

## Little Explorers Daycare Parent and Staff Handbook

Welcome to Little Explorers!

We feel privileged to be able to offer childcare services to our community and are committed to offering the best care possible.

We hope to reflect our namesake and fully explore the different interests of each child. We look forward to this adventure with all our families.

Sincerely,

Bev Wilson, Director

### Mission Statement

“To nurture and love children and their families by providing warm, responsive care that will meet the needs, growth and developmental areas of each child.”

### Philosophy

Little Explorers is an organization that not only strives to meet the developmental needs of each child, but desires to minister to the hearts of both children and parents by focusing on spiritual aspects of growth and development.

The focus is to:

- Foster a healthy self-image of children; encouraging children to accept themselves and others as unique and created in God's image, realizing each child has their own unique gifts and abilities.
- To promote the social development of children by encouraging optimism, long-lasting, loving relationships, and good manners.
- Give children a desire to learn by enhancing their intellectual development, fostering the thinking process, and by helping children acquire and use verbal skills.

- Enhance physical development of children by promoting good nutrition and healthy eating habits, as well as developing sensory motor skills on all levels.
- Nurture creative development of children consisting of expanding new ideas and presenting them in a unique fashion, assisting children to express themselves through the various arts, and encouraging children to appreciate the beauty of creation.
- Aid parents' awareness by promoting ongoing educational knowledge of child development and different ways to interact with their children.
- Little Explorers values continual training and education for its entire staff to ensure the promotion and provision of quality childcare. They receive ongoing support, in-service training, and resources to implement programs and grow professionally.

Little Explorers believes the environment children are in during the day should be one that reflects a warm, loving, home-like environment with an emphasis on cooperation, courtesy, nurturing, security, and non-violence.

### General information

Little Explorers Daycare was incorporated on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012, as a non-profit organization. It was licensed January 1, 2013.

Beginning June 1, 2017, LED was licensed for the care of 64 children ranging in age from 6 months to twelve years. The program has spaces for 5 infants, 10 toddlers (18 to 29 months), 20 preschoolers (30 months to 5 years) and 13 school age with 16 flex spaces.

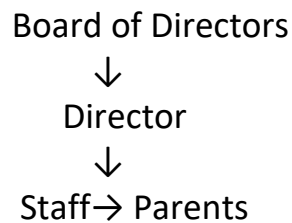
Staffing in the program is designed to provide high-quality care through maintaining proper ratios at all times; infants 1:3, toddlers 1:5, and preschool 1:10.

## Administration

Little Explorers Inc. is a non-profit organization run by a Board of Directors, consisting of church and community members, as well as parents whose children are enrolled in the program.

### Organization structure:

The chain of authority is as follows:



### Smoking policy:

There is no smoking allowed on daycare premises, inside or out. This includes parents, visitors, and staff.

### Child management and guidance

The goal of all child management action is to encourage mutual respect, self management, and control on the part of the child. Children are encouraged to be responsible for their own actions and handle their problems through verbalization. Emphasis will be placed on prevention of behaviour through appropriate modelling, positive reinforcement, and programming.

Verbal and Physical Abuse towards staff members or another person will not be tolerated. Please see section: *Actions for persistent inappropriate behaviour.*

As partners guiding your child's growth and development, it is important that staff and parents work together in meeting all aspects of a child's development. Staff will make every attempt to meet and discuss with you any questions you have regarding your child.

### Addressing Conflicts with Other Parents, Staff or Children

In the event of a conflict, all staff and parents are to talk to the director first. No staff or parents are to confront another parent, staff member or child when a dispute arises. The director will talk to the parent or staff member on behalf of the other party and will call a meeting between the two parties, if necessary.

#### Guidelines for staff include:

1. Staff will handle all child management actions in a positive atmosphere of mutual respect, courtesy, nurturing and self-control.
2. **Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden.** Children are never shouted at, berated, shamed, or humiliated.
3. Staff uses the following procedure when child management actions are required:
  - Positive wording is used.
  - The child's individuality, personality and circumstances surrounding the incidents, are taken into account.
  - Impartial, consistent methods are used in dealing with different children.
  - Reminders, reasoning, explaining, distraction, relating the consequences and removal from the situation are techniques used to deal with inappropriate behaviours.
  - No child is ever made to stand in the corner.
  - For children who are demonstrating dysregulated behaviour we will use a "Reset" or "Body Break".

#### Actions For Persistent Inappropriate Behaviour:

If a negative behaviour persists, the director will meet with the parents and will discuss the inappropriate behaviour and attempt to solve the problem. Every instance of inappropriate behaviour, as documented by the staff, is

presented to the parents. The meeting details are recorded, and both the parents and the director sign the document. All possible help is given to the family. If the behaviour persists into the second month, the Board of Directors is notified. At that time, the Board of Directors may decide to terminate the agreement of daycare services. For such termination, 30 days notice is given to the family. If the child makes a great improvement in his/her behaviour during the last month of service, the child may continue at the centre.

Behaviour that is severely disruptive or harmful to the child and/or the program will be considered inappropriate. This includes the following behaviours occurring on a daily /ongoing basis:

- Hurting oneself or other children
- Hurting staff members or visitors
- Abusive language or swearing
- Leaving the centre without notice
- Any other negative behaviour exhibited for one month.

### Expectations of Parents

Verbal and Physical abuse towards staff, children and any other person will not be tolerated. This type of behaviour may result in immediate termination of daycare contract.

### Communication

#### 1. Informal:

Staff welcomes communication with parents on an ongoing, daily basis. Please inform them of any changes in your family situation. As well, information about the child's sleep patterns, health and general well-being should be shared.

#### 2. Formal:

This handbook is issued at the time you register your child. It contains the centre policies and procedures regarding the program, the care of your

child and the general operation of the center. It is imperative that it be read and followed.

Parents of toddlers may also expect reports of the child's day, growth, and development; these reports will be recorded in the HiMamma Application.

Parents can expect to see notices of community and center-based educational opportunities posted in the center.

**It is imperative that parents contact the center when their child will not be attending.** This refers to general vacation periods, days of illness and/or days away.

Parents who are concerned with the care of the child or any incident in the centre are urged to speak with their child's caregiver or the director. Should the parent not be satisfied with the results, he/she may approach the director and request the matter be taken to the Board of Directors.

### Policies

1. Hours - the daycare is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 6:30 AM and 6 PM. The center is closed statutory holidays and Boxing Day.
  - If your child does not attend daycare for **one week without notice**, his/her spot will be filled.
  - Two weeks' notice will be required when withdrawing your child from the center.
2. Overtime Charges for Families – Parent fees cover a 9 ½ hour workday. Exceptional circumstances (e.g., working in a different community from the daycare) will require specific arrangements with daycare Director.
3. Summer/Vacation Time for Families – Policy was created to hold spots for children over the summer when they are absent from the daycare. Parents will have to pay for their children's full-time spots if they attend or not. Consult to the director to make summer or vacation for arrangement.

#### 4. Late Charges

All parents and children must be gone from the daycare by 6 PM each day. If for some reason parents are going to be late, they must contact the daycare. If a parent works until 6pm, please talk to the director.

When children have not been picked up, the following late charges apply:

- From 6:00pm to 6:15pm or any portion thereof-- a \$25 charge results.
- 6:30pm- 6:45 PM-or any portion thereof -- an additional \$25 charge results. These charges are due at the time of the parent's arrival or before the next drop-off time.

#### 5. Early Drop Off

If a parent requests that the daycare open outside the regular posted hours, the parent will cover the cost of staffing that additional time. To ensure staff is available, these requests must be negotiated at least 48 hours in advance. If staffing cannot be provided, the request will be denied.

#### 6. Children not picked up.

Should a child not be picked up by 7 PM and the daycare not be contacted, nor the designated emergency person be available, Social Services will be contacted. There will be a note left for the parents and they will be responsible for picking up the child. Any costs occurring from such an event are also the responsibility of the parents.

#### 7. Fees

Childcare fees are charged monthly, at the first of each month. All monthly fees must be paid by the 1st of the month. If the payment is not made by the 10th, the account becomes overdue and a late payment fee of \$10 per day will be applied retroactively. If the balance, including late fees, is not paid by

the 20th of the month the parent will receive termination notice. If the parents are unable to pay the fees within an appropriate time, they must contact the Director to make payment arrangements.

### Diaper and Wipe Policy

A charge of **a dollar per day** will be added to parent fees after 2 days of using daycare diapers or wipes.

### The Fee schedule effective April 1, 2023 (Regular Fees)

Infants (under 18months)	\$730.00
Toddler room	\$630.00
Preschool room	\$590.00
Before and after school	\$215.25
Drop-in – School Age	\$5.25 an hour or \$26.25 a day

### The Fee schedule effective April 1, 2023 (Government Subsidy Fee Reduction)

Infants (under 18months)	\$217.50
Toddler room	\$217.50
Preschool room	\$217.50

### Holding a Spot

A deposit, equivalent to a monthly fee, will be required to hold a spot and will be used to pay the first month parent fees. In the event that the family does not want the spot, the family will give 6 weeks' notice to the daycare and the deposit will be returned. If 6 weeks' notice is not given to the daycare, the daycare will keep the deposit. If you need to make a smaller payment each month to accumulate the total monthly fee, please talk to the director to make these arrangements.

### Picking up and dropping off children:

- It is very important that parents accompany their children into the daycare upon arrival. Policy requires that parents help children off with outer clothing and put it away. To ensure a comfortable transition, it is imperative that a staff member knows of the child's arrival before the parent leaves. All parents must verbally check in their child with a worker. The daycare does not accept legal responsibility for children until they are personally handed over to a staff person. Infant and Toddler parents are also required to answer a brief set of questions about the child's last sleep time, feeding and bowel movement. Time is also available to document special instruction and to leave messages for the staff.
- Picking up your child is the reverse of dropping off. A staff member must be made aware that the child is leaving. Again, parents must dress their own child and collect his/her belongings.
- Please remember that if someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, the staff members must know ahead of time. The staff will NOT let a child leave the center with anyone who is not authorized by the parent to do so. This does not include people designated as emergency contacts. In case of a phone call from the parent authorizing someone else to pick up the child; a full name and picture (via message) must be given so that they can be identified upon pickup.

### Clothing

Parents must provide adequate clothing for their child that is to be left at the daycare at all times. All clothing should be **labelled** with the child's name. Any soiled clothing must be taken home to be laundered. Parents should check regularly to make sure that a complete change is still available. A complete change includes:

- underwear, socks, shirt and pants

- For children toilet training-3 to 4 additional pairs of underwear, pants, and socks.

In an emergency situation, the daycare will use its small stock of extra clothing. These clothes must be laundered and returned the next day.

Parents must provide disposable diapers for the children. Spaces are provided to store up to one bag of diapers per child, for parents who prefer use diapers in quantity. For those who do not, at least two days worth must be on hand.

Parents must ensure that their child is adequately dressed for outdoor activity. Clothing must include:

- Winter: warm boots with waterproof soles, a snowsuit, a pair of waterproof mittens, a toque, and a scarf.
- **Indoor shoes are required.**
- Summer: a hat, a light cover up, shoes suitable for walking distances, a swimsuit and towel.
  - Sunscreen and insect repellent is provided at a charge of \$10 per child per month.
- For the spring and fall: layered clothing which can be easily added to or taken from to adjust for unsettled weather... Shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters, light jackets, woollen mittens, rubber boots and splash pants/suit, etc.
- For safety and sanitary reasons, it is imperative that every child has a pair of soft-soled, nonslip rubber shoes somewhere in the daycare each day. We ask parents to leave the shoes at the centre.

## Toys

Games of violence are against the daycare philosophy. This includes gun-building and role-play of current television characters that are violent in nature.

The daycare offers a variety of toys and activities. Bringing a toy from home is not allowed. Please be reminded that if a child does bring one, the daycare would not be responsible for loss or damage to this toy. Some exceptions include: a cuddly toy for rest time and specific requests for special activities.

### Parent's responsibilities

- Parents are responsible for completing all forms, both to daycare and subsidy board.

### Records and Forms

1. Child's health resume
  2. Agreement for childcare services
  3. Excursion and transportation consent
  4. Child's health and emergency information card.
- In conjunction with the philosophy, parents are expected to participate in as many areas as they are able. We ask that all parents are in agreement with daycare's principles and are willing to act in accordance with them; parent involvement is critical to the success of the daycare experience.
  - Participation in the annual general parent meeting is very important.
  - Parents are asked to keep the director and center informed of all changes in phone numbers, address, place of employment, marital status and people authorized to pick up their children.

### Absentees

Parents are asked to inform the staff if the child will be absent for all or part of the day. Parents need to indicate the reason for absence in order that the attendance forms can be completed to the satisfaction of the daycare subsidy unit.

### Health and safety

1. Nutrition: the daycare is a nut-free center. It is committed to providing children with nutritious meals in a positive atmosphere in which a variety of social and self help skills will be learned. Children are encouraged, but never forced, to try all foods on the plate.
2. Children are encouraged and taught to use utensils.
3. We always serve:
  - Morning snack: 2 different food groups---fruit and/or vegetable and milk are always offered.
  - Lunch: 4 different food groups offered
  - Afternoon snack: 2 different food groups---fruit and/or vegetable and water are always offered.
  - **Gum is not allowed in the center.**
4. The staff eats their meals with the children to model good nutritional habits and pleasant table manners.
5. Special diets: children are served at least one spoonful of each food prepared. Exceptions are made for food allergies or special diet restrictions as stated by the physician or parents. For mealtimes when children cannot eat the food being prepared due to special diet, the parents are responsible for providing the alternate foods; however, we will do our best to work with the parents to provide the necessary foods.
6. Lunch invitations: all parents are welcome to join us for lunch at any time. It is asked that you give prior notice to the staff so that a place can be set for you.
7. Breakfast: the daycare does not provide breakfast for the children; however, children are welcome to bring their breakfast from home and eat it at the center. Morning snack is served from 9:00am to 9:45am.
8. Children's birthdays: many parents using the daycare like to bring birthday cakes on the child's birthday; this activity is extra special for children on their days. Please remember, you're not obligated to bring anything to daycare. It is your choice!!

## Hygiene

The daycare believes all children should be taught proper hygiene habits for their own health and welfare. As a result:

- Children are taught to wash their hands before and after eating and after using the toilet.
- Children are taught to wipe themselves after using the toilet to encourage good healthy habits and prevent infections.
- Each family is responsible for supplying their child with the appropriate amount of diapers (usually enough for two days at any given time), wipes and any creams or powders. The centre does keep an emergency supply on hand.

### Diaper and Wipe Policy

A charge of a dollar per day will be added to parent fees after 2 days of using daycare diaper or wipes.

- Strict procedures are followed during diaper changes to prevent the spread of infection. The change table is disinfected after each child is changed.

### Illness

Children with the following symptoms will not be allowed to attend the daycare center:

- High fever (101 degrees or higher)
- Chronic diarrhea (at least 2 days)
- Any communicable disease (pink eye, hand foot mouth, RSV, croup)
- Head lice
- Severe cold or cough

If a child exhibits symptoms or becomes ill during the day, the staff will contact parents (or designate if the parent cannot be reached). The child will be isolated from the others until the parent arrives. The child must be removed from the center as soon as possible. The daycare will not accept sick children in the morning. It is a good idea for all families to have an

alternate facility or person to look after sick children when parents cannot be home with them.

### Communicable Diseases

Parents are required to contact the staff and/ or Director as soon as their child is diagnosed as having a communicable disease. A notice will be issued to inform the other parents that the disease has been reported. Further information regarding specific symptoms and exclusion periods is available from the director.

### Rash Policy

If a rash is noted, the parents will be contacted and asked to take their child to a physician. If the physician determines the rash as non-contagious, the child may immediately return to daycare with a doctors note. If the physician cannot determine a cause for the rash the child will be required to stay home for 24 hours to see if symptoms progress or subside. If the physician determines that the rash is contagious, the daycare will require written diagnostic information to share with the other parents (non-identifiable) including the physician's recommendations for daycare attendance.

### Medications

- Medication can be administered to your child provided you complete and sign the prescribed medication form. Medications will then be administered, according to your specifications, and documented.
- All medication should be in its original bottle and labelled with the child's name. Medications are stored in a locked chest. Please ensure you have collected your child's medication after 10 days, otherwise it will be thrown out.

### Accidents

- Staff are only responsible for performing simple first aid.

- All accidents (minor and major) are documented on an accident form; this form is signed by a parent and placed in the child's file.
- In the case of a serious occurrence, 911 will be called and the parents will be informed immediately. Staff is never allowed to sign consent forms for medical treatment of children.

### Child abuse

Parents please note:

When there is reasonable ground to believe that the child is in need of protection because of suspected or disclosed physical, emotional or psychological abuse, we are required by the law to report this instance to the Department of Social Services child protection. Failure to do so will result in prosecution under the Family and Child Services Act.

Our responsibility is to report suspicion and disclosure, not to determine whether abuses occurred. Reporting procedures are designed to protect the child; parents will not be contacted. In these instances, it is the responsibility of social services to investigate and decide whether abuse has occurred and to make the necessary contacts with the child's parents or guardian.

### Parents under the influence

If a parent should arrive to pick up his/her child and is obviously under the influence of alcohol or any intoxicating substance, the staff is required to:

- Ask whether the parent is driving. If they are, staff will suggest the parents call a cab or a friend to drive them home.
- If this fails, staff will call the police after the impaired driver leaves.

### Fire drills

Drills are conducted once a month at any given time during the day to familiarize children with the evacuation plan. Children are not allowed to stop for boots/shoes or outer clothing. This is why children MUST have indoor shoes on at all times.

## Program

The centre contains a number of activity areas. Children exercise and develop the skill of making choices as they plan and participate in activities of their own choosing. Since children range from the ages of 6 months to twelve years, staff provides the appropriate amount of guidance in this process.

## Unstructured play

Aside from routines, circle and gym times, children choose their own activities. The staff monitors the number of children in each area at all times to avoid over-crowding and disruptive play.

## Outdoor play

Fresh air and exercise are essential to growing, healthy minds and bodies. Therefore, all children shall have a minimum of a half-hour of free outdoor play or a walk in the neighbourhood. Exceptions include:

- Outdoor temperatures below -20°C (including wind chill) or +28°C.
- During the months of April through October, there will be a minimum of 3/4 of an hour free play outside, every morning and afternoon.

## Outside Air Quality

Children will not be outdoors on days when the Environment Canada website indicates an Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) of 7 or greater; parents with specific concerns may request to have their child remain indoors at a lower AQHI. When the AQHI falls in a moderate range (4-6), time limits should be enforced and should not exceed 15 minutes at one time or at discretion of the director.

## Circle/Gym Time

All the children have the opportunity to participate in the planned circle and gym times each day. The circle times expose children to crafts, literature, drama, music, science, sensory experiences, fine motor activities and sharing times. *The program will also include Bible stories (ie: Noah's Ark), related songs, finger plays and crafts.* Gym involves creative movements, gross motor and large muscle games and activities.

### Television viewing

Television viewing will be allowed in special circumstances and quiet time, extensive cold weather or celebration days. Online videos may be used for creative movement and indoor exercises in winter season.

### Movie viewing

All children may view pre-screened movies in their entirety during a planned movie event. Appropriate movies include Walt Disney animated and non-animated selections and other movies with prior approval of the director or designates.

### Rest periods

Following a morning of stimulating and vigorous activity, children's bodies require physical and mental rest. The daycare provides individual cots for all children. Parents are required to bring a small blanket for the child that can be left at daycare and will be laundered by the staff once a week.

- All children are required to rest for at least half an hour on their cots, even non-sleepers, unless that child is four and five years old. However, the four and five-year-olds are required to have a quiet time by doing quiet activities.
- All children will be awakened by 2:00pm unless the parent specifically wants them to sleep longer.

### Field Trips

Children are taken on excursions every now and then, weather permitting. The special outings usually coincide with a project that they are doing. Notice of these outings is given at least 24 hours in advance. All outings must receive the prior approval of the director.

Parents who are concerned about ratios and safety factors are encouraged to speak to the director.

### Subsidy

Saskatchewan Social Services provides a subsidy for parents using government licensed daycare services. The subsidy is based on the parents' income, the number of children in the family and the daycare fee. For information regarding daycare subsidy, you may check with the director or call the toll-free number for the Daycare Subsidy Unit in Regina at 1-800-667-7155.

Although the actual subsidies are the responsibility of the centre, it is the parent's responsibility to supply any information required by the Daycare Subsidy Division.

Parents receiving subsidy are responsible to the center for ensuring full payment of fees, either by themselves or by the Daycare Subsidy Unit. If a subsidy is not approved within the first month of application, parents will be required to pay full fees until subsidy is approved.

**ALL PARENTS, non-subsidy and subsidy, must pay parent fees at the beginning of each month** (half of the fee can be paid on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.)

### Things to bring on the first day:

All children must have the following items available:

1. A complete set of clothes
2. Runners (or other soft-soled shoes)
3. Suitable outdoor clothing

4. A blanket to keep at daycare (and perhaps a cuddly toy for those who want one to sleep with)
5. Note: It is a good idea to provide 2 changes of clothing for toddlers and 3-4 if they are being toilet trained.

Things to remember:

1. Check your HiMama daily.
2. Pay any late fees that you may owe.
3. **Ensure your fees are paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of every month.**

**It is important that all parents and staff read this handbook to ensure a healthy working relationship.**

I/ We have read and understand the handbook of Little Explorers Daycare Inc.

X \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Director \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_