



# Parent Handbook

Our mission at A Little Folks School House is to instill a life-long love of learning in the most nurturing and caring environment. Our philosophy as a program is to provide an environment that is safe and loving for all children to grow and succeed by giving children the opportunity to learn through play-based activities throughout the day. Our goal is to help children gain independence and self-awareness. Teachers design age-appropriate curriculum that will challenge and support independence and self-awareness for each child. Your child's day will consist of circle time, small and large group activities, outdoor exploration, and themed-based experiences.

As a school and a business, we have policies that we expect every family will follow. Please read the following information carefully and keep it as an important resource.

<u>Mailing Address</u>	<u>Tax ID #</u>	<u>Established</u>
A Little Folks School House PO Box 707 Londonderry, NH 03053	26-3169985	1976

## **Program Goals:**

### **General Curriculum**

Our curriculum covers the following areas: music, art, math, science, social studies, dramatics, language arts, reading, readiness, cooking, motor development, and creative movement. We believe socialization is particularly important for young children, and our program's routine and structure reflects this by allowing plenty of time for the children to play with friends outside during free play, and during free choice in their classroom learning centers. Making decisions about where they play and whom they interact with allow them to be socially confident, accepting, and independent.

Please refer to your classroom program guide for specific curriculum information.

### **Parent Involvement**

A vital part of our program is the strong bond between the teachers, children and their families. As caregivers, we dedicate ourselves to providing children with a very nurturing, supportive and appropriate environment, and because of this, we form very strong bonds with the children in our school. Equally important are the partnerships we have with the families that come to our center. We recognize you as the child's first teacher and look to build a foundation of trust. We are here to work in cooperation with families in doing what is in the very best interest of each child.

Part of developing good communication is daily contact with families. Our open door policy welcomes each of you into your child's world and encourages you to become involved with your children's education and social lives by visiting their classrooms and getting to know your child's routine. Talk to us at drop-off and pick-up times.

Ask questions, explore the classrooms, stay for morning snack, share a talent, or help us with a party. What are they learning about, what can they do, who are their friends? Ask teachers questions about their progress and get advice about behavior concerns. Above all, speak to your child about their day at school. When children grow up knowing that their family communicates with their teachers, then their chances of great achievement are considerably increased.

### **Getting Started**

Please try to maintain a consistent daily schedule, as this is an important part of establish a secure feeling for your child. Children thrive on consistency. Also, pick-up and drop-off time need to remain constant as they affect our

staff to child ratios. If you are going to pick up your child later than normal, please contact the center so that we can make staff adjustments if necessary. More often than not, we can accommodate an occasional variation; nevertheless, if each family changed their times daily we would not be able to maintain strict staff to child ratios. When you enroll, you are asked to fill in your child's daily hours, and we ask that you stay within these hours each day.

### Hours of Operation

Our center opens at 7:00 a.m. (7:30 for Infant/Toddler Rooms)

Other than our staff, no one is allowed on the premises prior to this time unless otherwise arranged with the director. Our curriculum part of the day begins at 8:30 a.m. we request that your child arrive to school by this time. On time arrival assures that your child can take advantage of all the great learning and social activities that we have planned for the day. It will also prevent disruptions of activities that are going on in each classroom. We value family communication and if the teachers are in the middle of an activity, they may not be able to speak with you.

Our center closes at 5:30 p.m.

You and your child are expected to be out of the building by this time. Please try to understand that our staff has been here all day for your child and many of us have commitments of our own at days end (families, second jobs, school, workshops, etc.) We ask that you be courteous and be ready to leave the building by 5:30 p.m. Any questions or concerns you may have will have to be addressed the following morning.

**Late Fee:** A late fee will be charged to you payable directly to the teacher in charge. A \$15.00 fee for anytime during the first 15 minutes, and an additional \$15.00 for anytime during the next 15 minutes and an additional \$1.00 per minute fee after 6:00 p.m. until the child is picked up, will be charged to you immediately.

If you have not come to pick up your child by closing time, have not called the school to notify us of your status, and we cannot reach you, we will immediately call the person(s) listed on your Emergency/Registration form to come pick up your child. We will leave a note on the door specifying which emergency person picked up your child. This is a worst-case scenario and we hope that you will do your best to contact us if you anticipate being late. Late fee charges will still be charged.

### Health Form and Immunization Records

Upon entering our center, you are responsible for providing us with official proof of current immunizations for your child. Documentation of immunizations shall be on file on the first day your child is in attendance of the program. Immunization schedule must follow the schedule determined by the NH Division of Public Health. A current physical examination record done within the last year is due within 60 calendar days after the date of admission and must be updated on an annual basis. Required immunizations due between physicals must be documented and submitted to the center. It is your responsibility to make doctor appointments well in advance and to return the proper forms and documentation to the center. Your child may not be able to attend if their records are not kept current. Thank you for helping us keep the children safe and healthy.

### Emergency/Registration Form

This form is where you list all of your contact information as well as the names and contact information of people other than you that will be picking up your child. We need this form filled out completely on the very first day your child is in our center. No exceptions will be made. It is very important that you keep this form up to date AT ALL TIMES in case we need to contact you during the day. Forms may never be removed from the premises. Be sure to carefully fill out the section concerning people who may pick up your child other than you. We will not release your child to a minor. If your child is to be picked up by someone that is not on your emergency list or alternate list, we require WRITTEN PERMISSION GIVEN TO US BY YOU. A phone call is not sufficient. It must be in writing. If the alternative pick up person is listed on the form, we require verbal confirmation from you. Only those people who have legal custody can give permission for an alternate person to pick up your child. We require photo ID from anyone picking up your child. We follow these rules exactly for the safety of the children in our care.

## Custody Rights/Parents Rights

While a child is in our care, we will only release them to the persons listed on the *Emergency/Registration Form*. If your family has a legal arrangement that we need to be aware of, please provide us with a letter from the court that explains these custody rights. We cannot withhold a parent or guardian's rights if they are listed as a parent or guardian on the Emergency/Registration form and we are not provided the appropriate legal documents stating that it is not their visiting time. Without legal documentation of rights, we are powerless. Likewise, we will not release a child to a parent or guardian if we have the appropriate legal documentation stating it is not that parent or guardians visiting hours. Most importantly, please do not put our school or our staff members in the middle of your family's difficult situation.

## Payment and Tuition

In both the Admissions application and the Enrollment agreement contract, the following policies are explained in the same terms. Please read the following information carefully and keep in mind that the policies are in place to make the running of the business more efficient.

### Enrollment/Advance/Payment

- We require the First and Last weeks tuition to be paid in advance.
- All fees and advance tuition paid to hold a slot are **NON-REFUNDABLE**
- The first week's tuition is applied to your child's first week only and the advance tuition will be applied to your child's last week of enrollment only.

### Tuition

Your on-time tuition payment allows us to meet payroll and maintain the grounds and facilities of the center. Yearly tuition is broken down into weeks to make payment easier. Late or non-payments make it very difficult to run the program properly. Please follow the following guidelines below and speak to the director if you have any questions.

- Tuition is due on Monday of the current week for that week.
- A \$10.00 late fee will be charged for payment received later than Monday.

### Sick/Missed/Holiday/Closed Days

- Tuition is required for vacation weeks, missed/sick days and holidays.
- Legal holidays that we are closed are considered regular school days and regular payment is expected.
- If your child is not in school on Monday due to illness, then tuition will be due the following day.
- If you expect to be out of school for an extended period or if your child is sick for a couple of days, please drop it off at the center or mail it to the address listed in the front of the handbook.
- If we close (due to bad weather, no power, etc. which is very rare) you are expected to pay for that day as well.
- Please be sure to watch WMUR Channel 9 or check WMUR.com for any school closings.
- Please do not call the center.

Tuition guarantees your child's place in our center and we still must maintain the same staff/student ration upon their return. We cannot substitute any other day for a missed day.

### Withdrawal/Leaving

- Please notify us as soon as possible of your intent to withdraw your child from our program.
- You must also notify us **IN WRITING** 2 weeks prior to your child's last day.
- Without a proper 2 weeks notice in writing, you will forfeit your advance tuition and be billed for the additional week.
- No refunds will be made for any reason.

While it is important for record purposes to have your notice in writing, we hope that you would let us know in person of your intent to withdraw your child from our program. As teachers and child caregivers, we dedicate ourselves to providing children with a very nurturing and supportive environment. This is an absolute necessity for high quality childcare programs, and because of this devotion, we form very strong bonds with the children in our school. It is always sad when a child leaves our school. Therefore, please let the teachers and director know in advance so that we may say our goodbyes and facilitate an appropriate transition for your child and the other children in the program.

If you remove your child from our program for any length of time without paying tuition (i.e. summer vacation), we cannot guarantee a slot for his/her return. We must fill openings as they become vacant. Of course, we will do our very best to try and find an opening if you intend to return. Please let the director know of your plans and we will do what we can to meet your needs.

### Termination of Enrollment

A Little Folks School House reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of a child, if,

- in the opinion of the staff continuing enrollment is not beneficial to the child or the school
- a child's repeated negative behavior or extensive special needs prevent staff from providing adequate care to the individual child or the entire class.
- no satisfactory solution can be reached for unpaid tuition balances
- parents fail to adhere to school policies or procedures

Parents will have at least two weeks notice to plan for termination of services, unless the situation presents a danger to the child and/or to others. Tuition will be required during the two-week period.

### Health and Safety

The following are the center and the State of NH's policies regarding the health and safety precautions to be taken by the family and the center staff. They are intended to promote and ensure the health and safety of all of the children in our center.

#### Illness

Children with the following symptoms or conditions will not be admitted or kept at school. We will call you to pick up your child if he/she has any of the following:

- A contagious disease
- A fever at or over 101° Fahrenheit
- More than one episode of vomiting in one day
- More than one episode of diarrhea in one day
- Any unidentified rash
- Skin lesions that have not been diagnosed or treated by a licensed health practitioner
- A sore throat
- An earache
- Uncontrolled coughing or wheezing
- Unusual or extreme fatigue or lethargy
- Inability to participate in the regular child care activities

If we cannot reach you, we will call the emergency pick-up person(s) listed on your Emergency/Registration form. Please choose these persons carefully and be sure to let them know that they may be contacted in an emergency.

In order to readmit your child that has had a contagious disease, skin lesions or unidentified rash we require a **written release** from your doctor stating that your child may return to school.

**Regardless of what time your child is sent home with symptoms or conditions such as fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, they will not be able to return to school the following day.** In addition, children must be symptom free without the use of over the counter medications for 24 hours.

If you feel that your child is not feeling well in the morning (excluding the above symptoms) and you feel that you must send him/her to school, please follow these guidelines:

- Please notify the staff of their symptoms and of any medications.
- Do not ask the staff to not let your child go outside to play, as play is an important part of our daily program and everyone goes outside.

Please be considerate of everyone at our school and keep your child home if they are not feeling well in the morning. We understand the challenges of working parents and we are here to support you when life is stressful and demanding. Given our understanding, please avoid dosing an obviously sick child with over the counter medication and sending them into school. More often than not, that same child leaves school before lunch because symptoms have not improved or gotten worse. We encourage and expect you to be open and honest with us regarding your child's health and well-being.

### Medication

We will give medication when the following procedures are adhered to:

- Initial doses of all medication must be administered at home or in the doctor's office.
- Over the counter medications must be accompanied by a doctor's note.
- A "blanket note" for over the counter medications is acceptable for six months.
- We will not administer over the counter medications for longer than a three-day period.
- Prescription medication must be in the original bottle and have the pharmacy label on it bearing the child's name, date, and dosage amount. Pharmacies may provide a duplicate bottle if you ask)
- If medications must be refrigerated, please bring it to the attention of the teacher.
- A medicine request form must accompany all medications. We can provide you with one upon request. It must be filled out correctly and be current.

### Injuries

Children get bumps, bruises, and scrapes. We take great pride in keeping the children safe by means of establishing a very protected and well-supervised environment. Your children are watched very closely, but injuries still occur. All staff members are trained in infant and child CPR and must have current First Aid certification. While in our care, your child's safety and protection from harm are our foremost concern.

Nonetheless, we have procedures in the event a child is injured while at school.

If a child receives an injury, we record the injury on an accident report. Please review, sign and return it to your child's teacher. State law requires us to keep these reports on file. Any type of head injury will result in an accident report and a personal call to you.

If a child is injured and it is not life threatening or an urgent emergency, but it seems that they will need to go home or seek a doctors advice, we will immediately contact the first family member listed on the Emergency/Registration form. If that person is not available, we will contact the other people listed as emergency contacts.

If a child is injured, and they need immediate medical attention, one staff will perform CPR or First Aid while another will immediately call 911. After 911 is called, a staff member will call the child's parents or guardian right away.

### Discipline Policy

Learning self-control is a normal part of growing up, so our policy is never to embarrass or ridicule a child when he/she misbehaves. Nor do we allow the use of corporal or physical punishment. Instead, we use positive responses that strengthen the self-esteem of children. Most situations can be handled by redirecting the child to another, more appropriate activity. This approach is called "positive redirection."

- The teacher will be responsible for the discipline in the room.
- The child will be guided toward appropriate behavior.
- The child will be separated from the group for a time with an independent activity (in the same room) until his/her

- behavior warrants coming back to the group.
- If the child continues to be a discipline problem, the parents, teacher, and the director will talk together to try to solve the problem.
- If the child continuously disrupts the class, or becomes a threat to other children, the child may be immediately removed from the program

### Toy/Weapon Policy

Children need to leave toys from home at home. We do not want them to be lost or broken at school. Please do not send any toys with a violent nature this includes; guns, weapons, action figures, super heroes, etc. A LITTLE FOLKS SCHOOL HOUSE (ALFSH) WILL NOT ASSUME ANY LIABILITY FOR LOST, STOLEN AND OR DAMAGED PERSONAL ITEMS.

### Safety

It is all of our responsibility to ensure the safety of children while teaching them the rules of safety and good common sense. We feel that these rules are very important so we strictly enforce them to assure your child's safety and protection. We expect everyone in our community to assist us in providing a very secure environment.

- Please ring the front door bell and to be buzzed in. If no one is able to buzz you in, please walk to the playground and enter the school through the back door. This door is unlocked during the day.
- An adult must accompany all children under 18 years at all times in the building, classroom, playground, and walkway or parking area. This includes siblings that accompany you to pick-up or drop-off your child.
- Do not send any child into the building or parking area alone for any reason. If you forget something inside, you must accompany your child back into the building.
- Do not leave a child unsupervised in the parking lot or out of your control while around moving vehicles.
- Parents are responsible for bringing your children into school or onto the playground and releasing him/her DIRECTLY to a staff member.
- Our responsibility with a child begins as soon as they are directly dropped off and ends when the parent arrives in the classroom to pick the child up.
- During drop-off, pick-up and any other times, parents are requested to reinforce school rules so that your child will learn acceptable behaviors such as staying with parents and not running off, and no running in the school or in the parking lot.
- All parked vehicles must be turned off. This is an enforced State Law.
- Never leave a child unattended in your vehicle. Even young infants must accompany you inside during cold months.
- Please remove all drawstrings from your child's clothing (including jackets, sweatshirts, etc.) prior to sending your child to school. Please keep in mind that drawstrings are very hazardous around playground equipment. Teachers will remove drawstrings from clothing if it has not already been done so.

### Mandated Reporting

While at our school, your children will be in the care of a group of adult staff that is committed first and foremost to providing you with a safe, secure and well-supervised place for your child to spend the day. As teachers, we are legally mandated to report any incidents or evidence of child abuse or neglect to the state.

### Rest Policy

Children who are in attendance of our program for more than five hours are provided with the opportunity for at least one hour of rest, relaxation or sleep, depending on the child's needs. Children who do not fall asleep after 30 minutes will be provided with a quiet activity to use on their mats. Children who are awake after 60 minutes will be provide

with quiet activities at a table. Please bring in a crib sheet and blanket on Monday to be left at school all week. These will be sent home every Friday to be laundered and returned to school the following Monday.

Infants and children who are not able to adjust to a scheduled naptime will be allowed to nap on their own schedule.

### Diet and Nutrition

The following requirements are recommended for children ages One Year to 12 years and should be met in your child's snacks and lunch each day:

- 1 to 2 servings of milk or milk alternative (cheese, yogurt, soy products, other dairy)
- 2 to 4 servings of meat or meat alternative (beans, hummus, soy products)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups of fruit or vegetable or 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 slice of bread or 1 to 2 servings bread alternative (crackers, pasta, cereal)

While it is our responsibility to teach children to eat a nourishing and wholesome diet, we are not allowed to tell the children which foods they must eat first. They are allowed to make their own choices deciding what they want to eat for snacks and lunch.

Please avoid the following foods as they are not healthy: soda, gummy snacks, chocolate bars, fried salty snacks, and candy. Try sending in: fresh fruit and vegetables, fruit cups, applesauce, crackers, pretzels, dry cereal, cheese sticks etc.

Often, your child may not eat something at home, but he/she will try it at school. Send it in and we will try to get them to try new things.

We thank you for your cooperation in all of these matters. The lines of communication are always open; please feel free to speak to your child's teachers or the director if you have any questions or concerns.