



Family Handbook

May 2016

WELCOME

Dear Family,

Welcome to Little Lights Learning Center! We are a Keystone Star 4 Center! We are looking forward to meeting and getting to know your child. At Little Lights we believe in making children feel that they are special and unique individuals created by God. Children of all ages are exposed to Christian values on a daily basis. We take great pride in our staff and work together in providing both a stimulating and nurturing environment. It is our goal to promote growth intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually. Through our daily schedules, we provide many opportunities for teaching that the children find very successful and enjoyable. We also provide plenty of opportunities for play throughout our day. Research studies have shown how important play is for young children. We follow the Keystone Stars regulations, making sure that the children receive the right amount of free play every day. Our center is a happy and satisfying experience for the child, as well as the parent.

This booklet contains important information about Little Lights' policies and procedures. Please read the booklet carefully and contact the center if there are any questions or concerns.

Thank you for choosing Little Lights Learning Center. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

Danielle Graham
Director
717-249-5130
Little Lights Learning Center
of Carlisle United Methodist Church

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ABOUT US

Philosophy

Little Lights believes in the importance of children feeling loved and secure. At our center we plan to instill the values of love, respect, compassion and forgiveness. The children will participate in activities that will enhance their self-esteem and they will come to understand that they are unique individuals created by God. The teachers' focus is on the development of the physical, social, emotional, spiritual and intellectual growth of each child. It is our goal to ensure that the children's day consists of love, laughter, challenges, and accomplishments. Together we will be sure to create an environment that is conducive to learning. We are a Star 4 Center and Little Lights expects that each teacher follows the guidelines of a Star 4 Center.

Mission

At Little Lights we believe in making children feel that they are unique individuals created by God. Children of all ages are exposed to Christian values on a daily basis. We take great pride in our staff and work together in providing both a stimulating and nurturing environment. It is our goal to promote growth intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually. Through our structured daily schedules, we provide many opportunities for teaching that the children find very successful and enjoyable. Our center is a happy and satisfying experience for the child, as well as the parent.

Certification

Department of Human Services www.dhs.pa.gov

Keystone Stars www.pakeys.org

Star 4

Hours of Operation

Child care and Preschool services are provided from 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday to children age six weeks to five years. School age children (6-10 years) may participate in our Summer Camp Program June through August. Parents may opt to drop to part time status (minimum enrollment of 2 days per week) for a maximum of 12 weeks either over the summer or during a family member's leave of absence from work.

Part Time Preschool operates September through May. Classes meet from 9:00am to 11:45am. The 4 and 5 year old class meets on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and the 3 and 4 year old class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Holidays

We are closed for certain holidays: New Year's Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day (If July 4th should fall on a weekend, the center will observe it on the closest Monday or Friday), Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday, Christmas Day and either the day before or the day after; we may close early on Christmas Eve

Definition of Family

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.

Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed and enrollment fee paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

Parents also will need to update their child's Emergency Form and Agreement form every six months as required by the Department of Human Services.

An enrollment fee of \$50 is due at the time of enrollment for the full day program and \$25 for the part day program. **This fee is non-refundable.**

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age.

If parents wish to reserve an available space in our center but are unable to enroll at the time of availability they will be responsible to pay 50% of the tuition cost until their child's enrollment begins.

It is highly recommended that parents tour the center with their child before enrolling him/her. A visit must be scheduled with the Director in order to make sure that you will receive a tour and given all of the information before enrolling your child.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

If your child has an IEP/IFSP, written plans and/or special needs assessments completed by professionals, you must turn them in to Director. The daycare must have a copy of any and all plans for your child. We are here to work with you and your child. The only way that is possible is to know what we could do to best help your child. Any refusal to allow the daycare to have these plans, Little Lights will have to ask you to leave.

Inclusion

Little Lights believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

Non-Discrimination

At Little Lights equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

Staff Qualifications

Our teachers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows: The child care teachers and assistant teachers are chosen for their knowledge of children and their love and patience with the children. Each teacher is required to have at least 24 hours of professional development training each year to further their education related to children. Each lead teacher in the classroom is required to have their CDA (Child Development Association), Associates degree or Bachelors Degree. Each teacher also is required to have their child abuse, criminal background, and FBI clearances.

Caregivers participate in an orientation class and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter and is not connected or sanctioned by Little Lights Learning Center.

Child to Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios as determined by DHS:

Age	Child to Staff	Maximum Group Size
0-12 months	<u>4 to 1</u>	<u>8</u>
12-24 months	<u>5 to 1</u>	<u>10</u>
2 years	<u>6 to 1</u>	<u>12</u>
3 year olds	<u>10 to 1</u>	<u>20</u>
4-5 year olds	<u>10 to 1</u>	<u>20</u>

Communication & Family Partnership

Daily Communications. It is very important that parents and teachers communicate daily about the child. Our goal is always to have open communication with our parent to create the best possible environment. Each room has a process of communication so that you know how your child's day was. The infant and toddler rooms fill out a daily sheet for each child; please make sure to check your child's folder. These rooms along with the Preschool rooms also have a Wipe off Board in which the teachers will write what the whole class did during the day. Please make sure to read these daily; if you aren't sure where it's located, please ask your child's teacher.

Bulletin Boards. Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc. There is a

parent information center located to your right when you enter off the parking lot. Please feel free to take any of the pamphlets or resources provided there.

Newsletters. Every month, you will receive a copy of your child's room calendar & newsletter. If you would like the detailed lesson plans of your child's class, please ask the teacher. There is also a copy of their lesson plans hanging on the Parent Information Board.

Email. We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

Family Visits. We are more than happy to have any parent/guardian to come in and spend time with their child at any point during the day. There are many times throughout the year that surveys are sent around in which we ask you how we are doing, your opinion on certain policies, etc. We always welcome any type of suggestions and/or feedback. There are also times throughout the year that the teachers may ask for a little extra help from parents. We also offer additional activities throughout the year to encourage family involvement such as Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, and Grandparent's Day.

Conferences. Family & teacher conferences occur three times a year. During these conferences we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

Publicity

Unless the family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible daily routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage the ability to work and play with others.

Copies of daily schedules are posted in each classroom.

We use Creative Curriculum as our Curriculum which incorporates the Early Learning Standards for each age. In writing lesson plans, the teachers include all areas of development. These areas include social/emotional, language, cognitive, and small and large motor. Each classroom is set to Keystone Stars standards and has active, engaging centers for the children to play in. Within the curriculum the children will have the following centers in their classrooms:

- *Science & Nature
- *Math
- *Block Play
- *Manipulative (small motor)

- *Sand/Water Play
- *Dramatic Play Area
- *Book/Quiet Area

Outings & Field Trips

Weather permitting; we conduct supervised walking trips around the neighborhood. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

From time to time there will be supervised field trips, you are welcomed to attend these field trips but are not required to do so in order for your child to participate. If you wish to attend a field trip you will be required to have a current copy of state and child abuse clearances on file with the center. *Permission Slips* for each trip must be signed by the child's family.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for walking and make it difficult for your child.

Transition

Your child's transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and people are introduced.

Transition from home to center. Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

Transition between learning programs. Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. Upon enrollment and each new class transition, you will have to fill out a questionnaire on your child. The questionnaire will help your child's new teacher get to know him/her a little better.

Before your child moves to another room, you will be given a welcome packet. This welcome packet includes information about the teachers, the daily schedule of the room, and your new agreement form. Your child's transition time will be based on your child's needs.

Transition to elementary school. Our Preschool teachers attend a transition training every year and we provide transition information to parents at our Open House.. The director attends meetings with local school districts and other center directors to discuss ways to make this transition as smooth as possible for the children.

Television Time

Our normal daily routine does not include television watching, but from time-to-time we may record a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. Television consumption will not be longer than [one] hour and the program will be screened prior to showing. Programs will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world.

Electronic Media

Electronic Media is limited to 20 minutes or less per day per child. Internet sites and software are pre-screened to contain non-violence and high-quality educational content.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our diverse world. Our center holds a multicultural day on occasion in which we focus on one country. The children get the opportunity to participate in activities from that country, eat their food and experience other aspects of the culture.

Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs.

After lunch, all children participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities.

Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns. Children have the opportunity to begin toilet training when they move into the 2 year old room. Please provide pull ups for your child if your child is toilet training. In order for a child to wear underwear to the center they must be able to tell their teacher when they need to use the bathroom. Please talk to your child's teacher to determine if your child is ready to take this step at school. Due to the location of the bathroom children must be toilet trained in order to move into the 3/4 year old room.

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, and property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. When a child becomes physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children.

Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. In the rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or the safety of others, we may restrain a child by gently holding him or her only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

If a child is having difficulty within a room and needs to have a certain issue or issues addressed with a parent, the procedure is as follows:

*Teacher briefly addresses issue with parent. At this point handouts can be given or websites suggested for more information on the subject matter. Communication is the first step.

*Teacher documents (using a behavior tracking form or other agreed upon form) situations that need to be addressed.

*Teacher/Parent & Director set up conferences to discuss issues at hand. At this point the teacher will reference their observation forms to discuss the specific problem area. Goals will be set for the child and if applicable, a plan of action needed for improvement. Recommendations for referrals for Community Services offered may be made at this time.

On rare occasions a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

Assessment/Observation

The teachers begin observations of your child the first day they start at the center. After they have been there for 45 days you will receive an Ages and Stages assessment that their teacher has done on them. It helps us to make sure that your child is developing how they should be. At this time you have the option to meet with your child's teacher to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Every October, February and May the teachers do another type of assessment on the children. Each child will be assessed using the assessment tool Teaching Strategies GOLD. With these assessments, each child is observed by their teacher and the observations are entered on to the assessment website. The information that is entered is only seen by the teacher and the

director. There is also information that you will have to fill out for us to enter into the website. If you have any further questions please ask your child's teacher or the director.

Referral to Community Services

Once we have done Ages & Stages, Teaching Strategies GOLD, and include other observations of the children, there may be times when we have to refer you to a community service. These services may include the Infant/Toddler Mental Health Program or the Intermediate Unit. These services are to help your child in their development. If they see something that is not of normal development, they will work very closely with you and the center to help the child in the areas that they need to develop.

TUITION AND FEES

Payment

Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Little Lights will be expected to have annual increases that are prompted by economic inflation and ever-increasing costs of operation. The increase will take effect every September. Full time children may attend child care for a maximum of 10 hours a day. A fee of \$5.00 will be charged per day when a child is left at the center longer than 10 hours.

Payments: Tuition payments are due weekly on the first day that a child attends.

Tuition checks are to be placed in the mailbox next to the toddler entrance.

Discounts

For parents who have two or more children enrolled there will be a 10% discount off the oldest child's tuition. Parents with full time children who are Carlisle United Methodist Church Members will receive a 10% discount off their child's tuition. (Not to exceed 10%)

Preschool Part-Time

Part-time children may not switch days for any reason, including holidays. Switching days upsets the teacher child ratios and therefore, it is impossible to grant requests for temporary changes in a child's schedule.

Late Pick-up Fees

Little Lights closes at 5:30 PM daily. This means that you and your child must be leaving Little Lights at 5:30. A fee of \$5.00 will be charged to parents who pick up their child between 5:30 PM and 5:45 PM. If you are late a second time, a fee of \$8.00 will be charged to your account. An additional fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for every minute after 5:45 PM. This fee will be added on to your child's tuition. If you arrive late to pick up your child, there will be a form that you have to sign. These fees are also applicable to Part day Preschool children who are picked up after 11am.

Late Payment Charges

Late payments can pose serious problems for our program. Therefore we have put procedures in place to reduce their impact. Tuition will be considered past due if not received by noon on Friday. After noon on Friday, a late charge of \$8.00 PER DAY will be assessed to your account.

If your account becomes more than 31 days past due, you will receive a written notice from the Director that your account needs to be paid within two weeks. If a payment has not been received in two weeks, your child may be asked to be withdrawn until payment has been made in full. If you pull your child because you are not able to pay the tuition, you will have a week to pay the money otherwise your child's spot will be given to someone on the waiting list. If you are only able to pay a certain amount, please discuss with the Director about setting up a payment plan. If your child withdraws and we do not receive the money, first we will send you a letter reminding you of what you owe. Second we will call you to remind you and to make sure that you received our letter. If an agreement is not reached after these two reminders we will have to send your name to a collection agency.

Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

There will be a \$30.00 fee for all returned checks.

Additional Fees Credits

- **Withdrawals** - if a child is suddenly withdrawn from the program without a [2] week written notice of withdrawal, a [2] week tuition fee will be applied. Families who withdraw and later re-enroll will be charged a re-enrollment fee.

Credits & No Credits

- **Credit will not be given for Sick Days** – there are no credits for sick days. Sick days are considered in determining tuition and are not refundable. Full payment is due for all absences.
- **Credit will not be given for Inclement Weather** - if we do not open due to inclement weather on a day that your child is scheduled to attend, your account will not be credited for that day. Full tuition fees are due for all holidays and emergency weather closings.

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence

If your child is going to be absent, please call us at 717-249-5130 or e-mail your child's teacher or the director. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you.

Vacation

All Full Time children will be given one week vacation credit per year (our year runs September to August). Credit will be in the amount of the child's weekly tuition, and the days of absence must occur within the same week. Parents must notify the director, in writing, at least 14 days prior to the anticipated absence. Part Time Children who attend three days or less will not receive a vacation credit.

Withdrawal

A written notice is required two weeks in advance when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in additional fees.

Transfer of Records

Whether transitioning to the next classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions to where the records should be sent is required. Be sure to include the address and name of the person receiving your child's records.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on CBS 21 and ABC 27 and on the website www.whptv.com.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

We open at 6:30 AM. Please do not drop-off your child prior to opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in.

We close at 5:30 PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

When dropping off your child in the morning, please make sure that they arrive by 11 AM, when the first lunch is served.

While dropping off your child, please make sure to park in the parking lot and walk your child in to their classroom. Also make sure that a staff member has seen you drop off your child.

Each classroom has a sign in/sign out sheet. You must sign your child in and out everyday.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible. However, after 2 hours, if we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child. We may also call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

Unless the center has been provided with the correct legal documentation from a court of law, we must allow the child to go with either of their parents. We may not stop a parent from taking their child home.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

- **Infants:** enough clean bottles for a day's use, at least 6 diapers per day, and at least 2 changes of clothes per day.
- **Toddlers:** six diapers and at least two changes of clothes per day.
- **Older Toddlers:** at least two changes of clothes per day if going through the toilet training program. Diapers and Pull-ups if necessary.
- **Preschoolers:** at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-share activity. Any toys brought in will be held by the child's teacher until the end of the day.

NUTRITION

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated annually.

Since food allergies can be life threatening, each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

Meal Time

At meal time the dining table is set with plates and flatware. Everyone sits at the same table. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Monthly menus are posted for viewing by parents/caregivers and are included in the monthly newsletter.

A caregiver who is trained in first-aid for choking is present at all meals.

Infant Feedings

Parents will have the opportunity to either provide their own formula/food or to use the center's formula/food. If your child requires special formula, you will need to provide that formula for your child. We ask that a feeding schedule be provided for the infants.

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Bottle-fed infants are fed while being held or sitting up.
- Infants are fed "on demand" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly).
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. Fresh breast milk must be used within 48 hours. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months. Bottles containing breast milk must be stored in a sealed container.
- Formula brought from home must be premixed in bottles labeled with the child's name.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child's family.

Toddler and Preschool Feedings

The center provides a morning and afternoon snack with juice; and a hot lunch with milk is catered by PreK Gourmet. Due to State Regulations lunch counts for the following week must be turned in by Wednesday. I need to know by Wednesday if you have to add an extra day for your child the following week. If you are not able to let me know the Wednesday before, you will have to provide a lunch for your child.

*Tuition is the same regardless if your child packs or eats the lunch that is provided for them.

*Parents should feed their child breakfast before coming to school in the morning. However, if you arrive before 8:00 AM, you may bring a breakfast for your child to eat. If you have to bring a breakfast for your child, please pack all of their breakfast items in a lunch box. When your child is finished with their breakfast, we will rinse (not wash) out their items and place them on their hook or in their cubby for you to take home. All food that is opened or heated must be discarded if not eaten. This is mandated by the Department of Public Welfare Regulations.

- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include: hot dogs, whole grapes, popcorn and hard candy.

HEALTH

Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org State regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

Physicals

Prior to enrollment you will have to submit a health assessment form signed by your child's physician. The purpose of this form is to confirm that all immunizations required by law have been satisfied and that the child is well before joining the childcare community. A Health assessment must be done and turned in to the center at the following ages: **2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months and every year on or near the child's birthday.** Failure to do so may result in termination of enrollment.

Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children, you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Fever 100 degrees or higher accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting
- Mouth sores that cause drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:

- The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care.

Medications

All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication must meet the following requirements. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
- **Non-prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and physician. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.
- **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream and sunscreen) will be administered upon receipt of the permission form supplied in the child's enrollment packet. Please apply sunscreen to your child prior to bringing them to the center. Sunscreen will only be applied by the teachers in the afternoon. It is your responsibility to provide sunscreen labeled with your child's name.

Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments.

Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness

SAFETY

Video Surveillance Policy

This policy authorizes the use of cameras and video surveillance to further Carlisle United Methodist Church's efforts to protect the health, safety and welfare of all church members and their families, guests, daycare and pre-school children and their relatives and both church and private property. In using the video surveillance system, the church recognizes the need to balance the protection of people and property with the privacy rights of all persons, including employees and volunteers. The cameras monitor entrances, hallways, gathering and worship areas, classrooms occupied by children as well as the exterior and grounds. The video surveillance equipment cannot capture audio or any oral communications. Access to the cameras in the Little Lights classrooms will be limited to the Director and Assistant Director and individuals authorized by the Leadership Council who need access in order to perform their duties. Carlisle United Methodist Church may share video images with law enforcement agencies in the event law enforcement personnel make an official request to view CUMC video images as part of an official investigation of criminal activity in the church's area. Video footage will not be shared with any organization or member of the public.

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including painting, outdoor play, sand, water, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment. This could lead to choking or other serious harm. As a precaution we ask that all drawstrings be removed from children's clothes.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 90 °F or less than 25 °F. Additionally, outdoor play will be cancelled if there is an air quality rating.

Communal Water-Play

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water-play. Precautions (fresh running water, standing water replaced on a regular basis) are taken to ensure that communal water-play does not spread communicable infectious disease.

Injuries

Safety is a major concern in child care. As a result daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. This incident

report must be signed and returned to the center. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately by the center director. If the center director is not on site another staff member will contact you. All of our staff members are well trained in the center's policies and procedures and are more than capable of handling an emergency should the center director not be on site. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact. In the event that the child would need to receive medical attention after being picked up please contact the director at your earliest convenience to ensure proper follow up.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each child to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

After tracking a child's frequency with biting a conference will be initiated with the parents to discuss the problems. If the child continues to bite on a daily basis, continues to break the skin, targets a single child or attempts to bite numerous times a day, Little Lights reserves the right to ask the child to leave the center in order to protect the other children within the classroom. Biting can be a tremendous stress factor in a room. Children bite for different reasons, but overall it is our concern for safety that would draw us to the point of asking the child to withdrawal.

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCIES

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely even that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. Staff from the church will also be contacted. If the child is not located within 10 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with smoke alarms, rolling cribs, and fire extinguishers

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a bi-monthly basis. All of our staff receive fire safety training once a year.

Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

CENTER POLICIES

Our center policies are reviewed quarterly, updated annually, and are available for review upon request. To view the center policies please contact the center director.

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the workbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

The handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are completed.

Thank you for your cooperation, and we look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the **Little Lights Learning Center Family Handbook**. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management any questions I may have regarding any policy, procedure or information contained in the **Little Lights Learning Center Family Handbook**.

Recipient Signature

Date

Center Staff Signature

Date