

Little Treasures Preschool Parent Handbook / Policies and Procedures

Adopted 1/28/15; latest revision 9/2024

*Para recibir una copia de nuestras políticas en español,
por favor hable con nuestro director, Rachel Barr: 719-274-0102.*

1. ADMINISTRATION & OVERSIGHT [Rules Regulating Child Care Centers 7.702.3]

Little Treasures Preschool is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization providing childcare and early childhood educational services under the rules and regulations as set forth by the Colorado Office of Early Childhood (Department of Human Services). Governance of the organization is provided by a Board of Directors which is responsible for approval of policies and procedures, hiring of the director, oversight of finances and facilities, and which acts as a resource for parent concerns in accordance with the rules and regulations as set forth by the Division of Childcare. The center director will report to the Board of Directors and will be delegated the authority and responsibility for the operation of the center in accordance with licensing rules.

2. STATEMENT OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES [Rules Regulating Child Care Centers 7.702.41]

A. PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY: The mission and purpose of Little Treasures Preschool is to provide outstanding school readiness to the preschoolers in our community.

We believe that:

- ★ Preschool is all about learning to love learning!
- ★ Children learn best in a learning-rich environment with educated teachers
- ★ All children are precious and have unique talents and abilities
- ★ Both social & academic development are critical to a child's school success

B. STUDENT BODY: Little Treasures Preschool accepts students from 3- to 6-years-old. In order to meet Colorado Preschool Program guidelines, students need to have turned 3-years-old by June 1 of the current year. Little Treasures Preschool is committed to welcoming all preschool-age students and their families and will not discriminate on the basis of gender, gender identity, religion, race, color, physical or developmental ability or ethnic origin.

C. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT:

1) Language Services: Little Treasures Preschool will work with current staff or North Conejos School District's language programs to arrange for interpretation of parent/teacher conferences and family meetings when parents/guardians prefer the conferences be held in a language other than English. Enrollment forms, parent communications, permission slips, and newsletters will be supplied to parents in their preferred language (with translation help provided through No Conejos School District). If more than half the children in a classroom speak a language other than English in their homes, a bilingual teacher fluent in the language will be provided.

2) Transitions: Our Meet Your Teacher Event (held in August) facilitates the transition of children into our preschool and from our younger to older classes. Invitations to this event will be emailed and posted on our web page, and teachers will follow up via text to set appointment times that work for each family. At the appointment, parents will have the opportunity to share information about their child and family with teachers, to give input into our curriculum, and to help in decision-making for their child. During the final Parent/Teacher Conference of the year, teachers and parents will conference about child

transitions into PK classes or Kindergarten and again have opportunity for input and decision-making. In the spring, Little Treasures will conduct Kindergarten visits to district schools so Pre-K students can become familiar with teachers, administrators, classrooms, buildings, and lunch procedures.

3) Parent Teacher Conferences: Formal Parent Teacher Conferences will be held twice annually (fall and spring) to discuss student progress. Mid-year reports will be communicated via email or notes sent home. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher at any time if they have questions, concerns, or suggestions.

4) Family Activities: Family activities will be held at least twice annually (Meet Your Teacher Night & Math or Literacy Education Event).

5) Board & Council: Parents may be asked to serve on our Board of Directors and CPP Advisory Council. Training will be provided.

6) Important Information for Families can be found on our parent board in the main hallway. We will post information on licensing and director qualifications, community resources, our quality rating and quality improvement plan, our latest licensing inspection, C-CAP guidelines, how to report Child Abuse, LEAP information, etc... In addition to many parent brochures, we have a parent lending library that has videos on sign language and potty training, and many books on different early childhood and family issues that parents are welcome to check out. Important information for families can also be found on our web page under the "FORMS & INFO" and "RESOURCES" tabs including our Policies and Procedures and annual Quality Improvement Plan.

7) Community Service Organizations: Little Treasures Preschool will provide parents with the San Luis Valley Family Resource Guide upon request. This guide includes contact information for families in the following areas: family support services, financial and job assistance, food pantries, health, insurance, housing, legal services, alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence and sexual abuse, behavioral or mental health services, and transportation. Also, the "RESOURCES" tab on our web page has links to many helpful organizations. Our director and/or administrative assistant will happily facilitate the connection between parents and any of these service organizations and will help complete the referral process as necessary.

8) Behavioral Health Supports: With family permission, Little Treasures Preschool will help facilitate connections with San Luis Valley Behavioral Health counselors (in partnership with the Early Childhood Council of the SLV) to support families undergoing adversity or trauma. Little Treasures will follow the counselor's recommendations in implementing a trauma-informed care plan to support the child while at preschool.

D. SPECIAL NEEDS & COMPLIANCE WITH AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT: Little Treasures Preschool, along with SLV Board of Cooperative Services (BOCES), will make reasonable modifications to our policies and practices to include children with disabilities in our program. Each case will be evaluated independently and ADA guidelines will be followed. If a child's presence would pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others or require a fundamental alteration of our program, services may be denied.

E. CENTER HOURS & INCLEMENT WEATHER: Little Treasures operates on a school year calendar, Mondays through Thursdays, 7:25 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. If child care enrollments are high enough, child care will be offered Monday through Thursday afternoons. Our calendar and any closures will be based on the North Conejos School District elementary calendar.

Little Treasures' Inclement Weather policy is to follow the lead of the North Conejos School District. If North Conejos Schools are closed for inclement weather, Little Treasures will also be closed. If the district calls for a 2-hour delay, Little Treasures will open at 9:30 a.m. for day care, but morning preschool classes will be canceled. In the case of excessive heat (heat index above 90), outdoor time will be limited to 10 minutes. Classes will exercise indoors if the wind chill factor is below 20 degrees.

- F. **STUDENT APPLICATION PROCEDURE:** Little Treasures will begin accepting 3-year-old student applications for a new school year in the spring and will set a deadline for initial paperwork to be returned. UPK enrollments will follow the state schedule. Required paperwork will include a developmental screening, the Ages & Stages Questionnaire. If concerns are apparent on the developmental screening, families will be referred to BOCES Child Find services. Student application packets are available at Little Treasures and on the LTPS web page. Student acceptance messages will be sent when children are formally enrolled.
- G. **FEE SCHEDULE:** A current Financial Agreement for Day Care & Tuition Students will be posted on our web page at all times. A change in fees will be approved by the Board of Directors prior to the beginning of the school year.
- H. **SUPERVISING CHILDREN:** A teacher and teacher assistant will be assigned to each classroom with more than eight children enrolled. The teacher and teacher assistant will share in the responsibility of knowing where each child is at all times, including at recess and when a child goes to the restroom.

Little Treasures meets the NAEYC adult-to-child ratio guidelines. Our maximum group size is eighteen children. Pre-K classes are limited to sixteen students with two teachers. Preschool classes (3-year-olds turning four) are limited to twelve students with two teachers. Day care is limited to eighteen students with two teachers, or eight students with one teacher.

Teachers are required to know where children are at all times. On outings and upon re-entering the classroom, teachers will use the current day's sign in sheet to take roll to verify all children are present. **LOST CHILD:** If teachers should discover a child is missing, they will immediately report the missing child to the Director. A thorough search of the building and playground will be conducted. If the child is not found after a few minutes of searching, 9-1-1 and parents will be notified. **END OF DAY PROCEDURE:** Closing employees will verify that all students have been picked up by their parents or an authorized adult by checking sign-out sheets and completing a building walk-through.

- I. **GUIDANCE, SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR, DISCIPLINE AND CONSEQUENCES:**
- ★ We will cultivate positive child, staff and family relationships through open and respectful communication, and by relying on guidance, training and resources from the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>)
 - ★ We will create and maintain an environment that is sensitive to social and emotional needs based on guidelines from the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning.
 - ★ Our students will be instructed in our safety rules (we keep ourselves, others, and our things safe), and will be given examples of how these rules apply to all situations. Positive guidance will be used to direct children toward appropriate behavior. Techniques that our staff will strive to follow:
 - Liberally praise children and try to refrain from using negative language.
 - Protect and preserve children's feelings.
 - Alter the situation (teacher-driven change rather than trying to force child to comply).
 - Present children with alternatives in a difficult situation.
 - Teach about choice and consequence.
 - Practice positive peer interactions and help students develop social/emotional competencies
 - Occasionally employ a short "thinking time" away from other students to diffuse a situation and allow a child time to calm down and think of a positive way to handle a difficult situation.
 - ★ If a child needs extra support to succeed socially, emotionally, and/or behaviorally in a classroom, we will request parental permission to involve our local Board of Cooperative Services (BOCES) to implement a behavioral plan or Individualized Education Plan. If parents refuse BOCES services, the child may be terminated from our program, as BOCES personnel and services are our best resource for children who need additional support.

★ As needed, we will work with San Luis Valley Behavioral Health group to access an early childhood mental health consultant.

J/R. HEALTH POLICIES: ILLNESS, ACCIDENT/INJURY, MEDICATION, ETC:

Little Treasures Preschool values the health and safety of all students. We ask parents to use good judgement when bringing their child to preschool. If your child is sick, or you think your child may be sick, please keep him or her home. Children can not be at school:

- if he/she doesn't feel well enough to participate,
- if the child needs more care than staff can give and still care for other children,
- or if they child has illness symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea, fever or pink eye, etc...

If a child becomes ill while at school, the child will be separated from peers. Parents or a listed emergency contact will be notified to pick the child up as soon as possible. If a child has been picked up from preschool because of illness, the child may not return to the center for at least 24 hours without written permission from a doctor.

It is against licensing regulations to have children at the center with a fever (100+ degrees), diarrhea, vomiting, or contagious illnesses (including but not limited to flu, covid, strep, pink eye, impetigo, chicken pox, or measles).

In order for Little Treasures personnel to be able to administer medication – even over-the-counter medications – a medical plan completed and signed by a physician must be on file. Only personnel who have completed the state-approved medication administration training may administer medication. Epi Pens and inhalers are stored in a locked box in the directors office. Staff trained in medication administration will have access to the locked box and trained staff will administer the inhaler or Epi Pen as needed and dispose of the Epi Pen in a sharps container.

Accidents or injuries will be assessed for severity and treated under first aid guidelines. Parents or emergency contacts will be notified if necessary. An accident or injury form will be completed by staff and signed by parents. If medical treatment is required outside the center, a report will be made to the Colorado Department of Health and Human Services.

HYGIENE/SANITATION: All staff members will practice good personal hygiene in order to reduce the potential for disease transmission. Staff members will practice adequate hand washing and teach children to practice adequate hand washing. 1) moisten hands with warm running water, 2) apply soap, 3) wash vigorously for at least 20 seconds, rubbing areas between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, under jewelry and the backs of hands, 4) rinse hands under running water until they are free of soap and dirt, 5) dry hands with clean disposable towels, 6) use paper towel to turn water off.

*Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Rules and Regulations Governing the Health and Sanitation of Child Care Facilities (Amended 2005)

SCREENINGS: Vision and hearing screenings will be conducted within the first month of each school year. Letters of referral will be sent to parents if a child does not pass a secondary screening.

K. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: Please See “Little Treasures Preschool Emergency Response Plan”

L/N. TRANSPORTATION SAFETY: Little Treasures Preschool does not provide transportation for students. On field trips, children will be transported in North Conejos School District buses, and will follow the district transportation policies and procedures regarding safety.

M1/Q. FIELD TRIPS: A permission slip signed by a parent or guardian must be on file before a child is allowed to go on a field trip. Parent volunteers will be encouraged to accompany staff on field trips and

may share in child supervision. Before leaving each site while on a field trip, every child will be accounted for. Transportation will be provided by North Conejos School District. If a child arrives at the center when their class is away on a field trip, they may join any classes remaining at the center.

- M2. MEDIA/SCREEN TIME: Little Treasures Preschool understands that TV and other electronic media can get in the way of exploring, playing, and interacting with others. Therefore we will restrict screen time by allowing a maximum of 30 minutes total per week of educational and age appropriate screen time in our preschool classrooms (television, video, and DVD), allowing no more than 15 minutes of educational computer/tablet time per day, and not allowing any tablet time during meals and snacks. Soothing music or a quiet educational movie may be played at nap time for less than an hour.
- O/P. CHILD DROP OFF and PICK UP: Parents, siblings or guardians who are at least 18 years old or older, will sign the child in and out of the classroom each day. As part of the application process, parents will complete a “pick up” list of persons authorized to take their child from the center. Persons on the list along with legal parents/guardians, are authorized to pick the child up. Persons unknown to Little Treasures staff will be asked for identification to be compared to the list. In exceptional circumstances, a parent may give temporary authorization for a person not on the list to pick their child up, but will need to send written authorization via email, fax, or text.

Little Treasures closes at 5:30 p.m. and all children should have been picked up at that time. A fee of \$15 per hour may be charged when a parent is late in order to pay overtime expenses.

- S. CHILDREN’S BELONGINGS: Each child will be assigned a cubby in which to keep their belongings. Families are discouraged from bringing valuable items or toys to preschool, though something for show-and-tell is acceptable. Should problems occur with items a child has brought from home, the teacher may institute rules to handle the situation and may keep the items in her care until they can be returned to parents.
- T. MEALS AND SNACKS: Children should breakfast at home. Little Treasures will provide a morning and afternoon snack each day and will send out a monthly snack calendar. Day care students need to bring a healthy lunch from home. Little Treasures provides milk so no other drink is needed. Lunches may be stored in the kitchen refrigerator. We are happy to microwave lunch foods. Parents are encouraged to provide nutritious food and candy is greatly discouraged.
- U. TOILET TRAINING: Little Treasures expects nearly all preschool children to be able to toilet independently. Staff will teach students to tell the teacher when they need to use the restroom and will remind students to flush and wash hands well. If a child has an accident at school, and if the child is able, staff will provide a trash bag and have the student independently change their clothing and wash their hands well. Clothing will be sent home to be washed. Parents may be contacted.

A few very young children or students with developmental delays may not be fully trained. In these circumstances, parents are asked to send the child to school in disposable underwear (pull-ups), dress their child in clothing that is easy for them to pull up and down, and supply extra clothing and pull-ups. Little Treasures staff will help in training by treating the child with respect at all times, reminding the child to go to the toilet periodically throughout the day, and trying to notice if the child is signaling that he or she needs to go. If a child who is still in training has an accident and if a parent is in close proximity to the school, the parent will be contacted to come to the school to change the child. If a parent is not close enough, two teachers will be present while the child is changed in the toilet area. Strict sanitation guidelines will be followed. Little Treasures staff will not check for wet pull-ups unless other clothing is wet.

V. VISITORS: Parents and guardians may visit the center at any time without signing in. Other visitors will sign the Visitor Sign-In Sheet located near the reception desk. At least one form of identification will be requested from visitors who are strangers to the staff.

X. QUALITY OF PROGRAM / REPORTING COMPLAINTS

Little Treasures Preschool strives to consistently meet the highest standards of preschool and child care. Quality will be measured annually using a variety of measurement tools including CPP Quality Walkthroughs conducted by Council Members, Colorado Shines quality ratings, or other methods as deemed appropriate. Results will be posted on our Parent Information Board.

If you have concerns about the quality of our program, or to file a complaint about child care, contact:

The Colorado Department of Human Services
Division of Child Care
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203-1714

Little Treasures' most recent Report of Licensing Inspection for our facility is posted on our Parent Information Board.

Y. REPORTING CHILD ABUSE: To report suspected child abuse, contact:

Conejos County Department of Social Services
12989 Country Rd G.6, Conejos, CO 81129
(719) 376-5455 or dial 9-1-1 or 1-844-264-5437

Z. WITHDRAWING A STUDENT / SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION OF A STUDENT:

Based on 2022 Colorado Code, Title 22 - Education, Article 33 - School Attendance Law of 1963
Part 1 - School Attendance Law of 1963

§ 22-33-106. Grounds for Suspension, Expulsion, and Denial of Admission

If a family decides to withdraw a student from the preschool after the first month of school, they will be asked to complete a withdrawal form to be kept in the student's file. If Little Treasures ends child care services for non-payment, a termination notice will be sent to the parents, guardians, and/or the responsible financial party.

Our staff work hard to identify and meet the social, emotional and developmental needs of each child. However, there are times when children may need additional support that our staff are not able to provide. If we feel that your child's behavior requires additional support or if your child's behavior is a danger to themselves or others, we will request parental permission to involve our local Board of Cooperative Services (BOCES) and/or Colorado's Early Childhood Mental Health Program to implement a behavioral plan. A temporary suspension (not to exceed three school days) until a behavioral plan can be implemented is a possibility. If parents refuse the services of BOCES and/or Mental Health, or if the behavioral plan proves ineffective and your child continues to pose a danger to him/herself or others, the child may be permanently removed from our program. Suspensions and expulsions will be reported to North Conejos School District who will report to the state.