Explorers Preschool will reserve the right to close.

Updates on Little Explorers Preschool closing will be posted on our Facebook page. (Little Explorers Nature Center Preschool).

Parents may sign up for the “Remind” app. Alerts will be sent by text or email any time the school will be closed due to weather related closings.

### **Weather Related Outdoor Play**

Every child will have outdoor activities at their scheduled daily time, weather permitting. All teachers must dress appropriately to participate in outdoor activities. In the case of severe weather the following indicators will prevent outdoor play:

- Heavy rain or thunderstorms;
- Temperatures that rise above 90° F;
- Temperatures that fall below 0° F, including wind chill for children ages two (2) and above;
- Temperatures that fall below 20° F, including wind chill for infants and toddlers;
- Storm or tornado warnings issued by the National Weather Service for our area.

### **Rules for Outdoor Exploration**

*Teachers are responsible for active supervision; individuals decide if an activity is safe/kind/respectful.*

- SAND STAYS IN THE SANDBOX.
- Teachers check weather conditions considering appropriate clothing for muddy puddles and rainy days.
- Each class can decide if it is safe/appropriate for their children to walk with sticks or use sticks as weapons.
- Wrestling is not permitted on any playgrounds.
- Check to be sure the doors are closed when you exit the school.

### **Slide Side:**

- Sliding in the middle wooden part of the slide is not permitted
- Children may walk along side the slide, sitting under the platform.
- More than one child may slide at a time.

- Children may go down the slide any way they would like, unless inclement weather makes this choice unsafe.
- Climbing on top of the monkey bars is permitted.
- Jumping into the sandbox is permitted.
- Sitting on the bottom level of the retaining wall is permitted. Climbing at any level of the wall is not.

#### **Climber Side:**

- Children may jump into the sandbox but their jump off point must stop where the fence around the sandbox starts.
- Children may not climb any part of the retaining wall.
- Climbing the tree on this playground is not permitted.
- Pots, pans and buckets stay in the sandbox. If one wanders off, please be sure to return it before your class goes inside.

#### **Train Station:**

- Children can climb up the green slide, be mindful of how many children are climbing at once, taking turns, and ability to stay balanced safely.
- Children are permitted to climb the outside wall of the low climber.
- Buckets/sticks/rocks are not permitted on top of climbing structures.

#### **Field Playground:**

- Each class/teacher is responsible for cleaning up balls in the field. Work to keep children from tossing them over the fence to the neighboring property.
- Children are not permitted to dig in the muddy path or in flowerbeds.

#### **Nature Trails:**

- When your classroom is finished playing at the adventure playground, please be sure all materials are put away in the appropriate places.
- Children are welcome to explore the many areas of the nature trail, but they must always be in sight and sound of the teachers.
- The gate leading to the nature trail must be always latched.
- Children may pick plants and flowers. Refrain from cutting any trees or branches without express permission.

#### **Butterfly Garden:**

- As this area is in the center of an active parking lot, model safety in checking both ways before walking to the garden.
- Please leave all plants and flowers for the butterflies and other pollinators.
- Watering the tall grasses and flowers is encouraged! Please be sure to put away small watering cans or hose when done using.

## **Air Quality Procedure**

*In the event of Wildfires, Raised Ozone Levels, or other Particle Air Pollution refer to the Colored Chart to Assess Values and Steps to be Taken.*

- 1. Check Air Quality on Classroom Phone.** Each classroom cellphone has access to weather updates, access air quality through an application or weather.com on an internet browser.
- 2. Stay Indoors AQI 151 or Higher.** Children are considered members of a “sensitive group” and any time spent outside could expose them to higher risk of health effects. Stay indoors and utilize time for structured large motor experiences in classroom or free play in the gym.
- 3. Limit Time Outside AQI 101-150.** Limit the risk of exposure to health effects by going for a 20-30 minute walk or 15 minutes on a playground to limit the time children may run. Adults or Children with asthma or upper respiratory illness should not participate in outside time, this may mean the group stays indoors with large motor activities in the classroom or gym.
- 4. Limit Time Outside for Extremely Sensitive AQI 51-100.** Monitor the health of the individuals within the group, limit extreme physical activity for those with upper respiratory issues.

## **Fire/Tornado Evacuation and Drills**

Monthly fire and tornado drills will be conducted according to center plans. Please follow protocol in evacuating the facility. All drills will be posted by the office. 911 will be phoned as needed. The Chef and specialists will be responsible for assisting the infant and/or toddler teachers. The classroom teachers are responsible for bringing each room’s attendance sheet and emergency contact info (clipboard). The director will complete a walkthrough of the facility during and after evacuation and assist as needed. During tornado drills we will evacuate to the basement. It will be supplied with flashlights, a battery operated radio, spare batteries, etc.

**Fire Drills:** Fire drills will be carried out on a monthly basis. The fire drill will be documented by the Administrator and/or Director. 911 will be called as needed.

Evacuation routes for each class are posted at the doors leading to the outside for each classroom. For all other rooms, the evacuation route will be posted at the door closest to escape. Staff will gather children calmly and safely to the appropriate exit and lead them to safety. Each Teacher will be responsible for taking the attendance sheet and emergency contact forms for their class from the building. An attendance check will be taken by the Teacher immediately (once safely away from the building at a place designated by the Administrator). Children who do not walk yet will be placed in an evacuation crib and wheeled to safety by a staff member. Evacuation procedures for children with special needs will be developed by the Administrator, Director and Teacher(s) as the need arises.

If the children and employees are unable to return to the building following an evacuation, we will move the children to the barn until the Parent(s)/Legal Guardian can be contacted and come for them.

**Tornado Drills:** Tornado drills will be carried out monthly (April through October) when the threat of dangerous weather is highest. The evacuation procedure is posted at the inside door of each room. Teachers will follow the same protocol used for fire drill/evacuations with children.

## **Missing Child**

In the event that a child becomes missing from the Center or other authorized outing, the following procedure will follow:

All available adults will make a thorough search of the classrooms, building and grounds. If the child is not found after a thorough search has been completed, the police and the child's Parent(s)/Legal Guardian will be notified. The DHFS Licensing Specialist will be notified within 48 hours of the incident.

## **Good Housekeeping**

Good work habits and a neat place to work are essential for job safety and efficiency. You are expected to keep your place of work always organized and materials in good order. Report anything that needs repair or replacement to any LE Administrative member.

## **Weapons in Regulated Childcare Settings**

On July 8, 2011, Wisconsin Act 35 (Concealed Carry Law) was signed into law. The Department of Children and Families addresses the presence of firearms, ammunition and other dangerous items in a licensed family childcare center as follows:

DCF 251.06(2)(c) Firearms, ammunition or other potentially dangerous items may not be kept on the premises.

LE respects your right to carry; however, we are following the recommendations of The Department of Children and Families and adding to our policies that all firearms, ammunition and other potentially dangerous items are prohibited inside the premises.

## **Workplace Violence**

Violence by an employee or anyone else against an employee, supervisor or member of management will not be tolerated. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the potential risk of personal injuries to employees at work and to reduce the possibility of damage to LE property in the event someone, for whatever reason, may be unhappy with a LE decision or action by an employee or member of management.

If you receive or overhear any threatening communications from an employee or outside third party, report it to any LE Administrative member at once. Do not engage in either physical or verbal confrontation with a potentially violent individual. If you encounter an individual who is threatening immediate harm to an employee or visitor to our premises, contact an emergency agency (such as 911) immediately.

All reports of work-related threats will be kept confidential to the extent possible, investigated and documented. Employees are expected to report and participate in an investigation of any suspected or actual cases of workplace violence and will not be subjected to disciplinary consequences for such reports or cooperation.

Violations of this policy, including your failure to report or fully cooperate in LE's investigation, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

### **Smoking in the Workplace**

LE is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for employees and visitors. Smoking is not allowed on the premises.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

### **Substance Abuse**

LE has vital interests in ensuring a safe, healthy and efficient working environment for our employees, their co-workers and the clients we serve. The unlawful or improper presence or use of controlled substances or alcohol in the workplace presents a danger to everyone. For these reasons, we have established as a condition of employment and continued employment with LE the following substance abuse policy.

Employees are prohibited from reporting to work or working while using illegal or unauthorized substances. Employees are prohibited from reporting to work or working when the employee uses any controlled substance, except when the use is pursuant to a doctor's orders and the doctor advised the employee that the substance does not adversely affect the employee's ability to safely perform his or her job duties.

In addition, employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful or unauthorized manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of illegal or unauthorized substances and alcohol in the workplace including: on LE paid time, on LE premises, in LE vehicles, or while engaged in LE activities. Our employees are also prohibited from reporting for duty or remaining on duty with any alcohol in their systems. Employees are further prohibited from consuming alcohol during working hours, including meal and break periods. This does not include the authorized use of alcohol at LE-sponsored functions or activities.

Your employment or continued employment with LE is conditioned upon your full compliance with the foregoing substance abuse policy. Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

### **Equal Opportunity Employment**

Little Explorers Preschool is committed to ensuring that fair and effective policies and procedures are implemented and adhered to when selecting talented and motivated individuals to meet its organizational needs. LE is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing a work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.

All recruitment, selection procedures and decisions will reflect LE's commitment to providing equal opportunity. All potential candidates will be assessed according to his/her skills, knowledge, qualifications and capabilities. We will follow all federal and state laws which prohibit discrimination in hiring and employment. LE does not discriminate against employees or applicants in violation of those laws.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

LE is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for differently abled individual(s) as permitted by law and LE may provide reasonable accommodation(s) where appropriate. It will be the individual employee's responsibility to notify LE's Owner(s) or management of any accommodation(s) the individual believes is/are necessary. LE may request input from the employee on the type of accommodation(s) she/he believes may be necessary to accommodate such request. Further, LE may need such employee's permission to obtain additional information from a physician and/or other medical/rehabilitation professionals for any changes requested by said individual.

### **Non-Harassment**

We prohibit harassment of one employee by another employee, supervisor or third party for any reason ["protected class"] including, but not limited to: veteran status, uniform service member status, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability or any other protected class under federal, state or local law. Harassment of third parties by our employees is also prohibited.

In Wisconsin, the following are a protected class: age [40 or over]; race; creed; color; disability; marital status; sex; national origin; ancestry; pregnancy, childbirth, maternity leave or related medical conditions; arrest or conviction records; military service; sexual orientation; use or nonuse of lawful products off the employer's premises during non-working hours and genetic testing.

The purpose of this policy is not to regulate the personal morality of employees. It is to ensure that in the workplace, no employee harasses another for any reason or in any manner. The conduct prohibited by this policy includes conduct in any form including but not limited to e-mail, voicemail, chat rooms, Internet use or history, text messages, pictures, images, writings, words or gestures.

While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment is, it includes: slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments or visual depictions, unwelcome jokes and teasing.

Any employee who feels that (s)he is a victim of such harassment should immediately report the matter to one of the following members of management who have been designated to receive such complaints: Darlene Davis, Owner, at 608.234.8867. If an employee makes a report to any of these members of management and the Supervisor either does not respond or does not respond in a manner the employee deems satisfactory or consistent with this policy, the employee is required to report the situation to one of the other members of management designated in this policy to receive complaints.

LE will investigate all such reports as confidentially as possible. Adverse action will not be taken against an employee because he or she, in good faith, reports or participates in the investigation of a violation of this policy. Violations of this policy are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.



## **Sexual Harassment**

Any type of sexual harassment is against LE policy and may be unlawful.

We firmly prohibit sexual harassment of any employee by another employee, supervisor or third party. Harassment of third parties by our employees is also prohibited. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate the morality of employees. It is to ensure that in the workplace, no employee is subject to sexual harassment. While it is not easy to define precisely what sexual harassment is, it may include: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including, but not limited to, sexually related drawings, pictures, jokes, teasing, uninvited touching or other sexually related comments. The conduct prohibited by this policy includes conduct in any form including but not limited to e-mail, voicemail, chat rooms, Internet use or history, text messages, pictures, images, writings, words or gestures.

Sexual harassment of an employee will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. There will be no adverse action taken against employees who report violations of this policy in good faith or participate in the investigation of such violations.

Any employee who feels that (s)he is a victim of sexual harassment should immediately report such actions in accordance with the following procedure. All complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated as confidentially as possible.

1. Any employee who believes that (s)he is a victim of sexual harassment or has been retaliated against for complaining of sexual harassment, should report the situation immediately to Darlene Davis at (608) 234-8867. If an employee makes a report and the supervisor either does not respond or does not respond in a manner the employee deems satisfactory or consistent with this policy, the employee is required to report the situation to one of the other members of management designated in this policy to receive complaints.
2. LE will investigate every reported incident immediately. Any employee, supervisor or agent of LE who has been found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge.
3. LE will conduct all investigations in a discreet manner. LE recognizes that every investigation requires a determination based on all the facts in the matter. We also recognize the serious impact a false accusation can have. We trust that all employees will continue to act responsibly.
4. The reporting employee and any employee participating in any investigation under this policy have LE's assurance that no reprisals will be taken as a result of a sexual harassment complaint. It is our policy to encourage discussion of the matter, to help protect others from being subjected to similar inappropriate behavior.

### **Driver's License/Driving Record**

Employees in positions where the operation of a motor vehicle is an essential duty of the position must present and maintain a valid driver's license and acceptable driving record to our insurer. Changes in your driving record must be reported to your supervisor immediately. Violations of this policy may result in immediate termination of your employment.

### **Immigration Reform and Control Act**

In compliance with the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), as amended, and any state law requirements, if applicable, LE is committed to employing only individuals who are authorized to work in the United States.

Each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility.

If an employee is authorized to work in this country for a limited time, the individual will be required to submit proof of renewed employment eligibility prior to expiration of that period to remain employed by LE.

### **Procedures Updates**

Operating procedures will be reviewed at a minimum of every two years and changes will be made as necessary. Employees will be informed of any updates made and will be sent an electronic copy of the updated Procedures. Employees will also be asked for their autograph acknowledging that they have read and understand any changes made.

### **Handbook Updates**

Handbooks will be reviewed at a minimum of every two years and changes will be made as necessary. Employees will be informed of any updates made and will be sent an electronic copy of the updated handbook. Employees will also be asked for their autograph acknowledging that they have read and understand any changes made.

## Receipt of Employee Handbook and Employment-At-Will Statement

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Little Explorers Nature Center Preschool Employee Handbook and I understand that it contains information about the employment policies and practices of LE. I agree to read and comply with this Employee Handbook. I understand that the policies outlined in this Employee Handbook are management guidelines only, which in a developing business will require changes from time to time. I understand that LE retains the right to make decisions involving employment as needed in order to conduct its work in a manner that is beneficial to the employees and LE. I understand that this Employee Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior Employee Handbooks and any inconsistent verbal or written policy statements.

I understand that except for the policy of at-will employment, which can only be changed by an owner of LE in a signed written contract, LE reserves the right to revise, delete and add to the provisions of this Employee Handbook at any time without further notice. All such revisions, deletions or additions to the Employee Handbook will be in writing and will be signed by an owner of LE. I understand that no oral statements or representations can change the provisions of this Employee Handbook.

I understand that this Employee Handbook is not intended to create contractual obligations with respect to any matters it covers and that the Employee Handbook does not create a contract guaranteeing that I will be employed for any specific time period.

**LE IS AN AT-WILL EMPLOYER. THIS MEANS THAT REGARDLESS OF ANY PROVISION IN THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, LE OR I MAY TERMINATE THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP AT ANY TIME, FOR ANY REASON, WITH OR WITHOUT CAUSE OR NOTICE. NOTHING IN THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK OR IN ANY DOCUMENT OR STATEMENT, WRITTEN OR ORAL, SHALL LIMIT THE RIGHT TO TERMINATE EMPLOYMENT AT-WILL. NO OFFICER, EMPLOYEE OR REPRESENTATIVE OF LE IS AUTHORIZED TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT—EXPRESS OR IMPLIED—WITH ME OR ANY EMPLOYEE FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR A SPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME UNLESS SUCH AN AGREEMENT IS IN A WRITTEN CONTRACT SIGNED BY ANY LE COUNCIL MEMBER OF LE.**

I understand that this Employee Handbook refers to current benefit plans maintained by LE and that I must refer to the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions as these documents are controlling.

I also understand that if a written contract is inconsistent with the Employee Handbook, the written contract is controlling. If I have questions regarding the content or interpretation of this Employee Handbook, I will ask any LE administration Member.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYEE  
SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

