



# Little Learners

Early Childhood Center

*Making Memories, Marking Milestones*

Welcome to Little Learners. We are so excited to be enrolling your child in our program. At Little Learners, your child will have the opportunity to explore, create, and imagine while developing academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. These opportunities will take place in a safe, nurturing environment under the guidance of loving, experienced teachers.

## **Directors' Information**

Kim Maples has been teaching for 17 years and in that time has had the opportunity to teach preschool through fifth grade students. She graduated from the University of Kansas in 1993 and completed the teacher certification program in 1994. Kim has a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction and received her Reading Specialist Certification from KU in 2000.










Christi Eaton has been teaching for 13 years. She has worked with preschool children and children up through fifth grade. Christi graduated from the University of Missouri in 1998. She also holds a Master's Degree as well as a Reading Specialist Certification. In addition, Christi received her National Board Certification in 2006.

Kim and Christi have both been Reading Specialists at Starside Elementary in De Soto and enjoyed helping struggling students improve as readers. Through this experience, they have learned what early skills children need before beginning kindergarten. They love teaching preschool and guiding children through experiences that will prepare them for a successful start in elementary school.

## **Little Learners Operating Information**

Little Learners is currently licensed to provide care for no more than seventy-two children. Child care will be available Monday through Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m and 7:00-5:30 on Fridays. Part-time care is available in the morning from 7:00-11:30 and from 11:45-4:15 in the afternoon. Four programs are offered at Little Learners to ensure that all children are engaged in activities that are developmentally appropriate and specifically designed for them. Our "waddler" program is for children age 12 months (and walking) to 2 years and our toddler program is for children 2 and 3 years old. For our older children we have two programs. Our preschool program is for 3 and 4 year olds and pre-K program is for 4 and 5 year olds who will be going to kindergarten the following year. With these programs we are able to find the perfect placement for your Little Learner.

## Little Learners Sample Daily Routine-Preschool

* Activities would be reversed for children attending the afternoon pre-K program and would vary slightly in each classroom.			
7:00-8:15		Breakfast	Children arriving after 8:15 a.m. should eat breakfast at home.
8:15-9:00		Free Play	Children will have time to play and explore while learning to share and interact with others.
30 minutes in the morning		Outside Play	Weather permitting, each morning children will play outside otherwise, we will play inside.
9:00-11:30	<b>Preschool</b> Children will participate in whole group, small group, and individual choice activities. Through songs, games, stories and creative play, children will learn the skills described below. Children will also have the opportunity for an outside play break during this time.		
	<b>Social Skills and Activities</b> Manners "I-Care" Rules Conflict Resolution Self Care (zip, snap, tie, button) Dramatic Play Singing Unstructured Play Time Outdoor Play Time	<b>Math Skills and Activities</b> Shape Recognition Patterning Number Recognition Basic Counting Skills Calendar Skills Spatial Awareness Comparing Math in the Environment	<b>Reading Readiness Skills and Activities</b> The Alphabet Letter Sounds Blending & Segmenting Sounds Rhyming Awareness Print Awareness Identifying Beginning Sounds Literature Appreciation
11:30 - 12:10		Lunch	A nutritious and balanced meal will be provided daily.
12:10-12:30		Read Aloud	A read aloud time will be used to share great stories and help children prepare for rest time.
12:30-2:00	<b>Nap/Rest Time</b> A rest mat will be provided for each child. They are also welcome to bring a special blanket or stuffed animal (please label). Children who aren't tired or have out grown naps may look at books or work on puzzles but will be asked to stay on their rest mats during this time. The length of nap/rest time will be based on the needs of the children. Please be sure to let your child's teacher know if you feel your child is getting too much or not enough time to rest.		
2:00-4:15		Learning Extensions	Children will enjoy a snack followed by a theme related craft, special of the day, a story, and unstructured play.
4:15-5:00		Outside Play	Weather permitting, each afternoon children will play outside otherwise, we will play inside.
4:00-5:30		Free Play	Children will have another opportunity to play and explore.

## **Program Descriptions**

### Waddler/Toddler Programs:

Your child will be engaged in research-based curriculum that is developmentally appropriate. Toddlers will remain in one room with the same teachers each day. Within the waddler and toddler rooms, your child will be engaged in enriching activities related to the current theme. Your child will also have a special activity each day which will include one of the following: Cooking, Science Experiments, Social Studies Exploration, Sign Language, and Music and Movement. Waddlers and toddlers will have the opportunity for outside play daily when weather permits.

### Preschool and Pre-K Programs:

Your child will be engaged in research-based curriculum that is developmentally appropriate in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. Children attending preschool will have one teacher and will stay in one classroom for all their learning activities. However, there will be a morning and afternoon pre-K class. When not in the pre-K classroom, your child will be in a Learning Extensions room. Within the Learning Extensions room, your child will be engaged in enriching activities related to the current theme. Your child will also have a special activity each day which will include one of the following: Cooking, Science Experiments, Social Studies Exploration, Computers, Spanish, and Music and Movement. Children will have the opportunity for outside play daily when weather permits.

### **Little Learners Curriculum**

The curriculum at Little Learners will be based on science and social studies themes and will have a strong academic focus on reading and math skills. Children will be engaged in activities that can best be described as "learning disguised as fun." The themes will capture children's interests and they will be invited to learn about their world through songs, games, stories, and creative play while developing the important cognitive, social, emotional, and physical skills that they need before entering kindergarten.

Little Learners will celebrate traditional holidays by reading books and making crafts. We will have parties for Valentines Day, Easter, Halloween, and Christmas. If you do not wish for your child to participate in these activities, please let a director know. Little Learners welcomes parents to visit and observe our activities at any time.

**Birthday Celebrations:** We enjoy celebrating birthdays at Little Learners and know that it is a very special time for the children. Birthday celebrations will be kept short and will take place during snack time in order to not disrupt the regular routine. Parents are welcome to send birthday treats such as cookies or cupcakes to share with the class; however, we ask that parents not send goodie bags with toys. These types of toys often get lost during the day which can cause hurt feelings.

**Birthday Invitations:** You are welcome to pass out invitations at school if you plan to invite the whole class. However, if you are not inviting everyone, we ask that you use the Little Learners Directory for addresses and mail the invitations.

## **I Care Rules**

At Little Learners, fun activities, games, songs, and puzzles from the Peace Education Foundation will be used to teach children the "I Care Rules" and important skills like listening, cooperating, and sharing. Below you will find the five "I Care Rules" that the toddlers and preschool children will be learning:

1. We listen to each other.
2. Hands are for helping, not hurting.
3. We use I-Care-Language.
4. We care about each other's feelings.
5. We are responsible for what we say and do.

## **Problem Solving Technique (F.R.I.E.N.D.)**

**Face-to Face** (The teacher will face the children at eye level and speak in a calm and gentle manner.)

**Recognition** (The teacher states observation: "You look very angry.")

**Inquire** (The teacher asks each child to tell him/her what happened.)

**Echo** (The teacher will repeat each child's statement: John you are saying Chris took the tricycle from you. Chris you are saying that John doesn't want to share with you.)

**Negotiate** (John wants to let you ride the tricycle for 10 minutes and then he can ride it for 10 minutes. The teacher may have to help with negotiations in the beginning.)

**Down Time** (The teacher praises the children for solving the problem and then follows-up to make sure the problem has been solved.)

## **Rewards/Consequences**

Your child will be rewarded daily with smiles, hugs, and constant praise for good choices.

Children may also earn trips to the "treasure box" for consistent, positive behavior.

When necessary the techniques listed below will be used to encourage waddlers/toddlers to follow the "I Care Rules." Consequences will be determined by the situation and by what is developmentally appropriate for each child. Corporal punishment will not be used at Little Learners.

1. Redirection: Children will be redirected to another activity and encouraged to try again at another time.
2. Natural or logical consequences may be used to encourage positive behavior.
3. Ignoring: Behaviors that are not harmful may be ignored so that they are not reinforced with undue attention.
4. Time Out/Safe Spot: Time Out will be used sparingly with waddlers/toddlers; however, if a child is having trouble regaining self-control or is being harmful to other children he/she will be separated from the group. The child will be encouraged to rejoin the group when he/she is ready to show appropriate behavior. Time out will not be used as a

punishment but as a way to provide the child with time to regain self-control and make good choices.

When necessary the techniques listed below will be used to encourage preschool and pre-K children to follow the "I Care Rules." Consequences will be determined by the situation and by what is developmentally appropriate for each child. Corporal punishment will not be used at Little Learners.

1. Redirection: Children will be redirected to another activity and encouraged to try again at another time.
2. Natural or logical consequences may be used to encourage positive behavior.
3. Ignoring: Behaviors that are not harmful may be ignored so that they are not reinforced with undue attention.
4. Conflict Resolution: When appropriate, children will be asked what "I Care Rule" is being broken and will be encouraged to think about positive choices and to solve the problem with the "F.R.I.E.N.D." technique.
5. Time Out/Safe Spot: A child who is having trouble regaining self-control or is being harmful to other children will be separated from the group. The child will be encouraged to rejoin the group when he/she is ready to show appropriate behavior. Time out will not be used as a punishment but as a way to provide the child with time to regain self-control and make good choices.

A private meeting with parents will be requested if a child's behavior is continuously inappropriate or dangerous. Parents are encouraged to schedule a time to meet if there is ever a concern about behavior or any other issue at Little Learners.

## **Biting Policy**

Biting is a natural developmental stage for many children. It usually does not last for an extended period of time if the appropriate action is taken to help reduce the occurrences. Children bite for a variety of reasons: frustration, anger, joy, overwhelmed, over-tired, (emotions they cannot yet express), teething, or just experimenting and testing limits. Our teachers will assess each biting incident to help better understand why a child is biting. This will help us respond to each individual child's needs. Below is a timeline of steps to be taken when a child bites or is bitten.

### **Steps to take:**

For each occurrence, appropriate first aid and care for the child who was bitten will be applied and documentation of each incident with both sets of parents being notified.

1<sup>st</sup> incident: Time out in classroom (No biting, biting hurts), teacher will talk to both sets of parents, assessment of why child might be biting and plan of action based on child's development.

2<sup>nd</sup> /3<sup>rd</sup> incident: Removed from classroom, assessment of why child might be biting and plan of action based on child's development (teacher will share plan of action with parents of child biting)

4<sup>th</sup> /-5<sup>th</sup> incident: One day suspension

6<sup>th</sup> incident: Action taken based on individual child's age, development, and severity of bites.

Additional information on responding to biting and developmentally appropriate practices is available upon request.

**Non-Discriminatory Policy:** Children will not be discriminated against in regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, or gender.

### **Holidays**

Little Learners will be closed for the following paid holidays:

New Year's Eve	New Year's Day	*President's Day
Memorial Day	Fourth of July	*The Friday Before Labor Day
Labor Day	Thanksgiving Day	The Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve	Christmas Day	The Day after Christmas

If a holiday falls on a weekend, Little Learners will either close the Friday before or the Monday after the holiday. \*These days will be used for staff development.

### **Inclement Weather**

Little Learners will make every effort to be open during inclement weather. However, it may be necessary at times to close due to extreme ice and snow conditions. Under these circumstances, we will announce our closing on FOX 4 News by 6:00 a.m. This is the only news channel that will post preschool closings so it is important that parents watch for our closing on this channel. Parents also need to be aware that FOX 4 lists public schools and preschools separately. Our closing will be listed under "preschools" as Little Learners Olathe. We will also post closings on the Home page of our website at [www.kslitlelearners.com](http://www.kslitlelearners.com). This will be posted by 6:00 a.m. and may be the fastest way to verify if we are open or closed during inclement weather. Parents are encouraged to use the website as their first source of information during inclement weather.

Regular rates will apply on days when Little Learners is closed due to inclement weather or any other unforeseen circumstance that would force the center to be closed. However, parents will receive credit for any day beyond the third unscheduled closing occurring within an academic year (September through August).

### **Sick Children and Accidents**

The Health Department prohibits a contagious child in group care and clearly defines when children should be kept at home due to illness. Little Learners will follow the Health Department guidelines for determining attendance. Please notify Little Learners if your child has a communicable disease or contagious illness (strep throat, flu, etc.) so that other parents can be notified to watch for symptoms in their children. If a child becomes ill while at Little Learners, parents will be called and will need to pick up the child within one hour. If parents can not be reached, Little Learners will contact the first person on the child's emergency contact list and work down the list until someone is reached who is able to take the child home.

Children with a fever of 100 degrees may not return to Little Learners until they are fever free (without the aid of fever reducing medication) for 24 hours. Children with diarrhea, unexplainable rashes, head lice, eye infection, or vomiting should not be sent to Little Learners.

Children must be free of these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to Little Learners. Children with head lice will need to be treated and nit free before returning to Little Learners. This illness policy was created using the *Exclusion of Ill Children* form from the Health Department. This form is included in the Forms and Handouts and may be referred to for more information about when children should be kept out of group care.

## **Fees**

The rates are based on the room in which your child is enrolled. The difference in price is due to the ratio, as younger classrooms have fewer children than our older preschool classrooms. The rate for care in the "waddler" room, Purple Diamonds, is \$225/week for children 12-24 months. The rate for care in the toddler room, Yellow Stars, is \$215/week for children at least 24 months. The rate for care in our 2 ½ year old classroom, Red Hearts, is \$210. The rate for the 3 and 4 year old preschool classrooms, Orange Ovals, Green Squares, and Green Circles, is \$195. The rate for care in the 4 and 5 year old pre-K classrooms, Blue Rectangles and Blue Triangles, is \$190. The rate for part-time care in Purple Diamonds is \$52/day. Half-days are not available in Purple Diamonds. The part-time rate for care in Yellow Stars and Red Hearts is \$50/day or \$25/half day. The rate for part-time preschool and pre-K care is \$45/day or \$25/half day. Priority is given to full time children and those enrolling MWF or TR. The rate for children who attend Little Learners before and/or after attending Cedar Creek Kindergarten is \$60/week or \$12/day. Bus scheduling arrangements should be made between parents and First Student Bus Services 913-782-1050.

Payment is due on the first day your child is scheduled to attend each week. Direct Payment can be arranged weekly, bimonthly, or monthly. A \$10 charge per day will be assessed for late or incomplete payments. Returned checks will be assessed a \$35 service charge. Consistent failure to make timely payments may result in termination of services.

Little Learners will be open from 7:00 a.m. - 5:45 p.m. M-Th and 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. on Fridays. We understand that there may be times when being late is unavoidable; however, in these situations please provide Little Learners with a courtesy call. If early drop-offs and late pick-ups become a consistent problem, we will reserve the right to implement a late fee of \$1 per minute.

## **Registration/Enrollment Fee**

A *nonrefundable* registration fee of \$100 will be due at the time of enrollment. This fee secures your child's placement and helps cover the cost of supplies, provides a rest mat and sheet, and holds your child's place until he/she begins attending Little Learners. A *refundable* deposit equal to one week's tuition is also required at the time of enrollment to secure your child's placement. This deposit is refundable if we are given a two week notice before your child's last day at Little Learners. If you choose not to enroll, you will need to give at least 3 weeks notice prior to your scheduled start date to be eligible for a deposit refund.

A yearly continuing enrollment fee will be assessed each year in May for the following academic school year. The annually fee is \$50/child. This covers the cost of replenishing supplies used throughout the year.

### **Activities Fee**

Little Learners provides different activities each month for the children to experience. We require a yearly activities fee in the amount of \$25/year for full time children, \$15/year for part time children, and a family rate of \$40/family for 2 or more children. This fee is renewable each year in October for preschool and pre-k children. You will be notified through a letter when this fee is due. This fee will cover the cost of the various activities that Little Learners provides throughout the academic year. If field trips are taken off premises, an additional fee may apply.

### **Termination**

Little Learners may ask that another provider be found if there are unresolved behavioral issues or issues involving noncompliance with stated policies. Whenever possible, parents will be given two weeks to find another placement. However, Little Learners may terminate care without giving notice if a child's behavior is consistently inappropriate and/or dangerous or if timely payments are not made. Parents will also need to give a two week notice when terminating child care. If a two week notice is given, the deposit will be returned on the child's last scheduled day of care or may be applied to the final week of services. If a two week notice is not given, the deposit will be forfeited.

### **Enrollment**

The documents listed below are included in the Forms and Handouts packet. Please take note of the forms that will need to be signed and returned. We ask that these forms be returned at least one week before your child's first day at Little Learners. A signed agreement must be returned with the enrollment fee before an opening will be considered filled.

#### **Forms and Handouts**

Child Profile\*

Parent-Provider Agreement\*

Authorization for Emergency Medical Care\*

Medical Record and Health Assessment\*

Permission to Administer External Non-Prescription Preparations Form\*

Permission to Photograph Form\*

Child Pick Up Form\*

Checklist for items to be left at Little Learners

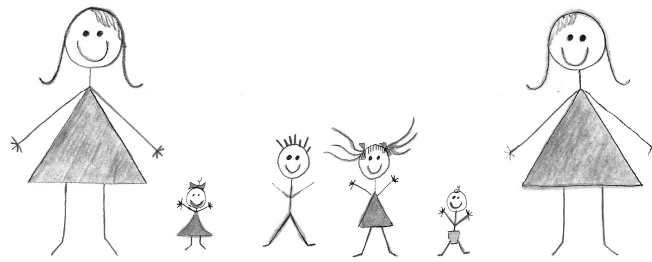
Guidelines for Exclusion of Children Who are Ill

Disaster Plans

Directory Permission Form

(\*must be signed and returned)

*Thank you for considering Little Learners. We look forward to having your child in our care. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call. We would be happy to visit with you more about the experiences your child will have at Little Learners.*



We promise you every day  
Your children will learn something.

Some days they'll bring  
it home in their hands.

Some days they'll bring  
it home in their heads.

And some days they'll bring  
it home in their hearts.

By Valerie Welk