Parent Handbook



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 **Mission**

**The vision of Little Sunshine House Reggio Inspired Preschools is to create a unique and special community that inspires and engages children, families and educators as they grow and develop.**

The mission of **Little Sunshine House**is to provide quality early care and education for young children by drawing from current research, that supports the idea that children are constructing their learning to provide a balance of intellectual stimulation, emotional support and physical nurturance. **Little Sunshine House**is dedicated to providing quality in early care and education for young children. Eligible children and families are served without regard to sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity or special rights. We strive to reflect the larger community of Long Beach in our program.

**Philosophy**

While it may look like ‘play’ it is our philosophy that experimentation, exploration and questioning are the natural mode of learning for the young child. It is our core belief that **in play the mind is always busy**.

Young children develop rapidly. In fact, more development occurs during the first five years than at any other stage of life.  A balance of, social, emotional, intellectual and physical stimulation is essential for development to be optimal. In our program we support and enrich individual development through several goal areas.

**Program Goals:**

To Support Children Socially and Emotionally by providing experiences that are intentional, as well as, responsive to the individual child while encouraging self-care and independence.

To Support Children Intellectually by providing opportunities that reflect the child’s interest. These opportunities provide time for interactive exploration while also providing a unique and exciting learning experience.

To Support Physical Development by providing outstanding outdoor classroom, playground and a variety physically stimulating activities.

Welcome

Welcome to Little Sunshine House.  We are excited that you have chosen to take this journey with us. We are here to provide the best possible care and early education for your child/ren. Our program offers children learning opportunities by providing a rich environment that encourages learning through experimentation, exploration and questioning. We are proud of our program, our comfortable and well-equipped environments and our qualified Staff.

We have prepared this PARENT HANDBOOK to acquaint you with our program and your responsibilities. For the purpose of this handbook, “parent” is defined as the person who has legal responsibility for the care and welfare of the child. Please become familiar with this handbook and refer to it often.  It will answer many questions you may have regarding our policies and daily procedures.

We will make every effort to inform you of your child’s activities and development at Little Sunshine House. Ongoing cooperation and communication between the home and school is important to your child’s progress. We use the App Brightwheel and invite you to use this tool to build a strong connection between LSH and home.

***We are a fully inclusive preschool welcoming all families. It is our goal to ensure that all families feel supported as partners in their child’s education.* It is our goal to reflect the surrounding Long Beach community within our programs. *Little Sunshine House* will make every effort to include all children and families to the fullest extent possible.**

**Admission Policy**

*Little Sunshine House* is dedicated to providing quality in early care and education for young children and their families. Eligible children and families are served without regard to sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity or physical handicap. The program does not include religious instruction or worship.

**Parental Involvement**

*Little Sunshine House* wants parents to feel involved and knowledgeable concerning their child’s experience at the center. There are many ways for parents to be involved in their child’s preschool experience including the following:

**Brightwheel**

Families will be invited to connect with us through Brightwheel. This app allows us to maintain your files and information on a secure platform. Your child’s primary educator will be able to update you via photos about activities, messages can be sent from both LSH and from the parent, there is a calendar and it also serves as a way to bill and pay for tuition.

**Documentation**

LSH educators spend a lot of time documenting the activities that the children are interested in. This documentation serves as a way for parents and educators to gain insight into how children are constructing knowledge.

**Volunteering**

Parents may volunteer in the A.M or P.M program. Throughout the year there is a sign-up with times and activities such as Read Across America. In addition, we request that families contribute 8 hours of volunteer hours per year. At our annual back to school night parents may sign up for one of our many committees including Parent Meet Up Committee, Scholastic Book Committee, Web Page/Social Media Development Committee, Outdoor Maintenance Committee . . . .

As many parents work full-time throughout the summer, we hold evening picnics that allow the parents, their children and the teachers a relaxed opportunity to get together.

**Parent Meeting**

There are several voluntary parent meetings throughout the year. Topics include information on our program and Reggio along with parenting issues. We welcome your suggestions.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered throughout the year. If you wish to have a conference with your child’s primary educator, simply message the educator and one will be arranged for you. The conference is usually 15-20 minutes long and provides time for you and your child’s primary educator to discuss your child.

**Annual Registration**

An initial $50 registration fee and a $100 material/music for preschool and toddlers and a $50 infant material fee is charged at the time of your family’s enrollment. The annual material and music fee of $100 will then be charged each year in September. There is no guarantee of re-enrollment if your child un-enrolls and wishes to re-enters the program. All registration fees and re-enrollment fees are non-refundable.

**Enrollment Process**

*Little Sunshine House* maintains a waiting list of families desiring care at their facility. We encourage parents to visit and fill out an Interest Form after which they will be placed on the interest list. Once it is determined that space is available, families will be contacted for an Enrollment Interview with the Director. During the Enrollment Interview, parents will become familiar with policies and procedures, complete enrollment forms and have an opportunity to share information regarding their child and family.

After the Enrollment Interview, a time will be scheduled for the child and parent to come and visit their classroom. During this minimum of one-hour visit, parents will have an opportunity to see the classroom environment in action. Parents will have a chance to meet the Teachers, share pertinent information regarding their child and find out where things are located within the classroom. They will be able to observe how the Teachers interact with their child, the other children in the room and the adults in the room.  Parents will stay with their child during this visit.

The next step in the enrollment process is for the child to stay by him/her self for a shortened day. **All required enrollment forms need to be submitted to the office before the child can attend their program.** Tuition begins on the first day of full attendance. The process of a gradual transition to *Little Sunshine House CDC* is designed for a smooth transition into the program. Please be aware that it is natural for children to take a while to adjust. Stay in close communication with your child’s teacher. Good communication helps both you and your child succeed in adjusting. Most children will make the adjustment to preschool in four to six weeks, but each child is different. Taking time during the transition process to help your child adjust will benefit both of you.

**Enrollment Forms**

The California Department of Social Services’ licensing regulations stipulate that all children entering *Little Sunshine House CDC* must have the following forms **completed and signed before attendance:**

Physician’s Reports – Child Care Centers (LIC 701)

Child’s Preadmission Health History – Parent’s Report (LIC 702)

Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment (LIC 627)

Parent’s Rights (LIC 995)

Personal Rights (LIC 613A)

Identification and Emergency Information (LIC 700)

In addition to the forms above *Little Sunshine House CDC* requires the following information and/or forms **completed and signed before attendance**:

Copy of the child’s current immunizations

Admission Agreement (last Page of Parent Handbook)

Family Enrollment Information

Application

Copy of Parent’s driver’s license or identification Card

Other documentation required may include:

Birth Certificate for verification of child’s birth date

Documentation of negative TB results for child within one year of entrance

It is important that*Little Sunshine House CDC* maintain current and accurate records on each child so that parents can be contacted in case of an emergency. The above listed forms must be kept current at all times. This information includes address, home and work telephone numbers, work location and names of at least two authorized persons to pick up your child.  Your child’s current immunization record must be received prior to or at the time of enrollment and must be kept current at all times. It is your responsibility to notify the Center Director of any changes. Failure to do so may result in termination of services.

It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent or legal guarding to accurately complete and sign all enrollment forms and keep the information updated as needed. By signing the enrollment form, the enrolling parent or legal guardian is also certifying that they have legal authority for the child. California law is clear that parents who have joint legal custody have equal access to all information regarding the child including enrolling the child and making changes to the enrollment information. Court orders are required to prevent a parent or legal guardian from certain activities such as picking up the child or visiting the child at the Preschool. We reserve the right, however, to prohibit individuals from being at the preschool if the health and safety of any child or staff is threatened or compromised.

Our policies do not allow staff to make copies of forms and other documents or provide testimony, verbally, or in writing, about any child. If subpoenaed by court order, a director will review the subpoena and contact the attorney. It is not in the best interest of any child for staff to act with partiality to one parent or the other.

If you should have any question, please speak with a Director.

**Tuition**

Tuition represents the largest source of income for *Little Sunshine House CDC* and we rely on these fees to assure that we can provide quality early education and care for your child at the most affordable rates possible. The snack (toddlers and preschool) is included in your weekly fee.  Please refer to the current tuition rate schedule. Tuition fees are subject to change at any time with a 10-day written notice.

Since full and timely payment of tuition is critical to our ability to maintain our operations, we would like to outline our policies and procedures regarding the payment of fees to *Little Sunshine House*as follows:

Tuition is due monthly and can be paid directly through Brightwheel. In addition, checks are excepted and can be placed in the tuition box when your child is dropped off on the first day of the month. Tuition may be paid by personal check or money order payable to *Little Sunshine House*.  Returned checks will be subject to a $20.00 fee for each returned check. If a check is returned, you will be notified and will be expected to obtain a money order for the original check amount and the retuned check fee.  Henceforth, you will be required to pay your tuition with a money order. Checks will no longer be accepted as payment.

***There is no reduction in payment in the tuition amount if your child is sick or on vacation.  Payment of your tuition assures that your child’s place in our program is maintained during his or her absence. We can not guarantee re-enrollment if you choose to take time off. We are a year-round program and as such draw from our current interest list to ensure that we remain fully enrolled year-round.***

If your child is ill or the family is going on vacation, the Preschool should be notified so that your child’s place in the program is maintained. An absence of more than five (5) consecutive days when Preschool staff has not been notified or paid for services may result in termination of enrollment.

Parents are responsible for tuition until *Little Sunshine House* has been notified that you plan to discontinue enrollment. If you wish to withdraw your child from the program, you are required to notify the Director by giving a written notice at least three (3) weeks in advance of your child’s intended withdrawal.

**Late Policy and Fee**

**Please call as soon as you realize that you are going to be late for pick up.** If your child is not picked up the end of your contracted day which is, 12:35 A.M. for the part-time A.M. or 5:30 P.M. for the part-time P.M. or 6:00 P.M for Full Day program, a late fee **of $15 for each 10-minute period**will be charged. **While we close at 6:00 P.M. parents should arrive by 5:50 P.M. in order to check in with staff, gather children’s belongings and say goodbye.**  All parents are personally responsible to pay late fees by the Monday following the week, in which the late fee is assessed. \*For those parents receiving tuition assistance most programs will not pay late fees on your behalf and you will be personally responsible.

*Little Sunshine House* reserves the right to discontinue services if the tuition and any late fees are not paid in a timely manner as detailed above.

**Extended Care Beyond Nine Hours**

Our contracted care with families is either for 4 hours (part time) or 9 hours (full time). Families that find themselves needing more than 9 hours of care on a weekly basis need to notify the onsite administrator. Extended hours will be accommodated at an additional rate of $7.50 an hour if staffing ratios can be meet and if it is in the best interest of the child. If a family frequently (more than twice a month) uses extended hours the hours will be billed at the end of the month as an additional fee.

**Transitions**

Children transition from their group based on many factors including developmental readiness, group dynamics, availability of space and age. We will notify parents three to eight weeks before a transition is likely to occur. The child’s primary caregiver will work closely to connect the child to their new group and set of educators. **Toddlers who transition to the preschool room and are not toilet learned will continue to be charged the toddler tuition rate.** The additional fee will help to offset the lower ratio needed to provide continued assistance with diapering in the preschool classroom. Preschool staff will work with parents to develop a toilet learning plan however LSH staff is not solely responsible for toilet learning a child.

**Refund Conditions**

There are no refunds for the tuition or registration fees (initial or annual). Please refer to the above stated policy, which requires at least three weeks written notice to discontinue your child’s enrollment.

**Hours of Operation and Holidays/Days Closed**

LSH is open 6:45 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday*.****While we close at 6:00 P.M. parents with a full-day schedule should arrive by 5:45 in order to check in with staff, gather children’s belongings and say goodbye.*** We are closed for the following:

1. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
2. President’s Day
3. Memorial Day
4. Independence Day 4th of July
5. Labor Day
6. Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following Thanksgiving Day
7. Christmas Eve through January 1st
8. The day following Easter Sunday
9. 3 Staff In-Service Days (the first will be August 30th) and 2 Teacher Planning Days (one at the end of September and the other on Good Friday).

**Early Childhood Program**

*Little Sunshine House CDC* provides an educational program designed to meet the needs of the whole child. This program is based on the knowledge that young children are active learners involved in a process that uses all their senses as they work, and play with people and materials. Professionally trained staff plan and arrange stimulating learning environments which are appropriate for the different developmental stages of a child’s life. These environments include indoor and outdoor areas. All children will participate in activities in these areas. ***Our outdoor classroom is open year-round in all weather conditions including rain.*** Children should have appropriate clothing and footwear along with dry clothing to change in to. The Teachers work together to meet the needs of the children, arranges the environment, and plan and implement activities. Weekly Plans are posted in the individual classes.

Our curriculum at *Little Sunshine House CDC* is based on current research that supports developmentally appropriate practices. Developmentally appropriate practices are those that take into account the way children develop and learn. We support the interest of each child, helping them to grow in their socio-emotional and cognitive skill development through hands-on experimentation with materials and concepts. We believe that your child will discover and learn by making the decisions needed to work through an activity, rather than being told exactly how to accomplish a task. As a result, you will find that no two-art projects look the same, and your child will discover many individual approaches to accomplish a task; thus, your child will not be asked or required to complete the activities in a specific manner. ***Our teachers build their classroom curriculum around ideas of interest to the children. Each day there are opportunities for children to explore materials and create meaningful experiences.  This curriculum is often referred to as a “Reggio Emilie Approach”* and is closely related to “Emergent Curriculum.”  *The activities emerge from the daily life of the children and adults in the program, particularly from the children’s own interest; it reminds us that spontaneity always has a place in the environments where young children play and learn****.*Nevertheless, as the world *curriculum*conveys, there is also Teacher planning in such environments, there *is*a curriculum.

Our curriculum provides opportunities in the following areas:

Language and Literacy – children are encouraged to talk, sing, make-up rhymes and listen to stories. Teachers provide supplies and opportunities for children to experience written material, flannel board stories, dramatic storytelling, dictations and puppet play.

Mathematical Thinking - children are encouraged to develop a sense of number and quantity.  Examples are activities that include counting, determining more or less, larger or smaller, how many, recognizing patterns and shapes and developing a sense of time awareness.

Scientific thinking- children focus on the world they know and understand.  Knowledge grows from the child’s innate need to discover.  Examples are measuring, comparing, using the five senses, questioning, predicting and analyzing results.

Social Studies – children explore the roles of relationships in their world.  Examples are dramatic play, block building, recognizing similarities and differences in people, families and professions, and understanding the reasons for social expectations.

The Arts – encourage children to express their creativity through art, self-expression, dance, music, and dramatic play. In art children mix paint, pound and shape clay, and build structures with blocks, boxes and logos. Teachers expose children to a wide variety of ideas and experiences in the arts throughout the day.

Personal and Social Development – children are encouraged to develop a self-concept and self-control through interacting with others, problem solving, and conflict resolution.

Physical Development – includes large and small motor development, and an understanding of personal health and safety.

The day is a blend of child-initiated and Teacher-initiated activities including group time, free choice times, outdoor play, appropriate meals, snacks and rest times.

The curriculum will be enriched through the use of community resources. Local groups such as the police, fire department, musicians, artist and geologist will be invited to visit. If you have a special interest, hobby or talent you would like to share with the children please let your child’s teacher know.

**Sample Daily Schedule/Flow of the Day**

At Little Sunshine House children spend time in mixed age groups (Community Time) and small peer groups. The benefits of mixed age groups include developing skills in help giving, teaching, sharing and sensitivity to others. In mixed age groups children often develop or try a new role which leads to a sense of positive self-regard. In mixed age groups children’s language and understanding of social rules develop and they gain important life skills. Small group allows children to learn with their peer group curriculum relevant to their development. The literature, music, songs, and activities in small group provide a scaffold to more complex learning.

6:30-8:00 Play of Choice

8:30-9:30/10:00 Outside Classroom with snack available

10:00-11:30/12:00 Small Group Experiences. To include: art studio, science, pre-reading, snack and small motor and fine motor activities. Ongoing small group activities that are specific to the children’s interest.

11:45 Clean Up and Prepare for Lunch

12:00-1:00 Lunch and Outside Classroom Experiences

Full Day Children Rest: 12:30/1:00 Prepare for Rest Time: read quietly 1:00-2:00 Rest Time for non-sleepers, read stories and/or quiet activities such as puzzles. Children allowed to sleep until they wake on their own or 3:30pm children join awake children in small group activities as they awake.

2:00-4:30 Mixed Age Community Time with snack available. Indoor and Outdoor Curriculum to include: art studio, science, pre-reading, and small motor and fine motor activities. Ongoing small group activities that is specific to the children’s interest.

4:30-6:00 Small Groups. Time for Reflection on Afternoon Activities. Goodbye to P.M. Children

**Staff Qualifications**

*Little Sunshine House* staff is composed of professionals trained in Early Childhood Education. It is important to select the employees with the best education and experience. All Lead Teachers/Educators and Aides meet or exceed qualifications as required by California Licensing. We encourage Teachers/Educators to continue their training at the college level and also provide additional in-service training. Qualified Substitute Teachers are providers when needed.  Regularly schedule staff meetings and professional development activities encourage staff members to continually increase their knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice so that they may better serve young children.  At times, other paraprofessional, such as interns, may be involved in our program.

Ratios at *Little Sunshine House CDC* meet or exceed State Licensing. **State** requirements are as follows: Preschool 1:12. Toddlers 1:5 and Infants 1:4. Ratios at *Little Sunshine House*during activity times are as follows: Preschool 1:8. Toddler 1:5 and Infant 2:7. Please keep in mind if there is an emergency with ill staff then the ratio may revert to State requirements. These instances are seldom but are acceptable.

All staff including inters are fingerprinted for submission to California’s Department of Justice (DOJ) who then completes a criminal background check. Prospective staff is not allowed to work with children until we have received clearance from the DOJ. Parents who require more information regarding the Caregiver background check can request it at the time of the enrollment interview.

*Little Sunshine House CDC* and *LSH at Linden* are licensed to operate by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division and California Department of Education, Child Developmental Division.

**Communication Systems**

Open communication is vital to your child’s successful experience. We have an open-door policy. Parents are welcome visitors at any time. We welcome your comments, suggestions and concerns. Several communication channels are established and we encourage you to take advantage of these.

**Parent Board**

This bulletin board or information area is used for information such as menus, daily schedules, and general announcements. There is a parent board outside the Office.

**Center Updates and Classroom Calendars**

The center staff publishes Center Updates and Classroom Calendars on Brightwheel. They contain important information such as upcoming events, general classroom news, and announcements.

**Brightwheel**

App used to communicate with families also allows parents to message LSH.

**Face-to-Face Conversations**

It is always helpful for staff to know when major changes happen in a child’s life. These changes could include a family death, moving to a new residence, loss of a parent’s job, a parent away for business, someone from the immediate family moving out of the home, etc.  Children are often worried about these incidents but do not know how to express their concerns. The child’s behavior may be affected. We are better able to assist your child when we are aware of these changes in the home. Staff is available and open to your comments and suggestions. We are here for you and your child, so do not hesitate to communicate with them frequently. Please check in with staff frequently and if you are needing a private meeting check in with your primary caregiver as to the best times for extended conversations.

**Health and Safety**

Children are expected to be in good health and able to participate in the planned activities.  *Little Sunshine House* has several policies and procedures that are strictly followed for the health and wellbeing of each child in the program. Please read these carefully and talk to a Director if you have any questions.

Health Information Required

Current immunization, TB records, and a physical examination are required to be on file for each child.

Daily Health Check

Your child’s health status will be checked each day. This health check may be informal however, if your child appears to be showing signs of illness, s/he may not be admitted into the program.  Daily health inspections allow staff an opportunity to check each child for any potential illness.  It also allows time for communication between parents and staff to discuss how the child has been feeling and whether there has been an exposure to any contagious disease.

When doing the daily health check, we are looking for signs of illness such as, but not limited to, the following:

* Unusual behavior (Examples are crankiness, pain, discomfort, very sleepy, the child may not “look or act themselves,” or doesn’t appear well enough to participate in routine school activities)
* Fever over 101 degrees
* Skin that is flushed, pale or unusually warm to the touch
* Sores on any part of the body that are open, have fluid in them or appear infected
* Unexplained skin rash, especially when accompanied by fever or behavior changes
* Red eyes with white or yellow discharge and/or crusty eyes
* Sore throat with fever and swollen glands or mouth sores with drooling
* Head lice or nits
* Runny nose – A child with a runny nose (green, yellow, or clear) should only be excluded if they also appear ill, are too sick to participate and/or have any other symptoms that they need to be excluded for.

Once at the center, if a child develops the following symptoms, the parent or other authorized persons will be called and may be required to pick up the child within a reasonable amount of time:

* Fever – over 101 degrees
* Flu Symptoms
* Cough – severe uncontrolled coughing, wheezing or difficulty breathing
* Diarrhea – runny or watery stools more than two times in an hour.  Any bloody diarrhea
* Vomiting – more than two times in 24 hours
* Stomach ache – pain lasting more than one hour
* Ear ache or foreign body/injury in the ear that causes pain or bleeding
* Heady Injury – if the child has associated symptoms
* Lacerations – a wound that will probably require sutures
* Unexplained skin rashes – especially accompanied by fever and/or behavior changes
* Unusual behavior

Please remember that staff is making “assessments” regarding potential illnesses and they are not medical personnel. They look at each child’s case individually and are sensitive to the fact that family members need to go to work and school. Exclusion from the center is to protect your child as well as others at *Little Sunshine House*. If there is a disagreement between the parent and staff member regarding exclusion, please talk with the Director or Co-Director.

Plan ahead:

Parents must keep emergency phone numbers current. We must be able to reach you if your child becomes ill. Once contacted the parent has 90 minutes to either pick-up the child or send an authorized contact to *Little Sunshine House* to retrieve their child.

Please make plans for who will care for your child if they are too sick to attend *Little Sunshine House* or needs to go home unexpectedly

When your child is sick, please be sure to promptly notify LSH of their diagnosis and treatment. **Also notify them if your child has a contagious disease or has been exposed to one**.  Such reports are treated with confidentiality. When necessary, staff will need to notify families and the Health Department of a potential exposure to a contagious disease.

Guidelines for Returning to School

Children should be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school. Children may return to school as long as none of the aforementioned symptoms are present.  Children who are prescribed antibiotics, in any form, are required to be on the medication for a period of 24 hours prior to returning to school. A permission to return to school note from the Physician is required for:

* Pink eye or conjunctivitis
* Contagious looking rashes e.g., scabies, impetigo, scarlet fever, Hand Foot Mouth Disease
* Strep throat or mouth sores with drooling
* HFM (hand, foot, mouth) is highly contagious please notify the center if your child has symptoms or has been diagnosed with HFM so that we can notify families and be alert to the situation.
* Hepatitis in family
* Meningitis in family
* Any child that has been sick and doesn’t seem to be improving
* Any time a child is hospitalized or has a procedure done as an “outpatient” basis

We have the right to request a permission to return to school note at any time it is in the best interest of *Little Sunshine House*. We also reserve the right to exclude a child with signs of illness even if a permission to return to school has been obtained. If you felt it was serious enough to seek medical assistance, please remember to ask for a permission to return to school note while still at the Physician’s office.

Injuries

The staff work very hard to keep children safe and well, however, occasionally typical childhood accidents, such as bumps, scrapes and falls, occur while in care. Staff will tend to minor injuries that can be adequately dealt with by using soap, water, antiseptic solution, ice and bandages.  An incident report will be completed to inform you of the type of injury, location on the child’s body, how the injury occurred, where the injury occurred, treatment and child’s reaction to the injury.  Please sign the injury report and leave it with your child’s Teacher. If you would like a copy of the report, check the box on the form indicating so. Parents will be notified of accidents requiring more extensive intervention.

If your child becomes injured while at *Little Sunshine House*, these steps will be followed:

All injuries steps 1-3. Serious injuries 1-8.

1. The seriousness of the injury will be assessed.
2. First-aid will be administered. If necessary, emergency personal will be contacted.
3. A photo of the injury will be posted on Brightwheel so that the parent can best asses the injury.
4. The parents will be contacted by phone if it requires further evaluation.
5. Persons listed on your emergency form will be contacted if we are unable to contact you.  It is essential that you notify the staff if you are not going to be at your regularly scheduled work or training site, and leave an alternate phone number.
6. Arrangements will be made to have the child taken to the emergency room if necessary.
7. You or the person you designate (must be on emergency form authorizing them to pick up) must pick up your child as soon as possible if you are called.
8. After a medical evaluation and/or treatment are administered, please contact LSH to inform us of your child’s status.

Little Sunshine House is not responsible for the payment of fees such as medical or ambulance fees that may be associated with an injury that occurs on the premises.

Medications

It is encouraged for parents to give medications to their children at home. However, it is necessary for your child to receive medication while at *Little Sunshine House* the following will apply:

  Prescription Medication

* Container must have the original pharmacy label listing the child’s name, physician’s name, name of medicine, issue date, dosage, expiration date, and directions for administration and storage.
* Container must be child resistant
* Medication must be prescribed in the United States
* Medication must be for the current illness

  Non-prescription Medication

* Dosage instructions and reason for receiving medication must be from a**Physician** and shall include a pharmacy label listing the child’s name, physician’s name, name of medicine, issue date, dosage, expiration date, and directions for administration and storage.
* Physician’s dosage must be in accordance with instructions on label.
* Must be in the original container which gives directions for safe use, expiration date, list of active ingredients, name and address of manufacturer, and be labeled with child’s name and date.

If you child needs to receive the medication during the day, inform your Primary Educator who will give the medication to them. Parents will need to complete a **Medication Consent Form** for all medications (prescription and non-prescription). Parent’s instructions on the consent form must be in accordance with the instructions from the Physician. If the consent form is incomplete, medication will not be administered and parents may have to return during the day to give the medication until the form is completed. A new form needs to be completed whenever there is a change i.e., dosage. Medications can only be given to the child indicated on the label. Twins and siblings cannot share medications! Parents may ask their Pharmacist to dispense a second labeled medication container for school. Children may not bring self-administered medicines i.e., aspirin, cough drops, eye drops.

Medical Treatments

If your child is required to have one of the specific allowable treatment procedures, such as a nebulizer, Epi-pen, or blood glucose monitoring, while in care, you will be asked to complete additional permission requirements, plus demonstrate for staff the proper use of the treatment.

Sunscreen

It is strongly recommended that children wear sunscreen to prevent sunburn. Parents should apply sunscreen before children come to school.

Allergies

If your child has been diagnosed with allergies, you must notify the child’s primary caregiver and the Director. We must have a statement in writing from your child’s Doctor describing the specific allergy, any special precautions, emergency procedures, or medical treatment equipment your child may require.

If your child has any food allergies for which substitute foods are required, you must provide the statement from the child’s Doctor stating the nature of the allergy and what substitutions are necessary.

**Emergency Information**

Your child will be instructed on emergency procedures in case of fire or an earthquake while at school. S/he will participate in regular fire and earthquake drills and learn other rules of safety. In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, staff will continue to care for your child until such time as you or your authorized representative can pick up your child. Each center asks that children bring an Emergency Kit (appendix) so that LSH has sufficient supplies to take care of children and staff for up to three days. Staff has disaster/emergency training. At all times, at least one staff member on duty has been trained in Infant/Child CPR. In any kind of natural disaster, as long as our facility has been determined to be safe, all children will remain on site unless an injury requires release to an emergency medical facility. In the event of an evacuation, signs will be clearly posted *at Little Sunshine House*giving destination of evacuated children. Only adults previously authorized on the emergency forms will be able to sign out children.

Emergency Center Closure

The center may close or delay opening if the following conditions are present:

* Natural disaster which prevents use of the facility,
* Room conditions prevent adequate ventilation and breathing,
* Disruption of utilities which prevent meeting the nutritional needs of the children or natural light is diminished to be a risk to children and staff,
* Presence of live wires,
* Loss of water that disrupts hand washing, and toileting with clean running water.

If possible, parents will be alerted via Brightwheel and the outgoing message on the phone answering system will give information regarding closure and signs will be posted outside of the facility.

**Nutrition**

We are a **NUT Free** environment. We serve children in the toddler and preschool program two snacks a day and a lunch that is provided by the parent. We ask that parents follow Healthy Eating Guidelines. Meals are served family style in each classroom. An Educator is present and adequate time is given for eating and pleasant conversation. Children are encouraged to serve themselves and try all foods, but are never forced to eat. Active involvement in food service, table set-up and clean-up in included. We ask that **only staff serves food to the children** this is done in order to avoid serving foods to children who may have specific food allergies.

General Policies

Sign-In and Out

It is a State Licensing requirement that each child be signed in and out by a parent or authorized parent representative every day. Sign in and out tablets are located at the parent area.  Failure to follow these procedures may result in termination of services. Once children are signed in, they are the responsibility of the center staff. Once children are signed out, they are the responsibility of the parent. Children may not be left unattended in the building or on the playground.

Children will be released only those authorized persons (at least 16 years old) designated on the Emergency Form. Picture identification will be required. The name on the identification must match the name on the Emergency Form and the picture must match the person presenting it. A photocopy of the identification card will be taken. It is the parent’s responsibility to notify office personnel of any changes on the Emergency Form. You may update this form at any time. We will ask you to update the form once a year. We do not accept notes or phone calls from parents stating that someone not on your Emergency will be picking up your child; they must be listed on the Emergency Form. NO EXCEPTIONS!

State law requires that all children must be secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint (safety seat or booster seat), until they are at least 6 years old OR at least 60 pounds. Never leave any child alone in the car no matter how short the time! It is not only unsafe, but also illegal.

Extra Clothing

Please provide your child with at least two complete change of clothing. Water activities may occur throughout the year. Children who are prone to wetting should bring plenty of extra underwear.

Blankets and Nap Sheets

Each child who naps at Little Sunshine House is required to provide a sleeping bag or nap sheet and a small blanket. The sleeping items are to be taken home at the end of the week and washed. If Little Sunshine House has to provide a sheet a fee of $2 for each incident will be charged to the parent.

Confidentiality

The use or disclosure of all information pertaining to the child and his/her family shall be restricted to purposes directly connected with the administration of the program.

The California Department of Social Services has the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or child care center records, without prior consent. The Department also has the authority to observe the physical condition of the child (ren), including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement.

Appropriate identification from the Department will be obtained prior to the interview.

Written consent is required if parents want the *Little Sunshine House CDC* to share information regarding their child to another agency (school district, health provider).

Child Abuse Reporting

All *Little Sunshine House CDC* staff is mandated by California law (California Penal Code 11165.7) to report cases of suspected child neglect and/or abuse (physical, emotional, and/or sexual) immediately to a child protection agency. Child Abuse law considers discipline that result in bruises and any other injuries caused by spanking to be a form of child abuse. If you need information about disciplining your children or help with other parenting issues, please see the Director who will give you information, assistance and/or referrals to the appropriate services.

Parent Responsibility

It is the goal of *Little Sunshine House CDC* to maintain a safe, caring, respectful environment for children, staff, and parents.  Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* Use of abusive or offensive language including, but not limited to harassment, threats, yelling, rudeness, and profanity.
* Theft or damage to property.
* Physical or verbal abuse of children, staff or other parents.
* Defiance of authority.

Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs and smoking are prohibited on the Preschool’s premised. No child will be released to anyone who appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

Parents, children, and staff are expected to maintain a respectful relationship with each other.  Parents demonstrating any of the above unacceptable behaviors may be terminated from the program.

It is not appropriate for parents to approach other parents or children to address an incident that happened at the Preschool. Parents must deal with such concerns through the Teacher, or a Director.

1. If an incident occurs, the parents will be asked to leave the premises.
2. The parent will be required to meet with the designated administrative staff person in order for the child to remain the program.
3. Continuation in the program will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the severity of the incident.
4. If the family continues in care, another such incident will result in termination from the program.

Clothing

Active play is very important to children’s overall development. Your child will regularly participate in “messy” indoor and outdoor activities such as painting, cooking, sensory activities, etc. Sturdy and comfortable play clothes that are easy for little hands to manage are appropriate and help children to become self-sufficient. Play shoes that are low-heeled, lace-up, or have Velcro closure, and a rubber sole are recommended.

Mark all clothing with your child’s name. Staff will encourage children to take care of their belongings; however, we cannot be responsible for lost or damaged items.  There will be a Lost and Found Box at the center. Please help your child learn to take care of his/her belongings and LSH Teachers will also encourage children to be responsible for the care of all items while at LSH. We reserve the right to offer children alternative clothing if it is determined that a child is inappropriately dressed.

Weather

Children are outside on a daily basis as they explore the outdoor classroom. Children should come to school wearing appropriate clothing for the season in order for them to be comfortable while outdoors. On days of extreme temperatures (cold or hot) the amount of time outside may be reduced, but nonetheless, **daily children will spend some time outdoors**. Cold temperatures do not make children sick; germs do. On days of poor air quality, AQMD index of unhealthy or higher, children’s active outdoor activities will be restricted.

Toys

Please help your child keep their toys at home. If you allow your child to bring a toy to LSH the staff is not responsible for the item. If the item is lost it is not our responsibility to search for it. Security objects such as a favorite stuffed animal are an exception and are welcome. Books and items related to the current unit of study are encouraged at any time; just check with your child’s teacher before bringing them in to the center. Please mark these items with your child’s name. **Toy guns and weapons** are not allowed at *Little Sunshine House*.

Birthdays

A child’s birthday is a day of celebration for some families and we will be happy to help make this a special occasion. Children start talking about their birthday weeks ahead of time, telling the Teachers, “It’s going to be my birthday.”  In order to include all children in the birthday celebration we ask that families provide all juice popsicles.

Visitors

All visitors of *Little Sunshine House* need to show their picture identification and be listed on the Emergency Form as an authorized individual.

**Little Sunshine House: Babysitting Policy**

We do not provide a babysitting service outside our normal operating hours. However, we understand that parents sometimes ask staff to babysit for their children and this policy has been implemented to clarify some points regarding private arrangements between staff and parents. Please also refer to our Safeguarding Children Statement.

* Little Sunshine House is not responsible for any private arrangements or agreements that are made: such agreements are between the staff member and family. However, we do expect staff members to inform us if they are babysitting or caring for a child that attend LSH.
* We require the staff member and parent to sign a copy of this policy, which we will keep on file for the child and staff member.
* We have rigorous recruitment to ensure that we employ competent and professional members of staff and uphold our duty to safeguard children whilst on our premises and in the care of our staff. This procedure includes interviews, references, full employment history and DBS checks as well as several other processes. Whilst in our employment all staff are subject to ongoing supervision, observation and assessment to ensure that standards of work and behavior are maintained in accordance with our policies. We have no such control over the conduct of staff outside of their position of employment. Parents should make their own checks as to the suitability of a member of staff for babysitting.
* We will not take responsibility for any health and safety issues, conduct, grievances or any other claims arising out of the staff member’s private arrangements outside of their scheduled LSH hours. The member of staff will not be covered by LSH insurance whilst babysitting as a private arrangement.
* **Out-of-hours work arrangements must not interfere with the staff member’s employment at LSH.**
* All staff are bound by contract of Confidentiality and are unable to discuss any issues regarding LSH other staff members, parents or other children.
* It will be the staff member’s responsibility to ensure they have the appropriate insurance, and child restraints or child safety seats if they are transporting them in a car.

Parent/Carer/staff member name: …………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Signature: ……………………………………………………………………………………………….. Date: ………………………………

**Discipline and Guidance**

The goal of *Little Sunshine House* discipline policy is to assist children in developing emotional regulation and self-discipline through respectful interactions that support children’s emotional growth. The early years are a time of immense cognitive, physical and emotional growth for young children. Young children are still egocentric, meaning they still think mostly of their own needs and wants as opposed to the needs of others. Because of this, if it not unusual for young children to use physical or verbal aggression in attempt to get their needs met. It is our job as adults in the environment to guide children through this time by setting clear limits and following through appropriately and consistently. Staff helps children understand the expectation for reasonable behavior by discussing, giving examples and by redirecting children to appropriate activities. Gradually, children are helped toward self-control and gain a sense of pride in their ability to care for themselves and each other.

“Rules” to Keep Everyone Safe

In our environment there are behaviors that need to be stopped by adults:

1. Physical aggression such as:

-Hitting, slapping, pinching, biting

-Throwing objects at others

1. Willful destruction at school property such as:

-Ripping books

-Breaking toys

1. Engaging in activities that may be physically or emotionally harmful to themselves or others such as:

-Teasing, name calling or threatening language

-Using equipment in a dangerous way

This list is not meant to cover every eventuality that may occur. It is important that the adults in the environment manage each case individually.

Procedures for Dealing with Unacceptable Behavior

The use of corporal punishment which includes physical force is not allowed. This includes but is not limited to spanking, shaking, pulling, jerking, or frightening the child.

If the unacceptable behavior persists over time the following procedures will be followed:

* The teacher will help the child to change the behavior. Methods used may include redirection, reinforcement of positive behaviors and/or choices between acceptable behaviors. If the negative behavior continues further action may be required and will include a parent conference, behavioral plan, observation and referrals. If the behavior endangers others, is persistent the child may be removed from the program.
* A Behavior Plan may be used to asses a child’s behavior.
* Parents may be asked to come in for a conference so that we can work together to better support the child.
* Placement at LSH may be terminated if it is agreed that LSH is not able to meet the needs of the child.

**Grievance Procedure**

Communication between parents and staff is important to achieving and maintaining a high quality program. Parents should have informal conversations with their child’s teachers as well as check the activity board for plans and updates. If an issue arises it should be brought to the attention of the Lead Teacher. The next level of communication is with the Co-Director or Director.

**Termination Policy**

*Little Sunshine House CDC* reserves the right to exclude children and/or families when it is in the best interest of the program. Termination may include but is not limited to:

* Chronic late payment
* Excessive absence
* Fraudulent information
* Safety and Health concerns
* Failure to follow policies
* Failure to compile with state regulations and guidelines
* Failure to maintain current contact information
* If the staff of *Little Sunshine House CDC* is unable to meet the physical, social or emotional needs of the child

Admission Agreement/Parent Handbook Receipt

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Please initial each of the following statements

(   ) I agree to pay the established tuition required for services based on rates posted by *Little Sunshine House CDC.* I understand that I will receive notice of any change in fees (30) days prior to the date when such changes are to go into effect.

(   ) I understand that after 5 days of consecutive absence childcare for my child will be discontinued if I have failed to contact the Director.

(   ) All information that I have provided is true and correct.

(    ) I understand the Department of Social Services has the authority to interview children and/or staff and to inspect and audit childcare records without prior consent. The Department of Social Services has the authority to observe the physical condition of the child, including conditions that could indicate abuse or neglect or inappropriate placement.

(   ) I have received a copy of *Little Sunshine House CDC’s* Parent Handbook. I have read all policies and procedures and agree to them. I understand that failure to follow these policies may lead to termination of services.

Child’s Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Director’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_