



Dear Parents,

Welcome! My name is Ina Brother-Santosuosso, and I am the executive director of Little Corner SchoolHouse. I founded LCSH in 1989 as a small program in my home, and I am very proud of what it has become. I am honored that you are considering LCSH for one of the most important decisions you have as a parent.

We are committed to making our Center the best choice for your child by providing a safe, educational, happy and trusting environment. The pages that follow represent a distillation of information and are not meant to answer every question you might have about your child's experience at LCSH. Rather, this handbook is meant to be a guide that will help to familiarize you with our policies, philosophy, and procedures.

Since the attempt to create a comprehensive parent handbook is an ongoing process, we welcome your input. If you have suggestions for this guide, please submit them to me in writing and I will consider them for inclusion in subsequent editions.

As you read through this handbook, I urge you to keep in mind that a child-care center cannot be all things to all people. Our primary concern is the happiness of your child, so please consider carefully whether our curriculum, policies and philosophy are a good fit for your family.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any further questions. You may call me anytime at LCSH at 617-975-3777 or at home in the evenings at 207-676-8675.

Sincerely,

Ina

Ina Brother-Santosuosso
Executive Director

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE & PHILOSOPHY

LCSH is a co-educational facility, servicing the needs of parents and their children from the ages of 3 months to 5+ years (infant through Pre-K).

At LCSH, we recognize the needs of each individual child and work hand-in-hand with parents to provide a safe, loving and learning environment.

Our child-centered environment promotes growth in all areas of development – social, emotional, cognitive and physical. Our developmentally appropriate curriculum helps to develop the child's self-esteem.

We encourage self-help skills and support our children's natural curiosity to explore and experiment. Our program fosters respect and teaches our children to appreciate the cultural diversity in our Center. We will celebrate customs and rituals that link our diverse cultures together with other families.

Interested parents are invited to visit LCSH, meet with the director and view our facilities. At this time, families are given an admission packet, including a parent handbook (this document), parent rights, referrals, termination and fee schedule.

The licensee (LCSH) shall not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, cultural or national heritage, political beliefs, marital status or disability.

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A CHILD-CENTERED PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Child as the Center of the Curriculum

The child is the center of the curriculum at LCSH. We recognize the universal patterns and milestones of child development, and our approach to early-childhood curriculum is based on what we know to be age-appropriate practices for all young children. However, we also value the fundamental premise of early education – curriculum begins with each child as an individual, with a unique pattern of developmental capabilities, temperamental characteristics and learning styles. Our curricular approach reaches beyond the developmental guidelines found in textbooks and is built new every day to be individually appropriate to the changing interests, abilities and needs of the children in our child-care programs.

The roots of our commitment to a child-centered curriculum philosophy lie in our basic **respect for the special qualities of young children** and our genuine delight in the unfolding wonders of their growth and development. For example, our view of toddlers is not the traditional image of “terrible tyrants,” but rather one of emerging individuals who proudly (and sometimes loudly) announce to the world of adults the exciting news of their growing autonomy. We cherish children and consider it our privilege to accompany each of them on their earliest journeys to discovery and learning. We know the paths to learning on which each child will travel are somewhat different and unique to the learning styles and characteristics of others. The intent of our curriculum is to offer diverse experiences and opportunities for learning and to encourage each child to become actively engaged in shaping the course of these experiences to fit his/her particular interests as a style of learning.

Our curriculum for children at LCSH is a curriculum of caring, with a fundamental goal of developing self-esteem in each child. Children grow to see themselves as important and competent individuals when they are nourished by the unconditional caring and concern of the significant adults in their lives. Children develop a positive self-image when they are also given opportunities to exercise the power of their own choices in play, uninhibited by adult concepts of achievement or failure.

Each child needs to experience success through involvement in self-selected learning activities in which there is no single “correct” way of responding or interacting. The preschooler who creates a new way to move through an obstacle course and the toddler who persistently puts sand into and/or out of various containers are both discovering the power and the possibilities of their own actions, and at the same time, they are experimenting with and learning about their world. Caring teachers celebrate these discoveries and offer their encouragement for the children’s efforts. Our success as teachers of young children is best measured by the extent to which we are able to help each child see him/herself as a valued individual and an able learner.

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The Significance of Teacher-Child Relationships

Trust, the development of which Erikson identified as the first major developmental task of early childhood, is established in children's first relationships with their caregivers, both parents and teachers. Trust is the first condition for effective learning. It promotes a sense of well-being and emotional security in young children, creating a solid foundation for future learning from the diverse experiences of childhood. Without the early support of trusting relationships with caring adults, children are ill-equipped to take the kinds of risks that are essential to the learning process.

Our teachers' primary goal is to establish relationships of trust with young children in the child-care programs at LCSH. Trust develops when teachers allow children to anticipate positive experiences in the child-care setting. If children are to develop trust, they need teachers who are sensitive and perceptive "caregivers" who understand what young children need and consistently offer tender, responsive care. This may be most apparent in an infant room, where tender holding for feeding and prompt responsiveness to infants' cries of distress are essential. However, it is equally important that every teacher of toddlers or preschoolers be a nurturing person, who gently reassures crying toddlers and who listens attentively to preschool children and responds with care to their questions and requests. Responsive interactions with caring teachers reassure children not only that they can rely upon the adults who care for them, but also that they themselves are valued and important people whose cries will be heard, whose needs will be met and whose ideas will be respected. Consequently, children's autonomy is also fostered in such caring interactions. Teacher behaviors that offer too much control, or even too much help, would be less facilitative of children's developing independence and sense of self.

At LCSH, we understand that the most effective teachers are those who cherish children and take great pleasure in them, or as Alice Honig has so eloquently portrayed them, "those who glow with admiration and joy." Teachers are the cornerstones of our Center. The interaction between our teachers and students reflects our teachers' sincere commitment to and respect for children above all. Our teachers are energetic and enthusiastic about their work with young children. Interactions between teachers and children are frequent and affectionate. Teachers converse with individual children throughout the day's activities, even during routine care, and their conversations are punctuated by warm smiles and gentle hugs. Teachers share daily in children's discovery and in their laughter.

The power of the basic relationship established between young children and their teachers cannot be underestimated. The first and most significant way to ensure that each child at LCSH receives care of the highest quality is to ensure that every interaction between teachers and children is caring and responsive. Any classroom curriculum, however enriching or developmentally appropriate, becomes ineffective unless built upon the solid foundation of strong, positive relationships between warm, responsive adults and the children in their care.

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LEARNING AS AN INTERACTIVE PROCESS

Learning is an interactive process for young children. Research has shown that young children learn best through active exploration and interaction, not only with adults but also with other children and materials. We share in the view of many child development experts that children's spontaneous play is the primary vehicle for children's learning and development in the early years. In particular, children learn when they initiate and direct their own play activities. We give children opportunities to choose from a variety of activities, materials and equipment, as well as time to explore through active involvement.

The teacher in this interactive model of learning is not at all like some of the teachers we remember from our childhood, standing before a group of learners and dispensing information from a seemingly infinite fountain of knowledge. For young children in particular, curriculum is more than a checklist of facts to be fed and digested. Curriculum is everything that happens in the early-childhood classroom – all of the experiences of young children. Our teachers join young children in the wonderment and excitement of their own explorations and discoveries, lending support to their investigations without imposing an adult view of the “correct” answers to be found on an adult standard by which to measure the worth of what they are learning. Teachers promote spontaneous learning in children, with the understanding that children will make many important discoveries and develop new concepts on their own. Because children are naturally motivated by their desire to make sense of the world, they are always learning and creating their own knowledge from their experiences. Our teachers share in that process of discovery.

The teacher's role in the classrooms of LCSH is to plan and prepare a stimulating environment in which children are challenged to learn through active exploration and interaction with materials and each other. Our teachers provide a variety of challenging activity choices for children and then facilitate children's engagement in the activities they select. Although children in our developmentally appropriate programs are permitted to take the lead in choosing learning activities that match their interests and emerging skills, teachers also play an active role in the process. Children's involvement in active learning experiences presents an opportunity for the teacher to extend this learning, specifically by asking questions, making suggestions or adding more complex materials or ideas to the situation, in order to stimulate children's thinking. A teacher's thoughtful input at the right moment can advance a child's competence and challenge a child's thinking. It is by making systematic use of children's experiences that teachers can extend children's knowledge and build on their capabilities.

Because of the dynamic and interactive nature of the learning process, characterized by the child's active investigation, exploration and experimentation, a particular “product” outcome is not our goal for early learning, as is the case when a teacher directs a learning activity toward a specific result. It is the process of learning that is recognized for its own inherent value. In fact, the content of any learning experience is not considered to be as important as the processes through which the child is learning how to learn and how to be an active participant in that learning. Finished products or “correct” solutions that conform to adult standards for a particular learning experience

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are not very accurate measures of children's growth as independent learners, thinkers and doers. Instead, it is the quality of the play itself that gives us a glimpse of the secrets of a child's emerging skills and developmental competence.

An example illustrates our perspective. When children are directed to use specific materials in a specific way to replicate a model that represents the teacher's concept of some aspect of their own experience (e.g., when all preschoolers are expected to paint a picture of a house just like the teacher's picture), children's learning is limited to that particular product. They may have "succeeded" in the task of replicating the adult model, but their learning is then essentially limited to imitation – one of the simplest and least complex forms of learning that, while certainly valuable to infants, hardly equips a growing child to face the exciting challenges of lifelong learning. We wonder, too, about the "cost" of such activities to the self-esteem and initiative of young children. When teachers direct how and what children will learn, they communicate a subtle message that children's own ideas are less important and are not valued.

Our intent is to provide a curriculum model that reflects a more developmentally appropriate view of early learning. We recognize that children become actively involved in their own learning when they are offered a selection of materials and can choose among items to represent their view of a particular concept. Even young children can be empowered to become active participants in learning, when given opportunities to acquire the intellectual, physical and emotional tools that enable them to learn. We understand that this goal is best accomplished when we engage children in the processes of "learning how to learn" – skills that will serve them throughout life (e.g., taking initiative to make choices and decisions about what to do and how to proceed, making plans for a project and carrying them through to completion, being creative in finding innovative and individual approaches to a task, solving a problem, utilizing available resources, and fully assimilating their learning through the self-chosen practice of newly acquired skills).

By involving children in these processes, our intent is that they will learn also to value themselves as learners who can figure things out in unique and individual ways, because adults significant to them have valued their ideas. We can hope for no better motivation for lifelong learning than the intrinsic motivation that results when children discover the joy of living in the world and learn to love the learning process itself.

To realize our curriculum goals for young children, it is important that our teachers remain open to new curriculum ideas, many of which come from their own colleagues in the classroom. Teachers at LCSH are members of a teaching team who are not only confident in their own ability to contribute to the development of the classroom curriculum but also respectful of the abilities and contributions of others on the team. Teachers who are supportive of each other and who share a common commitment to working together to create programs of quality for young children enhance all of our programs.

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The Components of Daily Learning

Developmentally appropriate curricula provide opportunities for the integration of learning in all areas of children's development – intellectual, physical, social and emotional – rather than concentrating on narrowly defined and separated content areas. Realistic curricular goals and plans are formulated on the basis of children's individual strengths, needs and interests, as these are regularly assessed. The learning and play experiences that our teachers plan for children are designed to concentrate on furthering these emerging capabilities through creative activity and intense involvement.

Learning is facilitated in environments that are neat, clean and orderly. Our classrooms for young children are organized into activity areas, or learning centers, which are equipped to encourage children to become involved in activities. The structure of this learning environment is intended to both allow and encourage children to explore and learn through their play. The diversity of activities and materials accessible to children increases the likelihood that they will be able to give prolonged attention to the activities they select. Additionally, the structure of our learning environment supports children's growing independence through the many opportunities for their participation in decision-making.

Because we know that children learn as they touch, manipulate and experiment with the things in their environment, each day we provide a wide variety of open-ended projects and materials that allow and encourage exploration in a variety of different ways. For example, we make available art materials such as play-dough, easel paints and collage materials that make possible children's own creative ideas and expression, rather than limiting them to coloring books and patterns for art. It is our intent to also provide learning activities and materials that are concrete, real and relevant to the lives and experiences of young children. Since we understand that play with real objects and events must precede more abstract understanding involving such symbols as letters and numbers, we view workbooks and ditto sheets as inappropriate learning materials for the young children in our programs.

Each child's individual family and cultural background also is relevant in the design of a curriculum that is both age-appropriate for all young children and individually appropriate for the children in a particular group. We hope to provide a wide variety of multi-cultural, non-stereotyping materials and experiences for children of all ages, in order to enhance each child's self-concept and self-esteem and also to broaden the experience of all children by fostering in them an appreciation of the differences and similarities among them.

Young children need uninterrupted time for their explorations of learning materials and activities. Consequently, the daily schedules that we develop for children allow them sufficient time to become involved – to investigate, select and persist at activities. Our teachers provide a balance of rest and active movement for children throughout the program day, typically alternating periods of active, sometimes physical exploration, and quiet activities such as stories, music and finger plays. Schedules provide a guide for each day's events, but are also flexible enough to individualize to children's own schedules and to take advantage of impromptu learning opportunities – what early educators call “the teachable moment.”

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BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

It is the objective of LCSH to provide high-quality child-care, which incorporates principles of early-childhood development. In doing so, we must realize the importance of discipline and its affect on each child. All of LCSH's disciplinary actions must be consistent with this philosophy. Listed below are disciplinary guidelines that are maintained within LCSH.

Child Discipline Guidelines:

1. Do not use any form of physical punishment.
2. Do not associate punishment with food, naps or bathroom procedures.
3. Maintain constructive discipline with the objective of helping the child learn rather than forcing him/her to conform to adult standards.
4. Consider the child's age, intelligence, emotional make-up and his/her past experience with discipline.
5. Use patience and understanding to help the child establish good social habits.
6. Be fair and consistent in enforcing disciplinary actions, and make every effort to help the child recognize your actions as such.
7. Avoid scapegoating or making an example out of a single child.
8. Encourage and praise good behavior. This approach is frequently much more effective than punishment.
9. Be aware that the child's acceptance of discipline and his/her ability to profit from it depends largely upon feeling that he/she is liked and accepted.
10. Be sure that all staff is in agreement regarding supervision, training and discipline of children.
11. Maintain discipline guidelines set forth by the State Licensing Authority.
12. Do not use verbal abuse, threats or derogatory remarks about the child or his/her family.
13. Speak with a kind, firm voice.
14. Inform the director when uncontrollable behavior persists and becomes disruptive and/or harmful to other children, so that the child's parents can be advised.
15. Do not allow any child, group of children or any other parent to discipline another child.

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DAILY SCHEDULE

Infant Schedule

The infant room is individualized for each child's needs. Each infant is fed, napped and diapered according to his/her needs. Activities will be age-appropriate as they grow. We have a wide variety of age-appropriate toys, games, and activities and a staff well-versed in the extra-special care, soothing and stimulation required by infants.

Our infant program hours are from 7:00 am – 6:00 pm.

Toddler Schedule

7:00-8:00	Early Arrivals, Breakfast
8:00-8:55	Free Play
8:55-9:00	Clean-up Time
9:00-9:30	Morning Snack
9:30-10:00	Diapering/Toileting, Free Play
10:00-10:30	Circle Time
10:30-12:00	Gross Motor Activities, Playground (weather permitting)
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00	Diapering/Toileting, Free Play
1:00-3:00	Nap/Rest Time
3:00-3:30	Awakening, Diapering/Toileting
3:30-4:00	Music Time
4:00-4:30	Afternoon Snack
4:30-5:00	Project
5:00-5:30	Reading Time
5:30-5:35	Clean-up Time
5:35-6:00	Sand Table, Departures
6:00	Closing Time

Note: Schedules may vary based on day, weather, season, availability of activities/presenters, and children's enjoyment of a specific activity.

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Preschool Schedule

7:00-8:30	Early Arrivals, Breakfast
8:00-8:55	Free Play
8:55-9:00	Clean-up Time
9:00-9:30	Circle Time
9:30-10:00	Morning Snack
10:00-10:30	Toileting/Diapering
10:30-11:00	Art Projects/Gross Motor Play/Free Play
11:00-12:00	Gross Motor Activities, Playground (weather permitting)
12:15-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:30	Toileting/Diapering, Preparing for Nap/Rest
1:30-3:30	Nap/Rest Time
3:00-3:30	Awakening, Diapering/Toileting
3:30-4:00	Music Time, Story Time
4:00-4:30	Afternoon Snack, Toileting/Diapering afterwards
4:30-6:00	Project and/or Outdoor time (weather permitting), Departures
6:00	Closing Time

Pre-K Schedule

7:00-8:30	Early Arrivals, Breakfast
7:00-9:30	Free Play
9:30-10:15	Morning Snack
10:15-10:30	Clean-up and Bathroom
10:30-11:00	Circle Time / Daily Project
11:00-12:15	Outdoor Activity (weather permitting)
12:15-12:30	Bathroom, Free Play
12:30-1:15	Lunch
1:15-1:30	Bathroom, Free Play
1:30-3:00	Nap/Rest Time
3:00-3:15	Bathroom, Free Play
3:15-4:00	Table Activity
4:00-4:30	Afternoon Snack
4:30-4:45	Bathroom, Free Play
4:45-5:00	Getting Ready to go to the Park
5:00-6:00	Outdoor Time (weather permitting), Departures
6:00	Closing Time

Note: Schedules may vary based on day, weather, season, availability of activities/presenters, and children's enjoyment of a specific activity.

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Hours of Operation

LCSH is open Monday-Friday 7:00 am-6:00 pm, except for certain holiday closings and early dismissals (see “Holidays”). A consistent drop-off and pick-up time is essential for your child to feel secure in the Center.

If you wish to chat with teachers about your child’s day, plan to arrive before 6:00 pm so that the staff members can leave on time – please remember they also have families waiting for them. Please also consider your child’s needs in determining your pick-up time. If your child likes to transition by playing with you or reading a book before going home, then you will need to plan to arrive well before 6:00 pm.

Late Fees: Please look at the LCSH clock - 6:00 pm is our closing time! After 6:00 pm, a late fee of \$1.00 per child/per minute will be charged. Fees begin promptly at 6:00 pm and may accrue until your family has left the premises, not just until your arrival time. Please note: the teacher who is staying late with the child receives the entire late fee; it does not go to the Center. This fee must be paid in cash to the teacher at pick-up or on the following day.

Drop-off & Pick-up Policy

Parents must exchange a greeting with a teacher at drop-off and pick-up time to acknowledge that a transition has been made in responsibility for care of the child. However, we ask that your conversation be kept simple to avoid distracting the teacher from the children, especially at the park. We will happily schedule a meeting for detailed conversations.

If a child is going to enter the Center later than 9:00 am, the child’s teacher must be notified.

An 11:30 am drop-off time will be the deadline for dropping off any child at LCSH for that day. This will reduce any distractions to the other children in our program.

If a child is being picked-up from LCSH after 12:00 pm for any reason other than a doctor’s appointment, they may not return to the Center. If the departure is for a doctor’s appointment, and you wish for your child to return to the Center afterwards, you must provide a note from the child’s pediatrician stating the date, time of visit, and that the child may return to the Center that day.

Parents may not park in the driveway of the Pre-K building.

Building Security

Only staff members should open doors for parents and other visitors to the Center. Upon entering or departing the Center, please be certain to close all doors tightly behind you. This includes building doors, inner school doors, classroom gates, and playground gates.

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Snow & Emergency Closings

In the event of a weather emergency (or other local or national emergency), every effort will be made to keep the Center open. If we are forced to close due to such events, an announcement will be made prior to 6:00 am on the radio at WBZ 1030AM and on Channel 7 at WHDH-TV. If you have any doubt, call the Center after 6:30 am and a recorded message will confirm either a closing or delayed arrival time.

If the weather conditions worsen during the day, the Center may close. In this event, all parents will be contacted and notified of the earlier closing time. Please make sure all of your emergency contact information is kept up-to-date so that we can reach you in event of any emergency.

If a weather-related closing occurs, there will be no provision for reimbursement or making up missed days—even for part-time students.

Holidays

LCSH observes the following holidays, with some adjustments made for holidays that fall on weekends. Tuition reimbursements are not made for holidays.

Please plan for the following closings:

- New Year's Day*
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day*
- 4:30pm Closing on Pre-K Graduation Day** (*Approximately 3rd Friday in July, Date will be announced each spring. All classrooms will close early for ceremony and potluck dinner, so that all our families and staff can take part in the celebration.*)
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Patriots Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving Day
- 2:00 pm closing on the last business day before Christmas Day**
- Christmas Day*
- Day after Christmas*
- 2:00 pm closing on the last business day before New Year's Day**

*If these holidays fall on a weekend, a weekday holiday will likely be substituted.

**The late fee of \$1.00 per minute/per child still goes into effect on the early closure days. The teacher who stayed with the child receives the entire late fee, not the Center.

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Intake Procedure & Deposits

After a parent contacts LCSH to inquire about child-care, an appointment is scheduled for the parent to view the Center and meet with the director. At this time, a parent handbook is given to the parent along with contact information for three references. These references are parents who currently have children or have previously had children at the Center.

After the initial meeting, we advise the parents of the availability of a space for their child at the Center. If a space is available, parents are required to give a non-refundable one-month deposit if they wish to secure a space for their child. It is important for parents to understand that this deposit is non-refundable in the event that your family chooses not to take the space, even if the Center has a waiting list.

The deposit shall only be applied to the child's last month's tuition payment. Prior to your child's first day, a first month's tuition payment also will be due. Your deposit will be adjusted accordingly with any future changes to your child's program or schedule (for example, toddler tuition is less than infant tuition, so as your child moves to the toddler room you will get a credit on your deposit).

Deposits only will be accepted when accompanied by a signed Handbook Acknowledgement Form. This form will be provided to you separately by LCSH. The form must be signed by all custodial parents and guardians; it serves as an acknowledgement by the parents that they have read the handbook and that they understand LCSH policies and procedures.

LCSH does not charge a registration fee, and there are no annual re-registration fees.

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Tuition

Please refer to the current fee schedule (provided separately) for the tuition rate applicable to your child.

Tuition is paid in advance on a monthly basis, depending on the number of weeks in the upcoming month and is due by the last Friday of the preceding month (Example: March tuition is due on the last Friday in February).

Eight months of the year are four-week tuition months; however, tuition for five-weeks is due for March, June, September and December.

- January – 4 weeks
- February – 4 weeks
- March – 5 weeks
- April – 4 weeks
- May – 4 weeks
- June – 5 weeks
- July – 4 weeks
- August – 4 weeks
- September – 5 weeks
- October – 4 weeks
- November – 4 weeks
- December – 5 weeks

Please note that this does add up to 52 weeks. Tuition is divided this manner, rather than monthly, because we have rolling admissions. Children may enter our program during any month of the year (if space allows), and children transition to other classes based on their own developmental milestones (rather than waiting until autumn). This system ensures families are paying only for the program that their child is enrolled in for any given month.

The tuition rate is not reduced for snow days, vacations, illness, holidays, children unable to attend field trips or for any emergency that may arise in which the Center must close. There will be no provisions for making up missed days for part-time students. Families must submit tuition payment prior to their vacation if they plan to be away on the day tuition payment is due.

Full-day tuition must be paid during transition, even for the days when the child is only attending part-time per their transition plan. Tuition is not pro-rated for transitions.

Tuition should be made payable to “Little Corner SchoolHouse” and can be dropped off at the Center in the designated area or mailed to the Center. Parents should save their canceled checks as receipts for tax purposes. Please be sure to write the name of the child on the check so that it gets credited properly to your account.

In the rare event that tuition increases were to become necessary, LCSH would provide families with four months (120 days) notice of the increase.

Late Fees: If tuition payments are not made within three (3) days of the due date, a late charge of \$20.00 per child will be added. If tuition is not paid, including the \$20 late fee, by the 7th day, your child will be automatically terminated from the Center.

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Withdrawals

We require that you notify the Center's director, in writing, at least sixty (60) days prior to withdrawing your child from the Center. It is important for the staff, your child and her/his peers to prepare for the change. A one-month deposit for each child will be forfeited if the required notice is not given. **Tuition is not pro-rated for partial months.** There shall be no refund of tuition if a child is withdrawn prior to the last Friday of the month.

Your initial four-week deposit will be credited towards the child's last month's tuition. However, if the child's last month at LCSH falls during a five-week month (March, June, September, December), you are required to pay the fifth week's tuition.

Examples:

1. If you intend to withdraw your child as of June 30th, you shall give written notice of the withdrawal prior to April 30th (with your May tuition payment). Your initial deposit shall be credited towards June tuition. You must also pay a fifth week's tuition because June is considered a five-week month for tuition purposes.
2. If you intend to withdraw your child as of June 15, you shall give written notice of the withdrawal prior to April 15. Your initial deposit shall be credited towards June tuition. There shall be no refund of tuition for the remaining weeks in June. There are no tuition credits or refunds for mid-month withdrawals.

If you have knowledge more than 60 days ahead of time that you will be withdrawing from the program, we would appreciate more advanced notice. It will be extremely helpful for us and other LCSH families in planning enrollments and transitions.

Terminations

If we believe that it is in everyone's best interest that your child be terminated from the Center, we will provide you with written notice of our concerns prior to termination. We shall meet with you to discuss our concerns and your position in an attempt to remedy the situation.

Note: LCSH reserves the right to terminate a child/family from the Center immediately if we believe that it is in the best interest of the other children and staff members in our program.

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Child Transition Policy

New students: Children new to LCSH are put on a transition schedule, usually lasting two weeks, depending on age. Transitions build incrementally over time, starting with a couple of hours and building up to a full day. New families are responsible for arranging for alternative child-care during their transition days. We strongly encourage that a parent make pick-ups during this time as it is reassuring to the child and allows staff to discuss the transition progress with parents.

Full-day tuition must be paid during transition, even for the days when the child is only attending part-time, per the transition plan. Tuition is not pro-rated for transitions.

Current students changing classrooms: LCSH develops for each child a transition plan based on their individual needs. We will work with parents on a transition plan based on factors such as development, previous interaction with a new teacher, coinciding life events (such as a new home or new sibling), and coordinating a transition with some closely aged “buddies” who can move with them. Transitions build incrementally over time, starting with a couple of hours and building up to a full day. When transitioning to a new classroom, the child will spend the remaining part of the day in his/her current classroom. Therefore, parents do not need to find additional child-care coverage during this time.

Preschool & Pre-K: Pre-K has unique transition issues on both ends that parents will need to keep in mind. These are issues that occur in most Pre-K programs and are not unique to LCSH.

- **Transitioning from Preschool into Pre-K:** This has special concerns because there are fewer mid-year places available, since the next level up is Kindergarten, which doesn't start until autumn. We work hard to hold spots for preschoolers transitioning into Pre-K, but not all children will be able to transition exactly at 4 years old. We will work with preschool parents on a transition plan specific to each child.
- **Transitioning out of Pre-K:** Kindergarten in most towns rarely starts on the first Monday in September. This may create a conflict for you as far as child-care coverage is concerned. For Pre-K programs, it creates scheduling issues and a possible over-enrollment situation for September. We will do our best to accommodate your child-care needs during the delay between August 31st and the start of your child's Kindergarten program. We ask that parents please contact the director so that we can discuss the details of your child's individual transition plan to his/her new school. The sooner we know what your plans are, the more options we all have to work out an ideal solution.

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Teacher Transitions

Children understandably become very attached to their teachers. Unfortunately, sometimes a teacher will need to leave a class or program. Our teachers may be relocated to a different class to make the best use of their talent and skills. Other times, they may take time off for maternity leave, find another opportunity, or in rare cases be asked to leave. We will make every effort to give children and parents as much notice as possible about the departure of a teacher and to make it as understandable as possible for the children. To avoid confusion for the children, any teacher who has left the program must obtain permission from the director or executive director before visiting so that the children can be prepared, if necessary.

Teacher Absences & Vacations

There may be days when children come in and their favorite teacher may not be at the Center. Our teachers work very hard, so we encourage them to take their vacation time to stay relaxed and refreshed. Also, due to the long hours, many LCSH teachers work four-day weeks. We are lucky to have had long relationships with many of our substitute teachers, so chances are good that your child will have already had experience with any substitute who may be covering for a regular teacher.

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Parental Involvement

- Children enjoy and look forward to their parents spending time with them in the Center. Parents are always encouraged to share in their child's classroom activities and to engage themselves in the Center's events.
- Parents are encouraged to share their ideas for curriculum and activities. If you have a hobby or profession that would be interesting to share, please tell us.
- Written communication (notices, calendars and a monthly newsletter) is our official means of distributing information to parents regarding events and policies. Parents must take responsibility for checking for and reading these notices as they are distributed. We especially want to draw your attention to "Save the Date" notices. We try to give you as much notice as possible about events that may require an adjustment to your schedule.
- No parent may discipline a child other than his or her own while at the Center or during Center-related activities. Parents shall seek the assistance of a staff member if an issue arises.
- Parents must also do their part to help us with safety. Please close all doors and gates, including at the park. Obey parking signs, driveway signs and don't block cross walks. Conversations with teachers at the park should be kept to a minimum to avoid distractions, however, parents must greet teachers and acknowledge that a transition in child-care is being made.
- To help alleviate stressful transition times, parents are invited to stay for a few minutes at arrival and departure time.
- Goodbyes need to be said to the child with the reassurance of when the parent will return. This will help facilitate a trusting relationship between the child, family and Center.
- Oftentimes, children enjoy waving goodbye to parents from a door or window and then moving to an area of interest.
- Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's latest activities and discoveries as they make their transition from the Center to home. Just as our teachers ask about what the children did at home, your asking about what they did at the Center helps to promote the link between families and caregivers.
- Many children have a difficult time leaving the Center at the end of the day. A direct goodbye and a reminder of when the child will return are usually helpful.
- Parents are responsible for understanding and adhering to the content of this handbook. All custodial parents or legal guardians must sign the Handbook Acknowledgement Form (provided separately) and return it to the Center prior to their child beginning the program at LCSH.

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Parental Supervision

Parents are responsible for supervision and care of their own child while in the Center. If a parent, friend or grandparent accompanies a child on a field trip, that adult is responsible for supervising the child.

Parents must greet teachers at both drop-off and pick-up time, acknowledging that a transition is being made. Parents are responsible at both drop-off and pick-up for getting the child in or out of coats and outdoor gear and putting belongings in the proper space. Please allow extra time as it sometimes takes a while to accomplish these tasks with young children, especially when they are asserting their independence and learning to do buttons and zippers themselves.

Visiting the Center

Parents are always welcome at LCSH. Please come and join your child's activities, lunch and field trips. Visits from persons other than parents or guardians must be scheduled with the Center, through the parents, to be sure that the visit is acceptable to the parents and not disruptive to the child or other students.

Communication between parents and the staff is vital for your child's well being. If you would like to call the Center to speak to a teacher, please do so at naptime. The teachers are not always free to talk during activity time.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Private meetings are held twice a year to discuss your child's development. Parents are always welcome to arrange additional private meetings with the teachers, director or executive director. Please schedule an appointment for lengthy discussions at a mutually acceptable time between the hours of 7:30 am-5:30 pm Monday-Friday.

If you are picking up your child at the end of the day and want some time to speak with a teacher, please arrive early so that our teachers can still leave by 6:00 pm. Please schedule an appointment for extended conversations rather than distracting teachers from the class, especially at the park or during other outdoor activities.

In addition, we schedule occasional potlucks and other events for parents to interact with teachers and other parents. Parents will be notified about these events via our newsletter and other "Save the Date" flyers.

Planned Absences & Vacations

If a child is going to be out of the Center for a planned absence or vacation, please be sure to advise the Center in writing so that we are not concerned about the whereabouts of your child. Please also provide us with an anticipated duration of the absence. Tuition is not reimbursed for absences or vacations.

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Custody Orders

Certified custody orders must be provided to the director prior to enrollment. Any new or revised custody orders must be presented to the Center immediately.

Parental Consent

It is assumed by the Center that a signature by one parent on a permission slip means consent by all parents or guardians, unless a written arrangement has been made with the Center ahead of time for more than one signature to be obtained. The exception is the Authorized Adults form in which the Center will require all custodial persons to sign off on any names of authorized adults allowed to pick up the child (see “Authorized Adults” section below).

Authorized Adults

The staff will release your child only to the persons listed on your consent form, unless you have notified the staff in writing that someone else will pick up your child. Please let the pick-up person know that they should always have identification with them, even if some staff members already know them. It is possible that your child may be with a staff member who has not met your pick-up person, and LCSH will require identification before releasing your child to an unknown person, even when the required note has been provided.

Written Communication

From LCSH to Parents: Notices, calendars and a monthly newsletter are distributed in each child’s cubby to keep parents informed about the Center’s upcoming events. Parents must take responsibility for checking for and reading these notices as they are distributed. Please understand, for our staff to verbally relay all information to all parents would take time away from the children. Written communication is our official means of distributing information to parents regarding events and policies. Any changes in policy dated after publication of this handbook are to be considered addendums to the handbook.

From Parents to LCSH: We require written communication from parents in changes of emergency contact info, changes in custody, changes in authorized pick-up persons, medical/prescription information, tuition issues and withdrawal notices. We also appreciate written communication as a way to advise us of other matters such as planned absences or suggestions. Any urgent concerns about your child should be conveyed to the teacher, director, or executive director in the fastest way possible (in person, phone) and then followed up in writing, if necessary, or if requested by the Center. E-mail should only be used for non-urgent, non-time-sensitive correspondence.

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Policy for Accidents & Injuries

Emergency: If any injury is an emergency, medical attention will be sought immediately. In an emergency situation, the director or staff person will stay with and care for the child as they are transported to a medical facility. Another staff member will call the ambulance and parents immediately.

The child's medical records and appropriate permission forms will accompany the child and the director or staff person to the nearest hospital or health facility.

If a parent or emergency contact person cannot be reached, a staff person will continue to try to contact the parents, who will be asked to meet the child and accompanying staff member at the hospital or facility.

Non-Emergency, requiring medical attention: If any injury requires medical attention, but is not an emergency, the director or staff person will contact the parent or emergency contact person. The emergency contact person will be asked to pick up the child as soon as possible to take the child for treatment. The director or staff person will stay with and care for the child until a parent arrives.

If a parent or emergency contact person cannot be reached, and it appears that treatment should be sought while the child is in our program, the child will have to be transported by ambulance. To avoid this situation, please make sure contact information is up-to-date.

The child's medical records and appropriate permission forms will accompany the child and the director or staff person to the nearest hospital or health facility. A staff person will continue to try to contact the parents, who will be asked to meet the child and accompanying staff member at the hospital or facility.

Non-Emergency, treated on-site: If an injury is minor and can be treated on-site by a staff member, an accident report will be filled out and noted in the accident logbook. A note will be sent home the same day of the accident explaining what happened and a description of the treatment that was administered.

At home: If your child sustained an injury outside of their time at the Center, we ask that you advise us in writing so that we can be aware of potential discomfort your child may be experiencing. Please note: a bandage must cover any open cuts or sores that have not scabbed over.

All medical care and transportation costs are the responsibility of the family.

Medical Facilities Preferred:

1. Children's Hospital at 300 Longwood Avenue, Boston. 617-355-6000.
2. Closest medical facility when on a field trip

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Medical & Health Record Requirements

Your child's current medical and immunization record must be submitted to the Center prior to enrollment.

This should include a complete physical examination, lead screening, HIB immunization, chicken pox vaccination and tuberculin test (and any others required by the State of Massachusetts at the time of enrollment). **These tests must be updated on a yearly basis with an official copy provided to the Center for our records.**

Each child will have a confidential health report on file at the Center. The health report will include:

1. The name, address and telephone numbers of the child's parent/parents/guardian
2. Two alternate people to be notified in case of emergency when parents cannot be reached – please note names, relationship to child and contact numbers
3. A complete immunization record
4. Any allergies the child may have
5. A list of persons authorized to pick-up the child from the program
6. A signed permission slip for emergency treatment when a parent or guardian cannot be reached.
7. Teacher observations
8. A record of any early intervention referrals
9. Medication authorization slips

Emergency Contact Information

It is imperative to keep the school updated with any changes to emergency contact information for parents, guardians and alternate emergency contacts. These days, phone number changes can happen quite often – especially for work and mobile numbers. Please use written communication to inform us of changes to emergency contact information.

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Illness Policy

When a child is out sick, a parent is asked to call the Center by 9:00 am and report the child's illness and any other pertinent information regarding the health of the child.

With any contagious illness, it is most important that the Center be notified in order to prevent further spread of the illness and to take appropriate precautions.

All parents of children exposed to contagious or infectious disease will be notified and alerted to watch for symptoms.

There are times, especially during the winter months, when a child should remain home for his/her own welfare and for the protection of others. Please keep your child at home if he/she has any of the following conditions:

- General lethargy
- Child complains of not feeling well, or is obviously not feeling or looking well
- Fever of 101 or higher
- Signs of severe cold or nose drainage
- Sore throat or swollen glands
- An undiagnosed or contagious rash or skin eruption
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Head lice that has not been treated
- Inflammation or oozing of the eyes
- If a child is given an antibiotic for any reason, he/she should not return to the Center until the medication has been given for at least 24 hours, along with a note from the child's physician stating what day the child may return to the Center and be with other children at risk for communicable infection.

Parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child if any of the above conditions are present in their child, or if other symptoms exist that are of concern to the staff. Changes to emergency contact information should be provided to the Center immediately.

Since schools and day care centers are not equipped to accommodate sick children, and contact with other children and staff leads to further spread of disease, it is imperative that sick children be kept at home. It is also crucial that parents make every effort to pick up children as soon as possible when notified by the Center.

If for any reason you think that your child is not feeling up to playing outside, then you must keep him/her home. It is our policy to have children outside as much as possible; therefore we cannot provide staff to accommodate requests for individual children to stay inside. If you question whether or not we plan to go out, call the Center, but please always have your child equipped with appropriate gear for the weather.

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Isolation Procedure

If a child is mildly ill during the day, the Center will notify the parent. In the event that the parent cannot be reached, the Center will contact those persons listed on the child's emergency information sheet. The child's physician will be called if parents or alternate contacts cannot be reached.

The child will be placed in an isolation area, away from other children, and will be kept under close supervision.

Cuts & Sores

A bandage must cover any open cuts or sores that have not scabbed over.

Policy for Return After an Illness

First and foremost, a child needs to feel well to return to the Center. Even if your child is no longer contagious, or no longer has a fever, your child may still not feel "well."

Please do not send your child to the Center if it is to his/her benefit to be resting at home.

A child may return to the Center under the following condition with a physician's release if they feel well and meet the following criteria:

- Contagious rashes or other parasitic diseases have been completely cleared
- A contagious disease after the period of contagion is over. Examples:
 - Chicken Pox – after all spots have crusted
 - Measles – Five (5) days after rash begins
 - German Measles – after rash disappears
 - Mumps – Nine (9) days
 - Lice and scabies – after treatment is completed*(These are examples only – other conditions apply)*

A child may return to the Center under the following conditions without a physician's release if they feel well and meet the following criteria:

- Fever – 24 hours fever-free without assistance of fever-reducing medications
 - Diarrhea – When solid stools have returned
 - Vomiting – When vomiting has ceased and child is able to digest food
 - Pink eye/conjunctivitis – 24 hours on an antibiotic ointment
 - Strep and other bacterial illnesses– after antibiotic treatment removes contagion
 - Cocksackie Virus and other viral illnesses – when child is no longer contagious
- (These are examples only – other conditions apply)*

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Medication Administration Procedures

There are times when a child may need medication during the day. The staff will administer only dated and labeled medication.

Any medication must be handed directly to a teacher and not placed in a child's bag where any children could access it. It must be sent to the Center in the original child-proof bottle.

Prescription medication should be labeled with the following information:

- Child's name - it must be prescribed to the child who is receiving it.
- Date filled and expiration date
- Contents and dosage
- Directions for administration
- Physician's name
- Pharmacy name

The Center will administer non-prescription drugs (Tylenol, cough medicine, etc.) when accompanied by an authorization note from the child's parent or guardian or a note from the child's physician. The note must state:

- Child's name
- Name of the non-prescription medication
- Dosage and Duration of Usage
- Directions for administration

A written authorization from the child's parent or guardian must be filled out on a day-to-day basis when medication is to be administered.

A record of medications administered to a child will be kept in the child's LCSH record, including the time and date of each administration, the name of the child, and the name and signature of the staff member administering the medication.

Medication that remains at the end of the day will be returned to parents. It is the parent's responsibility to reclaim that medication from the teachers. If the medication must be given daily or over a prolonged period of time, you may want to discuss with your doctor or pharmacy having a second prescription to avoid any concerns for your family should the medication inadvertently be left at the Center.

Medication will be refrigerated, if necessary. Parents should transport it in a separate thermal bag if it needs to be administered cold while the child is off-premises.

A staff member can administer topical medication as long as all of the pertinent information or prescription is written on the tube and the parent or guardian provides written permission. Teachers will wear gloves and/or wash their hands immediately after applying a topical medication.

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First-Aid Policy

This policy covers first-aid supplies maintained by the Center. Please see “Policy for Accidents and Injuries” for more detailed information about how an injury is handled.

- First aid supplies will be kept out of the reach of children
- All staff members have been trained in first-aid and have been instructed in the proper usage of first-aid supplies.
- First-aid supplies will be checked monthly to make sure that inventories are adequate
- A medical consultant will compose a list of medical supplies that the Center should maintain.

Policy for Early-Intervention

If our staff suspects that a child may be in need of an early-intervention screening or program, LCSH will:

- Meet with the parents privately to discuss our concerns
- Discuss what options we know to be available
- Work diligently with the family’s chosen specialist on any course of treatment or therapy

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Policy for Fire Evacuation

The Center has a fire evacuation plan, which is posted next to the primary egress of each of our buildings.

In accordance with Massachusetts Fire and Safety codes, each classroom must have two (2) means of emergency egress. In the event of a fire, a designated teacher in each classroom will take the attendance sheet and evacuate children from the building in an orderly fashion. A bag containing emergency contact info for parents is also removed from the building.

A designated teacher will be responsible to account for all classroom members before leaving the building. Attendance will be retaken immediately upon evacuation.

The director will be the last person to leave the building after checking all rooms to ensure that everyone has been evacuated. Once out of the building, the children will be escorted to a safe area, which is the nearest driveway on the same side of the street as the building, provided that driveway is away from the emergency and emergency vehicles.

If the event is a drill or false alarm, the teacher will return the students to their regular schedule. If it is an actual emergency, and evacuation is necessary, parents will be contacted and instructions for pick-up will be provided.

Other Emergencies

In the event of any other kind of emergency that does not affect our buildings directly, such as local or national emergencies, your child will remain at LCSH with a staff member until a parent or authorized guardian picks him/her up.

While we may consolidate classes into one building, we will not evacuate to a non-LCSH location unless absolutely necessary. We feel the children should remain at LCSH as we have within our Center the staff and so many of the materials, supplies and food that make the children feel safe and comfortable. If evacuation is necessary, parents will be contacted and instructions for pick-up will be provided.

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Diapering Procedures

LCSH is unable to accommodate families wishing to use cloth diapers at the Center.

Parents are responsible for providing the Center with the appropriate type and amount of diapers and wipe cloths for their child. Teachers will advise parents when supplies are getting low. In certain events, such as low supply or a field trip, LCSH may use a standard type of wipe cloth on your child. Be sure to advise us if your child is prone to reaction with a certain type of wipe cloth.

Each child's diaper is checked every two to three hours in addition to being changed as needed.

1. Caregiver washes his/her hands and picks up the child. Caregivers always wear latex gloves when diapering the children.
2. Child is placed on his/her back on a changing table lined with clean paper.
3. Diaper is removed and placed in the garbage pail adjacent to the changing table.
4. Child's bottom and genital area is cleaned and rinsed with diaper wipes. Girls are wiped from front to back to reduce the chance of infection.
5. Any diaper cream or ointment provided by the family for a specific child is applied per instructions, which should be written on the labeled container.
6. Dirty diapers, wipes and rubber gloves are placed in a plastic bag and deposited in the adjacent garbage pail.
7. A clean diaper is secured and clothing is re-secured. In the event that any clothing was soiled by a diaper leak, the affected clothing is replaced with extra clothes from the child's cubby. Soiled clothes are placed in a sealed plastic bag and returned to parents for laundering at home.
8. Child's hands are washed, while caregiver is careful not to touch sink handle with contaminated gloves. Child is returned to play area.
9. Paper from the changing table is discarded in the adjacent garbage pail.
10. Contaminated gloves are thrown away and caregiver washes her/his hands with soap and hot water.
11. The caregiver sterilizes the changing table with a cleaning solution after each diaper change.
12. The times of bowel movements for infants only are charted on a daily note that is sent home to parents.

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Toileting Procedures

Toilet training is an integral component in the diaper -changing routine. At each diaper change, children who are toilet training are asked if they would like to use the potty or toilet. Clapping and cheers and congratulatory stamps or stickers reward successful attempts. "Accidents" are considered normal.

The children decide for themselves when they are ready to wear underpants or when they need a diaper for security. They take an active role in encouraging each other and developing an aura of social relaxation.

Teachers use proper anatomical names for body parts when necessary, however, children are not required to use any specific phrasing and may use terms learned at home.

Teachers supervise children during toilet training to promote good hygiene habits. Children use toilet paper and girls are encouraged to wipe front to back to reduce the chance of infection.

Hygiene Policy

Every child and adult will wash her/his hands before meals and after toileting.

In addition, hands will be washed:

- After diapering
- After coming in contact with body fluids
- After handling Center animals and their equipment
- After administering medications

The hand-washing technique that we use is:

- Wash hands with liquid soap
- Using friction method, rub hands together
- Rinse under water
- Paper towel dry

Sunscreen Policy

During sunburn season, parents will be asked to bring in a bottle of sunscreen for their child, labeled with the child's name. Parents should apply sunscreen to their child in the morning before bringing them to school, and then teachers will use the labeled bottle for any necessary re-applications during the day. Please follow this request, as there won't be much time left for fun if our staff has to spend the morning covering each child with sunscreen before going out. Parents will also be asked to provide a hat that will significantly reduced the chance of sunburn.

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Field Trips

Field trips are an important and exciting way for children to learn about the world around them. We often plan field trips around our weekly and monthly themes.

The permission form included within the enrollment packet gives permission for short walks and excursions within the LCSH area, primarily Brookline Village and Coolidge Corner.

Parents will be informed in advance and asked to sign an additional field trip permission form if trips are planned outside the LCSH area or for any trip that requires transportation other than walking or Center strollers (infants). The permission slip will include the day and date of the field trip, the destination, time of departure and approximate arrival time back to the Center. The means of transportation will also be listed. The signature of only one parent or guardian is required, unless arrangements have been made with the Center ahead of time that more than one signature is required for all permission slips (see "Custody Orders and Parental Consent").

A designated staff person will carry a backpack containing sterile wipes, dry ice pack, bandages, first aid cream, sterile gauze, attendance sheet, the emergency numbers of each child and a cell phone.

All staff members will be certified in first-aid and C.P.R.

Parents must find alternative childcare if they do not wish for their child to attend a field trip. LCSH is **not** responsible for finding alternative childcare if a parent does not wish for their child to attend a field trip. A portion of the child's tuition **may not** be deducted if a parent does not wish to send their child on a field trip.

Extra fees may be required to cover the costs of some field trips. LCSH makes every effort to avoid additional costs beyond tuition, and we strive to keep them nominal when they are necessary.

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Parks & Playgrounds

Brookline has many beautiful parks. We will often go on walking excursions with different parks as our destinations – the children enjoy the variety. Our standard park is Pierce Playground, located across the street from our main building.

It is our objective to get the children outside as much as possible, at least once a day unless conditions outside are dangerous or unhealthy. Parents must do their part by checking the weather report regularly to make sure their children have the proper gear for the weather – from snow boots to sunscreen. A few children without raincoats or boots will likely prevent the rest of the class from going out to enjoy the fun that can be had during a spring rain shower.

Parents must also do their part to help us with park safety. Please obey parking signs, don't block cross walks and always close all safety gates on park entrances and exits. **Conversation with teachers at the park should be kept to a minimum to avoid distractions, however, parents must greet teachers acknowledge that a transition in childcare is being made.**

During nice weather, we usually have park-pick-ups at Pierce Playground. Children will be brought the park with their appropriate outdoor clothing and lunch bags. Parents wishing to claim any other belongings from the Center will need to go there before picking up their child (Note: the Pre-K building is usually locked upon departure for the park; please plan accordingly).

Walking Excursions

When on any walking excursion, each classroom has a special rope that they take with them. The rope has individual "bracelets" that each child puts one hand through and holds on to the rope. Teachers take a head count upon leaving for and arriving at any destination. At least two teachers must be present to transport a group of children on the rope – one leads the children and one follows. The Preschool & Pre-K ratio for excursions is 1 teacher for every 10 children. The Toddler ratio for excursions is 1 teacher for every 4 children, or 2 teachers for up to 9 children.

Staff members are required to use crosswalks when crossing the street with children. We encourage parents to do the same to reinforce this habit for safety.

The general permission slip that parents sign upon enrollment allows for walking excursions in the LCSH/Brookline area; these are not considered "field trips" and do not require individual specific permission slips.

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Food

At LCSH, each child brings his/her own food. We consider it an important way of creating a link between your home and our Center. For children new to our Center, an unfamiliar environment instantly becomes more comfortable when they open their lunch box to see familiar favorite foods from home. As our children get older, we find that they become interested in what their friends have brought to eat – it becomes a lesson in other cultures and promotes more adventurous eating habits.

Children have a morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack. Children who arrive before 8:00 am also may have breakfast at the Center. Please send enough food for your child, based on their individual eating habits. The Center does not provide refrigeration for food; it should be transported in a well-insulated bag with an ice pack to keep it cool. If necessary, teachers can microwave food to heat it up. Two drinks are usually enough for most toddlers, preschoolers and Pre-Ks; many parents choose milk and juice. Teachers will offer children water if they need more to drink; water is always available and children are encouraged to drink it.

There is usually one day a week in the Toddler through Pre-K programs where lunch is brought in to the Center via “Pizza Day,” which may also consist of pasta or another child-friendly food. Parents are asked to provide a small contribution instead of lunch on that day, however, snack foods and drinks should still be sent to the Center.

The Center stocks a small supply of emergency back-up foods and drinks. Parents of infants must provide the Center with one full day’s worth of non-perishable items (canned formula, jar food) clearly labeled with the infant’s name.

Allergies: Please be sure our staff knows about any food allergies your child may have.

LCSH is a nut-product-free Center. Nuts are a highly allergenic food that can cause serious health risks for some children. Please read labels carefully when choosing your groceries, as many products have nuts and nut oils in them. If a child is sent to the Center with a food containing nut products, they will not be permitted to consume it, and their parent/s will be issued a warning. Repeated violations may be grounds for termination.

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Children's Clothing & Supplies

A change of clothing for infants, toddlers and preschoolers – appropriate for the current season – must be kept at the Center at all times. The change should include pants, shirt, underwear, and socks. If these go home dirty, please be sure to bring in a clean set the next day. All items brought to the Center must be labeled with an indelible marker on the inside of the child's clothing. LCSH is not responsible for lost clothing or belongings.

Your child should be dressed in play clothes that are appropriate for the weather. Warm clothing is needed for outdoor play in the winter, including boots, mittens and hats. The children also use materials that can be very messy, so please send them in washable clothing. We can't be responsible for damage. Please choose items that can stand the wear, but won't break your heart if you have to say goodbye to them.

Children are not allowed to walk barefoot or in socks at the Center or outside. Some children enjoy having slippers to wear inside the Center, which is acceptable, as long as they have traction on the sole and cover the entire foot. All shoes must be securely attached to the child's foot. "Flip-Flop" style sandals may not be worn. We prefer rubber-soled shoes, ideally sneakers. Boots are necessary for outside cold-weather play, and water shoes for summertime sprinkler play.

Bathing suits are also required for summertime sprinkler play. We ask that you please provide a bathing suit and towel that will be kept at the Center for the season. For hygiene reasons, we machine wash and dry swimsuits, towels and water shoes after they have been used. This means they take quite a beating between use by the children and then a nightly spin in our washer and dryer. For this reason, we ask that you please not send them to school with their "nicest" or "most expensive" items. Again, we can't be responsible for damage. Also please consider your child's level of independence in choosing a suit that is easy to get on and off.

Toys and other personal belongings must be left at home unless your child's teacher approves the personal belonging for show and tell. Exception: a small soft toy that may be comforting to your child during naptime may be brought from home, as long as it stays in your child's cubby before and after naptime.

Lost Clothing & Supplies

We encourage all items to be labeled. However, we cannot be responsible for any lost articles of clothing, shoes, socks, bottles, food containers, utensils or other personal belongings. We do have a "lost and found" area that we encourage you to check occasionally.

Little Corner SchoolHouse

Supply List

Infants:

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Ointments (optional)
- Two (2) changes of clothes – seasonal
- Two (2) pair of socks
- Hat – appropriate for the season
- Blanket
- Pacifier, if needed
- Sunscreen – seasonal (and if age-appropriate)
- Lunch box with ice pack to store food (returned home daily)
- Spoon or utensil for feeding when solid food begins

Toddlers:

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Ointment
- Two changes of clothes (more during potty-training)
- Hat – appropriate for season
- Extra mittens – seasonal (one pair should be attached to jacket with mitten clips)
- Sunscreen, swimsuit, watershoes – seasonal
- Shoes - extra pair to wear inside the classroom during winter time
- Sleeping bag (sent home every other week to be laundered at home)
- Lunch box with ice pack to store food (returned home daily)

Preschool:

- Diapers, Wipes & Ointment (if child is not yet potty-trained)
- One change of clothes – seasonal (more if potty-training)
- Hat – appropriate for season
- Extra mittens – seasonal (one pair should be attached to jacket with mitten clips)
- Shoes – extra pair to wear inside the classroom during winter time
- Sleeping bag (sent home every other week to be laundered at home)
- Sunscreen, swimsuit, watershoes - seasonal
- Lunch box with ice pack to store food (returned home daily)

Pre-K:

- Shoes extra pair to wear inside the classroom during winter time
- Hat – appropriate for the season
- Extra mittens – seasonal (one pair should be attached to jacket with mitten clips)
- Sunscreen, swimsuit, watershoes – seasonal
- Extra sweater/sweatshirt in case it gets cool
- Lunch box with ice pack to store food (returned home daily)

Please label all of your child's items, and be sure to send them in washable, weather-appropriate play clothes. We cannot be responsible for damage or loss.

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Rest-Period Policy

Your child is required to rest after lunch. Children are not required to sleep, but they are expected to remain quietly on their mats or sleeping bags throughout the rest period. A small, soft toy that may be comforting to your child during naptime may be brought from home, as long as it stays in your child's cubby before and after naptime.

Sleeping Bags

Every toddler and preschool child must bring a sleeping bag to be left at the Center. Each sleeping bag will be stored in an individual clean laundry bag. Sleeping bags will be sent home with students on a Friday schedule to be washed and returned again with the child on the next program day. Please choose a machine washable sleeping bag to make this more convenient for your family. We realize that transporting the sleeping bag can be cumbersome with all that busy families need to do, however, keeping them clean is important for the cleanliness of the Center and the health of the children. We appreciate your cooperation.

Pre-K students do not keep sleeping bags at the Center. Instead, they rest on mats that are kept at the Center year round and are washed down on premises.

Balloon Policy

Balloons of any kind are not permitted at LCSH. They present problems of many kinds - noise, flammability, latex allergies – but most of all they are a tremendous choking hazard. A colorful balloon is extremely inviting to small children, as they immediately want to put it into their mouths. A broken piece of a balloon can block the airway and be close to impossible to get out with traditional first-aid methods. We urge you to consider this in your own home and to do your part at the park as well. Please do not bring water balloons to the fountains at the parks and encourage other parents to avoid this dangerous habit, too. We thank you on behalf of LCSH and all children using the Brookline parks.

Pet Policy

Children, parents, guardians, staff or guests are not permitted to bring pets or animals of any kind into the Center without prior written consent of the director.

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Birthday Parties

Parents are welcome and encouraged to plan class birthday celebrations at the Center. Please contact your child's teachers in the month prior to your child's birthday so that we can schedule the party for the weekday that is most convenient for your family.

Some guidelines to consider:

- Parties are usually scheduled in place of regular afternoon snack time
- Parents and siblings are invited to come, but we unfortunately cannot host non-sibling children who do not attend LCSH.
- No balloons, "silly string," confetti, or lit candles
- No clowns or other entertainment
- Please bring enough cake or other snack-type food to feed the entire class.
- Please adhere to our nut-free policy in choosing your food.
- Please bring plates, napkins and paper goods.
- Please clean up after your child's party and do not leave the mess for our staff.
- Many parents provide "goody bags," but this is certainly not a requirement. Please choose safe, non-toxic, age appropriate items and avoid items like candy or toy weapons that may be unacceptable to some families. Please label goody bags with the giver's name in case there are any questions. Goody bags are placed in the parents' mailboxes and should not be opened inside the Center. Please wait until you are home before opening any goody bags and please inspect it to determine its appropriateness for your child.

Invitations to Home Birthdays: If you plan on using Center mailboxes to distribute birthday invitations, please be sure to put the invitation in a sealed envelope with the invited child's name on it – sometimes items fall out of mailboxes and they may accidentally wind up in the wrong one. If the party is not an all-class event, please mention so somewhere on the invitation to avoid any awkward moments for those you may not be able to invite. Don't worry! We all understand that an all-class party may be too much to handle, but please follow these requests to lessen hurt feelings.

Religious/Cultural Holidays

There are certain religious and cultural holidays that we study or celebrate in the program. Seasonal holidays are discussed in the program, since these holidays often become a focal point for children when the season arrives. Valentine's Day is celebrated with the exchange of cards and a discussion about love and friendship. Halloween is celebrated with a party and costumes. Special celebrations are planned for parents or special friends during the weeks of Mother's Day and Father's Day.

We encourage families who celebrate all religious or cultural holidays to speak with our teachers about how to incorporate those into our program. Our children love learning about how the world's cultures choose to celebrate. If your family would like to come in to talk with the children about your traditions, it likely can be arranged. We want all children to feel and be included in our celebrations.

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Language

LCSH welcomes children regardless of their language abilities. Perhaps due to our location in the heart of the medical and academic community, we sometimes have children who are speaking English for the first time. This arrangement is most successful when the parent is comfortable with an English immersion program for their child and is working with the child at home about any concerns. Teachers at LCSH speak English to the students, although many speak other languages that may be incorporated into our curriculum often with songs and words related to an area of study.

Photograph Policy

LCSH does not use photographs in any promotional materials, advertising, or Web site for the Center. We do however take pictures for our bulletin boards and projects that we make. Parents who come to the Center for birthday parties, graduations, Halloween and other events are permitted to take pictures for their family albums. We also use photographs in our Center newsletter, which is given to LCSH families and sometimes to prospective families. Please advise us in writing if you do not wish to see your child's photograph in the newsletter.

Directories

LCSH does not provide parents with class directories. This is both a privacy issue and a practical issue, as enrollment and contact information can change often. We encourage families to provide their contact information to each other. An introductory note put in your child's classmate's mailbox is a good way to let others know how to reach you for play dates, birthdays, etc.

Thank You!

Thank you for the care that you have taken in reading this handbook. We welcome your feedback. Whenever you have any comments, concerns, compliments or ideas for Little Corner SchoolHouse, please share them with us as soon as possible. We welcome all of your feedback, and we will give it every consideration. Many of our events, activities, projects and improvements come from parent ideas. Together we can learn from each other and guide each other in helping to raise happy and healthy children.



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Parent Notes