**Little Friends Preschool**

***A Child's******Pathway******to Learning***

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Little Friends Preschool and thank you for selecting our team as your child’s personal teacher and childcare provider. We will strive to make both your child’s and your relationship with us a pleasant and rewarding one.

You may find our policies and procedures similar to those you have experienced in other early childhood educational programs, and there may also be some differences. The primary goal of Little Friends Preschool is to provide quality early childhood educational services to the families in our diverse community.

This handbook contains information regarding the preschool/childcare program. It is very important that you read this handbook and keep it handy for future reference. It will answer many of the questions you may have about our program.

We are excited to have your child join Little Friends Preschool and want to assure you that your child will be well cared for. Please feel free to call us to see how your child’s day is progressing or for any other questions or concerns you might have.

Sincerely,

Linnette C. Nieves,

Director

PARENT HANDBOOK

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**Little Friends Preschool**

***A Child's******Pathway******to Learning***

**Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide quality care

and a developmentally appropriate

Nationally recognized educational

program that encourages physical,

language, social-emotional and intellectual

growth in a safe and caring environment

that will prepare and develop children

for school and life.

**Purpose**

The education of young children is a delicate and sensitive undertaking. The major purpose of Little Friends Preschool is to provide children ages 15 months through 6 years old an educational program in a safe, nurturing, and diverse environment. We provide a warm, creative, and stimulating environment using developmentally age- appropriate furniture, toys and activities. Children will build on their natural curiosity and imagination; develop social-emotional skills through positive interactions with teachers and peers and thrive as respectful, self-confident children.

**Philosophy**

It is the philosophy of the Little Friends Preschool program that children be encouraged to learn and grow by providing a foundation of developmentally appropriate experiences where all children can succeed in a safe and nurturing child-centered environment. We use language, literacy, math and science concepts in meaningful ways that allow children to learn both through play and teacher-directed specific academic activities. Our play-based, child-centered program reflects the integration of cognitive, language, social-emotional, physical and aesthetic areas where children begin to develop self-esteem, self-regulation, empathy towards others, and the skills necessary to become productive members of society.

**Staff**

The center is staffed by qualified and caring professionals that strive to develop a warm and constructive relationship with each child. The director and teachers have specialized training in early childhood education and child development. The staff at Little Friends Preschool will provide a creative and thematic curriculum in which children can learn, grow, and thrive at their own individual pace.

**Classroom Goals**

**The Children Will:**

* Develop a sense of respect and responsibility for their peers, teacher, and classroom.
* Feel free to express their feelings.
* Experience successful interactions among peers.
* Feel safe and secure in the classroom environment.
* Find success, value and worth within themselves.
* Appreciate cultural diversity.
* Develop skills to clean up after themselves.

**Physical Development:**

* Develop an awareness of proper health and safety procedures.
* Children will be offered activities that will enhance their gross motor and fine motor skills.

**Social/Emotional Development:**

* Children will develop verbal skills that will help in socialization.
* Children will have support and encouragement to express feelings in an appropriate manner.

**Intellectual Development - Language:**

* Children will be offered opportunities for language development.
* Children will experience and enjoy quality literature in a variety of ways.

**Intellectual Development – Cognitive:**

* Children will explore math concepts such as classifying, sequencing, graphing, and categorizing**.**
* Children will explore number concepts through pretend play, music, movement, and art.
* Children will begin to recognize themselves as problem solvers and work on conflict resolution.

**Program**

Each classroom environment is carefully organized, with a selection of toys, books, and materials accessible to children. Each week, teachers will develop a lesson plan of activities around a theme and with a focus on specific skills to meet the developmental needs of the children in the classroom. The Toddlers & Twos and Preschool classrooms are organized into distinct interest areas, such as blocks, dramatic play, art, sand & water, table toys, music and movement, and library.

The goals of our curriculum are to help children develop a positive sense of self, be active and creative explorers and, in the process, become enthusiastic learners. Our program addresses goals in all areas of development. No single area of development is stressed above another. Little Friends Preschool will provide children with learning experiences through meaningful play that help children meet development and learning objectives that lead to individual growth and school readiness.

**Activities**

The daily schedule for each group is posted on the Parent Communication Board in each of the classrooms. The daily schedule is a combination of child-initiated and teacher-led activities. Mornings typically begin with child-selected activities, including art, block-building, and pretend play.

**Outdoor/Playground**

Outdoor play is scheduled in the mornings and afternoons every day throughout the school year. Exceptions are made when meteorologists are reporting dangerous wind chills or heat indexes. During the winter months, we ask that you send children with weather-appropriate clothing, including snow pants, boots, hats, and gloves. Parents who do not want their child to participate in outdoor activities must make other arrangements for their child during this time.

**Little Friends Preschool**

**Classroom Schedule**

**Toddlers & Twos**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 7:00 | - | 7:45 | Arrival/Free Play – Preschool Playroom |
| 7:45 | - | 8:00 | Transition to Toddler & Two’s Room |
| 8:00 | - | 8:30 | Washroom / Books |
| 8:30 | - | 9:00 | Breakfast Time |
| 9:00 | - | 9:30 | Washroom / Diaper Change |
| 9:30 | - | 9:45 | Circle Time / Books / Calendar / Songs |
| 9:45 | - | 10:30 | Art / Sensory Table / Interest Areas |
| 10:30 | - | 10:45 | Water Time / Snack - Optional |
| 10:45 | - | 11:00 | Clean Up / Wash hands |
| 11:00 | - | 11:15 | Transition to Outdoors |
| 11:15 | - | 11:45 | Outdoor Play |
| 11:45 | - | 12:00 | Transition to Indoors |
| 12:00 | - | 12:30 | Lunch Time |
| 12:30 | - | 1:00 | Diaper Change /Story Time – Prepare for Nap |
| 1:00 | - | 3:00 | Quiet Time / Nap Time / Soft Music |
| 3:00 | - | 3:30 | Wake up / Washroom / Diaper Change |
| 3:30 | - | 4:00 | PM Snack Time |
| 4:00 | - | 4:15 | Washroom / Transition Outdoors |
| 4:15 | - | 4:45 | Outdoor Play |
| 4:45 | - | 5:00 | Clean Up / Transition to Indoors |
| 5:00 | - | 5:15 | Wash hands / Diaper Check & Change |
| 5:15 | - | 5:30 | Circle Time / Recap of daily events |
| 5:30 | - | 5:45 | Music Time |
| 5:45 | - | 6:00 | Transition and combine all Groups / Good-byes |

**Little Friends Preschool**

**Preschool Schedule**

**Group I**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 7:00 | - | 8:15 | Arrival/Free Play – Preschool Playroom |
| 8:15 | - | 8:30 | Washroom |
| 8:30 | - | 9:00 | Breakfast Time |
| 9:00 | - | 9:15 | Washroom |
| 9:15 | - | 9:30 | Circle Time / Books / Calendar / Songs |
| 9:30 | - | 9:45 | Transition Outdoors – Group I |
| 9:45 | - | 10:30 | Outdoor Play / Group I |
| 10:30 | - | 10:45 | Clean up / Transition Indoors / Washroom – Group I |
| 10:45 | - | 11:30 | Art / Sensory Table / Interest Areas |
| 11:30 | - | 11:45 | Group Time – Group I & Group II |
| 11:45 | - | 12:00 | Clean up /Washroom |
| 12:00 | - | 12:30 | Lunch Time |
| 12:30 | - | 12:45 | Washroom / Prep for Nap Time |
| 12:45 | - | 1:00 | Story Time |
| 1:00 | - | 3:00 | Quiet Time / Nap Time / Soft Music |
| 3:00 | - | 3:15 | Wake up / Washroom  |
| 3:15 | - | 3:45 | PM Snack Time |
| 3:45 | - | 4:00 | Washroom / Transition Outdoors Group I |
| 4:00 | - | 4:45 | Outdoor Play – Group I |
| 4:45 | - | 5:00 | Transition Indoors / Washroom – Group I |
| 5:00 | - | 5:15 | Circle Time / Recap of daily events – Group I |
| 5:15 | - | 5:45 | Music Time – Group I |
| 5:45 |  | 6:00 | Transition and combine all Groups / Good-byes |

**Little Friends Preschool**

**Preschool Schedule**

**Group II**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 7:00 | - | 8:15 | Arrival/Free Play – Preschool Playroom |
| 8:15 | - | 8:30 | Washroom |
| 8:30 | - | 9:00 | Breakfast Time |
| 9:00 | - | 9:15 | Washroom |
| 9:15 | - | 9:30 | Circle Time / Books / Calendar / Songs |
| 9:30 | - | 10:15 | Art / Sensory Table / Interest Areas |
| 10:15 | - | 10:30 | Clean up / Transition Outdoors / Washroom – Group II |
| 10:30 | - | 11:15 | Outdoor Play / Group II |
| 11:15 | - | 11:30 | Clean up / Transition Indoors / Washroom – Group II |
| 11:30 | - | 11:45 | Group Time – Group I & Group II |
| 11:45 | - | 12:00 | Clean up /Washroom |
| 12:00 | - | 12:30 | Lunch Time |
| 12:30 | - | 12:45 | Washroom / Prep for Nap |
| 12:45 | - | 1:00 | Story Time |
| 1:00 | - | 3:00 | Quiet Time / Nap Time / Soft Music |
| 3:00 | - | 3:15 | Wake up / Washroom |
| 3:15 | - | 3:45 | PM Snack Time |
| 3:45 | - | 4:00 | Washroom  |
| 4:00 | - | 4:15 | Circle Time / Recap of daily events – Group II |
| 4:15 | - | 4:45 | Music Time – Group II |
| 4:45 | - | 5:00 | Washroom / Transition Outdoors – Group II |
| 5:00 | - | 5:45 | Outdoor Play – Group II |
| 5:45 | - | 6:00 | Transition and combine all Groups / Good-byes |

**Enrollment**

Little Friends Preschool is an equal opportunity provider of educational/childcare services. The enrollment application is accepted without regard to race, religion, sex, or national origin. We accept children with disabilities and special needs and will make “reasonable accommodations” based on the recommendations of the child’s health care provider and in consultation with the child’s parents.

Upon enrollment, your child will be placed in either the Toddlers & Two or Preschool classroom based upon his or her chronological age. Each child’s advancement to the next classroom is based on chronological age, developmental readiness, and availability of space.

**Tuition**

Upon the initial decision to enroll a child(ren), parents are asked to pay a non-refundable enrollment fee of $50.00 per child and $25.00 for each subsequent child being enrolled. In addition, one-week tuition per child for deposit is due upon enrollment. The deposit will be retained by the Center if a two-week notice is not given upon your decision to withdraw your child(ren) or if you terminate the contract within 1 year.

The Center accepts families participating in the Illinois Department of Human Services subsidized childcare program. Parents are responsible for the initial application (or re-determination) process. The Center will assist the parent in submitting any required documents to Action for Children. Weekly tuition will be collected until the subsidy is approved in writing and the center has received payment for the services rendered, at which point the parent will be reimbursed for any overpayment. Any shortfall must be made up by the parent out-of-pocket. If at any point a parent is dropped from the subsidized childcare program, the parent will be responsible for the weekly tuition.

* Tuition is due on Friday the week prior to care.
* Payment is accepted either by cash, check, or electronic payment.
* Checks should be made payable to: Little Friends Preschool.
* There is no deduction from the tuition for the holidays that we are closed.
* No allowances will be made for occasional absent days due to illness or vacation.

**Delinquent fees**

Accounts that become delinquent may be turned over to our collections department with potential additional fees charged. Services will be discontinued until the account is current.

* If tuition is not received on Friday for the upcoming week, a late fee of $35.00 will be added to the weekly tuition the following Monday when you drop off your child. If no payment is received by Monday, your child will not be allowed to attend the Preschool until the tuition payment is current.
* A $35.00 fee will be added for each NSF check return from the bank unpaid.
* A $1.00 per minute fee will be charged for an additional time after 6:00 p.m.
* A late payment fee will be charged each week to accounts not paid in full on your child’s first scheduled day.

**Insurance Information**

If your child is injured while at Little Friends Preschool and requires medical attention, your health insurance will be the primary source responsible for payment of the cost of treatment for your child. If there are charges for treatment that are not paid for by your health insurance, Little Friends Preschool has a secondary insurance policy that will pay for treatment for your child only to the extent that such costs are not covered by your primary health insurance. The policy requires that you pay a deductible for each incident. The Center Director will give you an Accident & Sickness Proof of Loss Form to give to your physician to fill out. Return the completed form directly to the insurance company at the address on the form. You have one year from the date of the injury to make a claim under this secondary insurance policy.

**Hours/Days of Operation**

Little Friends Preschool is a full-service childcare center that operates from 7:00 a.m. and closes at 6:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday. We are open year-round except for the following:

**Holidays**

New Year’s Eve

New Year’s Day

Memorial Day

4th of July

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day After Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

**Admission**

Prior to admission, we request that you read this Parent Handbook of Little Friends Preschool policies and procedures and that you complete and sign all enrollment forms. The non-refundable registration fee and the first’s week tuition are due on or before the first day of your child’s attendance. We require a pre-admission visit with the parent and child to acquaint the new family with the center environment, teachers, and the schedule for the care of your child.

**Enrollment Forms**

The following forms should be completed and submitted to the Center prior to enrollment:

* Application/Record of Child Information
* Consent to Day Care Providers
* Certificate of Child Health Examination
* Birth Certificate (Within 30 days of enrollment)
* Childcare Contract
* Guidance & Discipline Policy & Agreement
* Child’s Emergency Record
* Health Care Policy & Agreement
* Summary of Licensing Standards Receipt
* Sunscreen Lotion Consent Form
* Permission Forms
* Non-Prescription Meds. Consent From
* Request/Waiver for Pesticide Application
* Intoxicated Person Policy & Agreement

**Discharge policies**

Parents may withdraw their child from Little Friends Preschool at any time. A written statement from the parent/guardian stating the reason for the decision to withdraw the child is required two weeks in advance. The one-week tuition/deposit received at the time of enrollment will be retained by the Center when:

1. Parents withdraw their child within one (1) year of enrollment; or
2. When a two-week notice is not given after one (1) year of enrollment.

Please be aware that should one of the following situations arise, we may ask you to dis-enroll your child:

1. Failure to pay your child’s tuition

Our policy is that tuition must be paid in advance for the upcoming week, and for the schedule, you have agreed to on the “Application/Record of Child Information” initiated at the time of enrollment.

1. Verbal or physical abuse by your child to other children or staff

Our goal is always to ensure the safety of every child and every staff member in our Center. A child’s language or behavior that is hurtful to other children or staff, such as profanity, using sexual language, humiliating, throwing rocks, furniture, toys, etc. is inappropriate and unacceptable. If your child should display such behavior, an Incident Report will be completed by your child’s teacher. The Center Director will review it with you to identify possible solutions. If the behavior continues, you may be asked to dis-enroll your child.

1. If your child bites another child

Although recognized as a developmental stage, biting is very serious and is unacceptable. If your child bites, we will develop a plan with you to try to correct the behavior. However, we may ask that you temporarily dis-enroll your child if the biting is aggressive i.e., breaks the skin, or the biting does not lessen within a reasonable period, (two weeks after consultation) and if your child continues to hurt other children, we may increase your tuition payment to offset the cost of an additional staff member who will be responsible for the one-on-one care of your child until he/she is older and is better able to function in a group care setting.

1. Non-compliance with immunization and exclusion due to illness

You should make certain that your child is immunized according to the schedule recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. If your child’s immunizations are not completed according to the recommended schedule, we may exclude your child for the protection of the other children until such immunizations are current.

**Arrivals and Departures**

All parents are expected to adhere to the daily schedule agreed upon with the Director. Parents need to inform teachers of changes in their child’s normal routine, particularly if it affects their day at the Center. This will help prepare your child for the change, make adequate staffing plans, and/or inform other children that your child will be absent. It is especially important that you let us know if your child will have a longer day at the Center. A child anticipates his/her parent’s arrival and can become worried or anxious if not picked up at the usual time.

Because consistency in daily routines is so important to young children, parents and teachers need to communicate openly and frequently about the schedule that works for them, their child, and the classroom.

**Arrivals**

An adult must accompany children when arriving and departing from the Center. No person under the age of 18, including family members, may pick up a child from the center. Parents are required to physically bring their child into the center to “sign in,” and to pick up their child inside the Center and “sign out.” A sign-in sheet is used for each of the classrooms. The signature of a responsible adult is needed at the drop-off and pick-up of your child. Your child will not be released to anyone other than those designated on the application unless a written request is received.

**Late Arrivals**

All children are expected to arrive at the Center by 9:00 a.m. Because activities are scheduled, playgroups are formed, and the morning is generally a busy time, we appreciate a telephone call if parents anticipate arriving after 9:00 a.m. While we can accommodate occasional late arrivals, they are disruptive to the classroom and difficult for the late child. **Children will not be accepted into the classroom if they arrive later than 9:00 a.m. on a continual basis.** When such a pattern develops, teachers will give parents a verbal warning, after which the child will not be accepted into the classroom for that day.

**Departures**:

We ask that you make every effort to pick up your child before the center closes. Parents are expected to pick up their child at the time agreed upon with the Director and never later than 6:00 p.m. Our staff may not take your child home with them or make other childcare arrangements. **Parents who develop a pattern of arriving at the Center after the 6:00 p.m. Closing time will be given a verbal warning and ultimately written notice of withdrawal from the program.** If your child is left in the Center after closing, staff will take the following measures:

1. Try to contact you by phone.
2. Try to call your emergency contacts.
3. If unsuccessful, the staff member will contact the appropriate authorities.

**Release of Children**

Any parent or other person who is authorized to pick up a child enrolled at Little Friends Preschool and comes to the Center intoxicated or in an impaired physical condition which may prevent him/her from assuring the child's welfare will not be allowed to pick up the child. In the event that a parent or other authorized person arrives at the center while intoxicated or in an impaired condition, staff will use their best judgment in determining if they are in a condition that may prevent them from assuring the child's welfare. Should it be determined that the person is in a condition that prevents him from assuring the child's welfare, the staff will:

1. Make alternative arrangements for child pick-up, including, attempting to contact another person on the Authorized Child Pick-up List.
2. Notify the following individual(s) in writing:
	1. The parent(s) of the child (if they are not the ones who are intoxicated or impaired)
	2. The intoxicated/impaired person and spouse;
	3. Parents of other children the person has been authorized to pick up;
	4. Appropriate Center staff.

For any parent or other authorized person who arrives at the center in an intoxicated or physically impaired condition to pick up an enrolled child, the following will occur:

1. One written warning;
2. Removal from the list of individuals authorized to pick up a child after the second occurrence.

The Center Director, or the person in charge, is authorized to carry out the directives of this policy.

**Absentee**

If your child will not be attending the Center for any reason, a phone call in the morning before 9:00 a.m., or as soon as possible, is requested. There will be no deduction from the weekly tuition if your child does not attend for any particular reason on a scheduled day of attendance.

**Parking**

There are two (2) designated parking spaces on the side entrance of the Center on Bryn Mawr Ave. These spaces are to be used for the drop-off and pick-up of your child.

The side entrance of the Center, which is the Preschool Classroom, will be used as the main entrance for arrivals and departures of the children assigned to that classroom. The corner entrance is the Toddlers and Twos classroom and is used as the main entrance for the children in that classroom. All doors are kept locked from the inside for security purposes and all parents and visitor must ring the doorbell.

**Illness/Accidents**

Little Friends Preschool is dedicated to providing a safe and healthy environment and has implemented Health policies and procedures in accordance with the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and as mandated by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The Center has also implemented a Covid-19 action plan. Refer to the Covid-19 Health Policy Handbook for detailed precautionary information and in determining when your child should not attend the center.

Staff shall conduct a daily pre-admission screening upon arrival of the child to determine if the child has any obvious signs or symptoms of illness. If symptoms of illness are present, the childcare staff shall determine whether that child needs to be excluded. The Center staff will document any findings in the child’s individual Child’s Daily Health Check Log.

Children exhibiting any of the symptoms listed below will remain excluded from the Center until the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) or local health department states, in writing, that the communicable, contagious, or infectious stage of the disease has passed and that the child may be re-admitted to the center.

* 1. A child suspected of having or diagnosed as having a reportable infectious, contagious, or communicable disease for which isolation is required by the Illinois Department of Public Health's General Procedures for the Control of Communicable Diseases regulations of May 29, 2020, shall be excluded from the Center.
	2. Children with a fever of 100.4º F or higher shall not be admitted to the Center while those symptoms persist and shall be removed as soon as possible should these symptoms develop while the child is in the Center.
	3. Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exists, in which case exclusion from the Center is required:
		1. Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities;
		2. Illness that calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children;
		3. Fever of 100.4º F or higher with behavior change or symptoms of illness;
		4. Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of possible severe illness;
		5. Diarrhea;
		6. Vomiting 1 or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
		7. Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his or her saliva, until the child's physician or the local health department states that the child is noninfectious;
		8. Rash with fever or behavior change, unless a physician has determined the illness to be non-communicable;
		9. Purulent conjunctivitis, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
		10. Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
		11. Strep throat (streptococcal pharyngitis), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
		12. Head lice, until the morning after the first treatment;
		13. Scabies, until the morning after the first treatment;
		14. Chickenpox (varicella), until at least 6 days after onset of rash;
		15. Whooping cough (pertussis), until 5 days of antibiotic treatment have been completed;
		16. Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling;
		17. Measles, until 4 days after the disappearance of the rash; or
		18. Symptoms that may be indicative of Covid-19, one of the current serious, communicable disease identified by the Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases which also include;
			1. Fever or chills
			2. Cough
			3. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
			4. Fatigue
			5. Muscle or body aches
			6. Headache
			7. New loss of taste or smell
			8. Sore throat
			9. Congestion or runny nose
			10. Nausea or vomiting
			11. Diarrhea

**Immunizations**

For the health and safety of all children, we ask that you follow Little Friends Preschool’s health policies for minimum immunization and reporting of communicable diseases. Not following vaccination recommendations may endanger the health or life of an unvaccinated child, others with whom they come in contact, and individuals in the community. All children must be immunized according to the schedule which is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the IDPH and DCFS.

**Minimum *I*mmunization Requirements**

* 4 doses Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis.
* 3 doses Polio.
* 1 dose MMR.
* 3 doses Hepatitis B.
* 4 doses Hib titer.
* 1 dose **Varicella** (chickenpox) vaccine.
* Pneumococcal series, or one dose after the age of two.

**Emergency Medical Care**

At Little Friends Preschool we take every precaution to provide a safe environment for your child. However, occasionally children are injured or become ill at the Center. In either case, we will contact you to pick up your child from the Center (within 1 – 1 ½ hours) in order to prevent contagion of other children and staff and to provide comfort to your child. If you cannot be reached, we will call the emergency number you have provided for us.

In the event of a medical emergency, the staff will follow these procedures:

1. Assess the immediate situation and determine if the child is ill or injured, the extent of the injury, and where first aid is needed to assure breathing, control bleeding, and limit further injury.
2. Determine a course of action, including notifying the parent and contacting the paramedic services (if needed) to transport the child (accompanied by a teacher or parent) to the hospital. All parents are required to sign an emergency medical authorization allowing staff to obtain emergency medical treatment in the parent’s absence.

Below is a list of medical emergencies that would require immediate medical care by a health care professional.

• Loss of consciousness

• Semi consciousness

• Breathing difficulties

• Severe bleeding

• Unequal pupils

• Seizure

• Neck or back injury

• Continuous clear drainage from nose/ears after a blow to the head

• Severe headache

• Stiff neck or neck pain when head is moved

• Hives that appear quickly

•A very sick child who seems to get worse quickly

• Repeated forceful vomiting

• Vomiting blood

• Severe abdominal pain that causes a child to double over

• Abdominal pain after a blow to the abdomen

• Possible broken bones

• Shock

**Medication**

We may dispense medication after the following has been done:

1. Parent or guardian signs a “Medication Consent Form” allowing the staff to administer the medication.
2. The prescription container is labeled with contents and instructions from the doctor and the child’s first and last name.

**Religious Exemption**

Parents who request that medical treatment be waived on religious grounds should submit their request for such a waiver in writing. The waiver must be signed by the parent. Exceptions for children who should not be subject to emergency medical treatment must be indicated by the child’s physician on the “Certificate of Child Health Examination”. Parents are required to submit to the Center a plan to access the services of a certified practitioner for a child exempt from medical care on religious grounds.

No student is required to have an immunization/examination that is contrary to the religious beliefs of his/her parent or legal guardian. In a disease outbreak, or after exposure to any of the diseases for which immunization is required, we may exclude children who are not vaccinated to protect all students.

Parents who request that immunizations be waived on religious grounds must submit their request for such a waiver in writing utilizing the “Illinois Certificate of Religious Exemption to Required Immunization and/or Examination Form”.

The form, which is available from the Director, must be signed by the child’s parent or legal guardian **AND** the child’s health care provider responsible for performing the child’s health examination.

**Illness/Accident Notification**

Good communication is essential between the parents and staff members. Parents will always be informed by teachers immediately (by telephone or text message) if the illness or injury is serious, or at the end of the day for a minor injury. Parents and guardians will be notified when any communicable disease or condition has been introduced into the Center in accordance with IDPH recommendations and by utilizing Little Friends Preschool’s Parent “Communicable Disease Notification letter”. In addition, a health alert will be posted, and we will attempt to communicate to you the earliest symptoms so that additional exposures can be avoided.

**Required Reporting**

For the protection of all children and staff members, we ask that you notify the Center within 24 hours after your child has developed a known or suspected communicable disease, or if any member of the child’s immediate household has a communicable disease. When your child has a disease requiring exclusion, we ask that you inform the Center’s Director or staff of the diagnosis.

**Trips and Special Occasions**

Periodically we will take the children on short trips to the park and into the community. These trips are planned for fun, a change in environment and to expand the children’s learning experiences. When taking a field trip, the safety of your child is our primary concern. The Toddlers & Twos will be transported using the six-seat Bye-Bye Buggy and two-seat strollers for field trips in the surrounding neighborhood. Children three years and older will be escorted by their teachers.

The Center has a van for transporting children on field trips. Children must be three years or older to go on any field trip outside of the community. You will be notified of the details and your written permission will be required for each trip. Children on a field trip are required to adhere to safety control standards such as buckled seat belts.

The van used for transporting children on field trips is insured by State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Co. for bodily injury $300,000/$500,000 and medical payments of $50,000.

**Birthday Parties**

Each child’s birthday is recognized by Little Friends Preschool staff as a special day for that child, as well as for his/her classmates and teachers. The birthday celebration, however, is purposefully kept simple and child-centered. The birthday child’s parents(s) are asked to bring either a simple packaged, store-bought birthday cake or cupcakes to be shared with the classroom group at snack time. We will celebrate your child’s birthday in a simple way.

**Personal Belongings**

To help your child feel more comfortable while at the Center, we ask that you bring a few things to keep in his/her cubby. Children get wet through water play, painting, spills, or bathroom accidents, and they often feel better when they can change into dry clothing. Each child will need a full change of clothes, including a shirt, pants or shorts, underwear, and socks.

**Cubby**

Each child is assigned a cubby. It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that their child has the needed supplies i.e., diapers, wipes, and extra clothes. Check your child’s cubby weekly for needed supplies.

**Clothes**

Please dress your child for play. The children will be painting, pasting, climbing, etc., and need to feel free to participate in these activities. We recommend gym shoes or sneakers for running and climbing. Please provide suitable outside clothing for each season. Mark the items with your child’s name.

**Extra Clothing for Children**

 Two (2) Tops

 Two (2) Bottoms

 Two (2) Socks

 Extra pair of Shoes

 Seasonal Clothing as required

**Toys and other possessions**

We provide a cot and small blanket for your child’s use at nap/rest time. Your child may bring a favorite bedtime toy to sleep with during naptime. For reasons of sanitation and storage, we ask that your child NOT bring his/her blanket or pillow or any other toys to the classroom.

**Art Projects**

Most of your child’s art projects will be put in his/her cubby each day. Occasionally, some of the projects will not be finished until the following day and sometimes they will be displayed on the walls.

**Confidentiality**

Little Friends Preschools respects the rights of each family to privacy and confidentiality regarding information pertaining to the admission, health, behavioral and developmental records, or discharge, of an individual child. This information shall be confidential and limited to the staff unless the parent of the child has granted written permission or in the case where there is evidence of child abuse. The staff is mandated by Illinois State Law to report to the Department of Children and Family Services any case of suspected child abuse or neglect.

As required by the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, teachers and directors must report suspected child abuse or neglect and provide information to representatives of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services if they suspect that a child is being abused or neglected or if contacted during an investigation of such a report. These reports are always handled confidentially within the Center program.

**Release of Information**

The staff at Little Friends Preschool will provide information about a child enrolled in the program only to that child’s parent or legal guardian. Parents who anticipate needing information release to schools, physicians, social-service agencies, etc., should notify the Director well in advance, when possible. Information will not be released over the telephone to a child’s relative or a parent whom we have not met. Written authorization from the parent or legal guardian is required before the Center will release any information to third parties.

**Video, Photography & Tape-Recording Guidelines**

Video equipment at the Center is primarily for staff development purposes. Its use is for teachers and their supervisors to increase knowledge of their teaching styles and to enhance their professional development as a teacher of young children. All use of the video equipment is coordinated by the Director.

We ask that parents not bring in their own personal video equipment or cameras to tape or take photographs in the classroom. While we understand that some parents would enjoy filming their child at school, other parents specifically request that their child not be taped or photographed by anyone other than a staff member. If you would like to take a picture of a special occasion (such as your child’s birthday celebration), please discuss it beforehand with a teacher. With the teacher’s permission, a parent may take a picture of the child with his/her teacher(s) and/or parent(s), as long as no other children are in the photograph.

In terms of videotape viewing, we may show a videotape made in that classroom in order to see an activity, such as a story dramatization, a puppet show, or other “productions” carried out by the children. Carefully selected commercial videotapes, such as favorite stories, may be used in conjunction with other classroom activities.

**Guidance and Discipline Policy**

Little Friends Preschool believes in positive methods of discipline. We set consistent, age-appropriate limits to encourage children to function in their world. The teachers work to prevent conflict by arranging the room so that the children work in small groups and have a choice of activities. We are also trained to skillfully guide children’s behavior along appropriate channels. We establish limits and teach the children to understand the consequences of actions that are unacceptable.

Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing, profane language, corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching, and other measures intended to include physical pain or fear is prohibited and not tolerated at Little Friends Preschool.

The teachers at Little Friends Preschool are fair and consistent in dealing with appropriate behavior. We use positive guidance techniques and will follow these procedures when dealing with difficult behavior.

1. State of the rule.
2. State simple brief reasons for the rule.
3. State the consequences.
4. Help the child find an acceptable alternative for his/her behavior.
5. Help the child carry through the alternative plan.
6. If the child cannot acceptably control himself/herself, we then remove the child from the situation and take him/her to another play area. Removal from the group will not be used for children under 24 months of age.
7. Time out may be used in extreme situations, but only as a way to separate the child from the situation or confrontation. The time is 1 minute per year of the child’s age.

If your child has difficulty with his/her behavior the teacher will notify the parents as follows:

1. A conversation with the parent is initiated to discuss the inappropriate behavior.
2. Written notification is given to the parents for repeated behavior problems.
3. A formal conference with the teacher and parents is scheduled in order to make a plan to meet the child’s needs.
4. After several attempts have been made to meet the child’s individual needs; any child who demonstrates the inability to benefit from the care offered at Little Friends Preschool or whose presence is detrimental to the group will be discharged.

**Daily Communication**

We encourage you to speak with your child’s teacher regularly. However, at times it is quicker and simpler for us to post a general notice. In the main entrance of the Center, there is a bulletin board for posting notices to parents about the Center and general parent/child information. You will find a variety of articles and forms, including licensing information, bulletins about contagious illnesses, and other resources available to you. In addition, each classroom has its bulletin board with notices related to that classroom’s schedule, activities, and weekly menus.

**Parent’s Bin**

At the entrance of each classroom, there is a parent bin with your child’s name. Please check your bin daily for any communication or for any of your child’s art projects that need to be taken home.

**Nutrition**

Daily breakfast, lunch, and snacks are provided by Little Friends Preschool and are prepared on-site. Weekly menus are posted on the bulletin board of each classroom.

Lunch is served family-style and the preschool children serve themselves and select the amount of food they want to eat. The Toddlers & Twos are served by the teachers until they are developmentally ready to serve themselves.

Please discuss any food allergies or other food restrictions your child may have with the Director or classroom teachers. In order to protect children with food allergies from contact with the problem food, we ask parents to give consent to post information about the child’s food allergy and possible allergic reactions as a visual reminder to all those who interact with the child during the day.

As a participant in the Child and Adult Food Care Program we are required to serve a protein for lunch, as well as milk. If your family is vegetarian, we ask that you send your child with a protein substitute on days that meat is offered.

Teachers sit in the classroom with the children, assisting them as needed and encouraging them to taste new foods. Lunch is a time for nutrition and conversation, with the goal of having a relaxing mid-day meal. Children are not required to eat more than they want. Food is never used as a reward or punishment at the Center.

Parents are welcome to join their child’s class for lunch. Please let your child’s teachers know in advance when you would like to have lunch with the group. The classroom teacher will invite you to join the class for lunch or snacks when your child’s birthday is observed.

**Cooking Activities**

The Center strives to provide nutritious meals and snacks to the children, including classroom cooking activities. Teachers provide a variety of recipes for the children to use in preparing food for their classmates to enjoy.

**See Separate “Child and Adult Food Program Meal Pattern” File for complete information**

**Nondiscrimination Statement**

The commitment of Little Friends Preschool to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity requires that decisions involving children and employees be based on individual merit and be free from invidious discrimination in all its forms.

It is the policy of the center not to engage in discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military, or status as a protected veteran and will comply with all federal and state nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, orders, and regulations. This nondiscrimination policy applies to admissions, employment, access to and treatment in the Center’s programs and activities.

The Center’s complaint and grievance procedures provide parents/guardians and children with the means for the resolution of complaints that allege a violation of this Statement.

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Fire/Rescue/Police . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (911)

Hospital: Weiss Memorial Hospital . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (773) 387-8700

Poison Control Center . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (800) 222-1222

Electric Co (Com-Ed) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (800) 734-7661

Gas Co (Peoples Gas) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (866) 556-6001

Water Co. (City of Chicago) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (312) 744-4426

Insurance Provider (Midwest Certified Ins. Agency) . . . . (847) 640-8000

Director (Linnette C. Nieves) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (773) 317-9900

Assistant Director/Classrooms - Direct Line. . . . . . . . . . . (312) 973-2800

Evacuation - Neighborhood (Mellin Park) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (773) 317-9900

Evacuation Off-site (Jewel-Osco) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (773) 728-7730