

Little Friends Preschool

Parent Handbook



1028 Jennings Ave.
Salem, Ohio 44460
(330) 332-4905
www.lfpreschool.org

Welcome to Little Friends Preschool, an outreach ministry of Salem First Friends Church. Little Friends Preschool provides a quality preschool education for your child in a caring, warm environment. This handbook contains information regarding the preschool program. It is very important that you read this handbook and keep it handy as long as your child is enrolled in this program. It will answer many of the questions you have about Little Friends Preschool.

Goals:

The staff of Little Friends Preschool seeks to help your child grow and develop in the following areas: socially, spiritually, intellectually, physically, and emotionally.

Socially: Children will have opportunities to interact with others through parallel and cooperative play. As they develop relationships with their peers and teachers, children will be learning important skills such as how to cooperate, share, listen to, and respect each other.

Spiritually: Our primary goal is that each child will experience the love of Christ. Daily times of Bible teaching will help children grow in their relationship and understanding of God and His principles. Children will have the opportunity to explore, examine, and investigate the wonders of God's creation.

Intellectually: Our goal is to partner with parents to help ready each child for success in kindergarten. The curriculum includes number readiness, reading readiness, science and social studies concepts, and experiences with the arts (music, clay, paint, and drama). These skills are acquired through a variety of activities such as learning centers, guest speakers, music CD's, books, and field trips. Individual achievement is encouraged, but the teacher will always be available to help.

Physically: Throughout the course of each day, children will participate in activities that promote fine motor (small muscle) development and gross motor (large muscle) development. Fine motor development activities may include painting, constructing with Legos, and cutting with scissors. Gross motor development activities may include jumping, walking on a balance beam, or playing "Simon Says".

Emotionally: Each child will be recognized as a unique individual who is full of potential. We will work with each child to help him or her develop a positive self-image. Additionally, we will work extensively to help each child develop an understanding of his or her own emotions, as well as the emotions and feelings of others. We will practice appropriate ways to express emotions and appropriate conflict management strategies.

License:

At the end of the handbook you will find an attachment about licensing and other valuable information. Please take time to read this information.

Admissions:

Any parent interested in sending their child to Little Friends Preschool must schedule an appointment with the administrator or appointed staff member. A tour of the school and a review of the parent handbook will be provided.

A child is considered to be enrolled in the preschool only after the registration fee has been received, the administrator confirms the availability of space and the required paperwork is received.

The following is a list of forms that must be completed in entirety before the child will be admitted:

- Application for Enrollment
- Child Enrollment and Health Information
- Parent Handbook Confirmation
- Photo/Web Consent Form
- Child Medical Statement signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner is required to be submitted within 30 days of admission. This medical form must be updated every 13 months.
- General Information Sheet (optional)

All children will be admitted with the understanding there is a 30 day trial period.

* Please notify the director when any information on these forms changes, especially phone numbers. This is for the safety of your child.

This program ensures compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including: administering medication to children with disabilities and administering care procedures to children with disabilities.

Hours and Days of Operation:

Classes are in session as follows:

Preschool Classes:

Explorers- Monday-Friday 9:00AM-12PM.

Voyagers- Monday-Friday 9:00AM-12PM

School will close to observe the following holidays: Thanksgiving recess, Christmas recess, spring recess, all legal holidays, and teacher in-service days. Little Friends Preschool follows Salem City Schools school schedule. A Little Friends Preschool school schedule will be given to you on Orientation night or upon enrollment.

Staff/Child Ratios and Maximum Group Size:

Little Friends Preschool will not exceed the following state required ratios:

- 1:12 Preschoolers (3 years – 4 years)
- 1:14 Preschoolers (4 years until eligible for kindergarten)

In the event an employee is absent, a substitute is hired to maintain standards of teacher/pupil ratio.

Maximum group sizes are as follows:

- 24 3 year olds
- 28 4 - 5 year olds

Maximum group size is defined by the number of children in one group that may be cared for at any time. Limitations do not include naptime, lunch time, outdoor play, or special activities.

We are licensed to serve the following number of children during one time period.

- Toddlers: 2
- Preschool: 27
- School Age: 6

Daily Schedule:

The following is a sample of our daily routine. We try to keep the routine consistent so the children feel secure but vary the activities of each segment to keep their interest.

~ Greet the Children / Attendance

Free play. If children bring breakfast from home, they may eat it until 9:00 when preschool begins.

~ Learning Centers – A variety of “play” areas are set around the room for the children to choose. This provides socialization and a chance to explore new ideas. Each activity is carefully thought out to teach while having fun. This also gives the teacher time for

one on one interaction.

Learning centers include:

- ~ Craft table, various mediums available
 - ~ Science and discovery table
 - ~ Game table – puzzles and games
 - ~ Math and language manipulatives
 - ~ Block area
 - ~Dramatic play area
- ~ Bible Time-Sing songs, a Bible story/lesson is taught, prayer.
- ~ Circle time — A learning time where participation is encouraged. Time for songs and fingerplays, skills, theme of the day and sharing.
- ~ Bathroom and snack time
- ~ Outdoor or large motor activity — Little Friends has a fenced playground providing safe and fun activities that can be used any time weather permits. Please dress your child to suit the outside conditions. We also have a large inside area for inclement weather days.
- ~ Craft — Easy open-ended crafts that promote progress and encourage creativity.
- ~ Music — Background music is frequently playing, but this is a time to sing together.
- ~ Story — A quiet time for listening.
- ~ Dismissal/Good-bye for children who are staying for our morning session of preschool only
- ~ Bathroom break and hand washing.
- ~Children will eat lunch that they have brought from home.
- ~Outdoor or large motor activity- Little Friends has a fenced playground providing safe and fun activities that can be used any time weather permits. Please dress your child to suit the outside conditions. We also have a large inside area for inclement weather days.

Creative transition is used throughout the day. The three year old class stresses socialization and basic skills. The four year old and Pre-K classes stress socialization and cover kindergarten readiness skills. The Pre-K class moves at a more advanced pace.

****Tuition/Fees and Payment Policies:**

There is a \$45.00 registration fee. This is non-refundable and must accompany the application for enrollment.

Tuition for Preschool Classes:

The fee for classes, 4 days a week is \$200.00 per month. The family discount when enrolling two or more students is \$10.00 per child. Tuition is due by the fifteenth of each month. **Tuition charges are subject to change annually.**

All checks are to be made payable to **Little Friends Preschool**. Our Tax Id number is available upon request.

A late charge of **\$5.00** will be added if not paid by the fifteenth of the month. If tuition is not paid by the end of the month, an **additional \$5.00** charge will be added and the child may not be admitted to school the following month. There will be a **\$40.00** charge for non-sufficient funds check return. If there are unforeseen difficulties with payment, please contact the administrator. Full tuition is due for any periods including holidays and snow days.

If you must withdraw your child for any reason, please notify the school as soon as possible.

Supervision Policy:

Supervision:

The children are under adult supervision at all times. The adult in charge of a specific group is responsible for the children in that group.

The preschool has immediate access to a phone in the preschool office, and the staff is instructed in emergency procedures. The phone number is 330-332-4905.

An emergency evacuation plan is posted in each room. Monthly fire drills and disaster safety drills are held to acquaint the children with emergency procedures. These are recorded on a chart in the preschool.

An incident report for any minor accident or injury will be filed at the school. A parent must sign this report signifying he/she has been informed of the incident.

A person trained in first aid and CPR is available at all times at the school and on field trips. (see Field Trips section for safety procedures when away from the school.)

No aerosols will be used in the rooms when school is in session.

****Arrival/Departure:**

Preschool classes:

Arrival time is 8:55 AM and departure is at 11:55 AM for morning classes.

Each child will be marked in and out on an attendance roster each day. All staff will be present at arrival time to greet the child in their classroom. You may choose to park along the back of the building and walk your child in through the Fellowship Hall doors. Please hang up their belongings and take them to the restroom to wash their hands before coming to the classroom. If your child is late for school, please use the North door entrance under the carport and accompany him/her to the preschool room. Pick up will be in the classroom at 11:55am. Please park using the designated parking spaces and come in to pick up your child.

****School Delays/Cancellations:**

The preschool will follow the same schedule as Salem Public Schools. In case of severe weather conditions or other circumstances causing the school to close, cancellations will coincide with Salem City Schools. If Salem City Schools has a delayed start due to weather, the preschool will have a one hour delay. The school day will begin at 10am and end at 12pm.

****Release of Child:**

The administrator or a teacher should be notified if the child is to be picked up by someone other than the usual person. This must be done by written authorization from the parent or guardian. The person picking up the child may be asked to show proper identification. Staff will check ID's of anyone they do not recognize. Please let people know this ahead of time so they bring a picture ID and they are not offended. The children's safety is our priority. No child will be released from the school to a person not authorized by the parent. Staff will not release children to anyone, including parents, who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Emergency contacts will be called to transport the child home. Police will be notified in necessary.

Custody Agreements:

If there are custody issues involved with your child you must provide the preschool with court papers indicating who has permission to pick up the child. The center does not deny access to their child without proper documentation.

Child Abuse Reporting:

All staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse. If staff have suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, they MUST make a report to the local children's service agency. The safety of the children is always our first concern.

Field Trips and Transportation of Children:

Field Trips:

Field trips can only be taken with the help of parents. Each child on a field trip will be properly identified with the school's name, address and phone number. Permission slips for field trips must be signed by a parent or guardian in order for the child to participate. We encourage family participation during field trips. If you choose to bring siblings of your preschooler please be aware that each parent is responsible for any additional children.

A first aid kit, children's emergency transportation authorization, and health records will be available on all field trips. A person trained in first aid and CPR will be available on all field trips.

Seatbelts are used in all vehicles in which children are transported. Children who weight less than 40 pounds or who are younger than four years of age must be in a car seat provided by the parent or guardian. Additionally, children between the ages of four and eight who are less than 4'9" tall must ride in a federally approved booster seat. All drivers must have proof of license.

Transportation:

The center will not transport children in emergency situations. If a child requires transportation, a parent or the emergency squad will be contacted.

Discipline Policy:

At Little Friends Preschool, our goal is to maintain a safe and orderly environment in which your child can learn. Staff shall provide each child with guidance that helps acquire positive self-concept and self-control.

The following rules and standards apply:

1. To prevent unacceptable behavior from occurring, the staff will model positive behavior.
2. When unacceptable behavior occurs or is about to occur, staff will use:
 - Redirection- substitute a positive activity for a negative activity
 - Distraction- change the focus of the activity or behavior
 - Active listening to determine the underlying cause of the behavior

Children who endanger others:

One of our primary goals is to provide a safe, nurturing and pleasant environment for all of the children and staff. However, at times a child's behavior may endanger others. We want to ensure parents that we will address such behaviors immediately, using the following guidelines:

Suspension:

- A first incident will be reported to the parent.
- A second incident will result in a parent-teacher conference to discuss the behavior and establish a plan of action moving forward.
- A third incident will result in the parent being called and another conference will be set with the teacher and director to continue the discussion to understand the problem. Referral for outside services will be suggested.
- A fourth incident will result in suspension for **3 days**.

Expulsion:

Little Friends Preschool reserves the right to terminate any child's enrollment if any further incident occurs, or if we feel that any of the following conditions exist:

- The parents are not able to work with our center to find an acceptable solution
- The continuing behavior endangers the well being of other children and/or staff, or the well being of the child engaging in the behavior.

Birthday Snacks:

You are asked to bring a nutritious snack and juice several times during the year. This helps keep the cost of our tuition down. It also provides variety at snack time and makes the child feel important. Some suggestions for snacks are: raisins, bananas, pretzels, vegetable sticks, cheese or peanut butter and crackers. Information on nutritional values of foods in the basic food groups is available at the school. Each month a calendar will be sent home for you to check the dates that you are responsible for a treat. A child's birthday is a special time. This is his/her chance to be special for that day, wear a birthday hat, and bring a special treat. If your child has a summer birthday, he/she can celebrate a half birthday, so no child is left out.

Accidents/ Emergencies:

In case of a fire or tornado:

Staff will take their attendance roster, secure the classroom, exit the building with the children to the designated meeting place- which is the pine tree in the front yard, account for all children, and notify the administrator or staff in charge whether all children are present or if any are missing. We will not return to the classroom until the all clear is sounded. Staff is not required to take emergency medications/supplies in a fire evacuation.. Emergency response personnel will be available to assist if needed.

In case of threat to the safety of the children due to an environmental situation or threats of violence, natural disaster, loss of power, heat or water:

Our emergency destination is the front yard of the church. If the immediate area must be evacuated we will go to the Kelly residence, 1092 Jennings Ave. A sign will be posted on the door to the preschool indicating that we have been evacuated and the location where you can pick up your child. Parents will also be contacted as soon as possible to come pick up your child. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts as listed on your child's enrollment information. In the unlikely event there would be an environmental threat or a threat of violence, the staff will; secure the children in the safest location possible, contact and follow the directions given by the proper authorities and contact the parents as soon as the situation allows. An incident report would also be provided to the parents.

In case of a medical emergency:

A person trained in First Aid/Communicable Diseases and CPR is at the preschool at all times. In case of a minor injury or illness a trained staff member will provide basic first aid and TLC. If the injury/illness would be more serious first aid would be administered and the parents would be contacted immediately to assist in deciding the appropriate course of action. If any injury/illness is life threatening EMS will be contacted, parents will be notified, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available health records. Staff may not transport children in their vehicles. Only parents or EMS will transport.

An incident/injury report will be completed, and given to the person picking up the child, on the day of the incident/injury, if any of the following occur: the child has an illness, accident, or injury that requires first aid; the child receives a bump or blow to the head; the child is transported by emergency squad; or an unusual or unexpected event occurs which jeopardizes the safety of the child. If a child requires emergency transportation, the report shall be available within twenty-four hours after the incident occurs. The center shall also contact licensing personal from the appropriate ODJFS within 24 hours when there is a "general emergency" or "serious incident, injury, or illness." The report will be provided to licensing staff within 3 days of the incident.

Management of Illnesses:

A person trained in the recognition of communicable diseases is available at all times.

A mildly ill child will be kept in a quiet area near the rest of the group and carefully monitored for a change in condition. The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease.

1. The school will immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when the child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.
2. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness will immediately be isolated and discharged to his/her parent, guardian, or emergency contact.
 - a. diarrhea (more than three abnormally loose stools within a 24 hour period.)
 - b. severe coughing (causing the child to become red in the face or to make a whooping sound)
 - c. difficult or rapid breathing
 - d. yellowish skin or eyes

- e. redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eye lashes, burning, itching
- f. temperature of 100 degrees F., when taken by the auxiliary method, in combination with any other signs of illness
- g. untreated skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- h. unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool
- i. stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- j. sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- k. vomiting more than once or when accompanied by any other sign of illness
- l. evidence of untreated lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation

While waiting for the parents or guardian the child will be removed from the room and kept under supervision in another area equipped with a cot. The area will be properly disinfected before future use.

Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some time during the day shall be determined by the administrator and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the school, will be carefully watched for symptoms listed above.

If your child contracts a communicable disease, **please contact the teacher so she can notify parents of other children in the group to be aware of the symptoms of the disease.** A notice of the specific disease will be sent to parents or the teacher may verbally alert parents. The child will be readmitted to school after having a communicable disease after at least 24 hours of being free of fever and other symptoms. If not symptom free a doctor's note will be required stating that the child is not contagious. If you are unsure, check with your doctor or the teacher. The health chart is posted at the school in the office.

We ask that you do not send your child to preschool if they are sick. Our staff are also ask not report to work if they are sick and have signs of any of the above illnesses.

Medications:

Little Friends Preschool will not administer any medications, prescription or nonprescription, to children, unless your child has a medical care plan which requires medications in an emergency situation. If you are unsure if your child has a medical care plan please speak with the administrator.

Food Supplements or Modified Diets:

If your child requires food supplements or a modified diet, you must secure written information from your physician regarding this. Please speak with the administrator for more information regarding this.

Immunization Policy:

A medical statement signed by an approved health professional is required of all children. This medical statement must be submitted to the preschool within 30 days of the start of school.

If a parent or legal guardian wishes to claim exemption from immunizations due to a medical or religious belief, a written statement by the child's doctor who states the reason for such an exemption and that the child is in good health, shall be submitted to the preschool. Parents of other children in the preschool will be notified if a child enters unvaccinated. All names shall be kept confidential.

From time to time, children do contract communicable diseases (staph infection, hand foot and mouth disease, etc). Parents who enroll their non-vaccinated children assume all risk and the preschool shall not be held responsible.

Consent for Transportation:

In the event of a medical emergency, Little Friends Preschool requires consent from parents for any and all medical needs. This includes transportation to a hospital. A medical form will be given to you upon enrollment that must be filled out if you give the preschool consent to transport children to a hospital. You also need to state your hospital of choice. A teacher or staff member will ride with your child until reunification with parents is available.

If you choose to deny transportation for medical emergencies, You will need to give written documentation of instructions to the preschool director explaining what course of action shall be taken by the preschool.

Parent Participation:

Parents or guardians may visit Little Friends at any time to observe the children's activities and/or evaluate the program or facilities. Please notify the administrator or teacher of your presence upon arrival. Enter into the fun instead of just being an observer.

From time to time a newsletter will be sent home advising you of the skills being stressed at school. The teacher may talk to you about an individual problem your child may be having. If you feel there is a need to talk to the teacher, let him/her know and arrangements will be made for a time to meet. Individual parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled in the spring.

Parents are asked to become involved in our program by providing snacks, driving on field trips, helping with special events and being resource persons. Parents may also volunteer as teacher's helpers.

If parents have any concerns or questions at any time it is recommended that the following chain of command be used until an answer or solution is found:

1. Child's Teacher
2. Administrator
3. Preschool Board

Please feel free to bring concerns up when they occur. Often they can be addressed when they are little problems, before they grow into bigger problems. Our staff fully recognizes that you are trusting us with your little ones and we want our relationship to be a good one.

Additional Policies:

Special Needs:

Children with special needs will be accepted on an individual basis.

Age Requirements:

Generally the three year old class is composed of children who are three years old. We will accept a limited number of 2 and a half year old children to be placed in the three year old class. The Pre-K class is composed of children who are four to five years old.

Not every child is ready for kindergarten just because he/she meets the age requirements and may remain in preschool an extra year after preschool screening by the school system where he/she will attend school. Kindergarten has been mandated by Ohio state law.

Each child must be toilet trained before admission. We do not have facilities for potty training or diaper changing as required by state law.

Staff Requirements:

Our teachers are required to have one of the following: a four year degree in education, a two year associate degree, two years of college in the education field with courses in child study and teaching methods, or a vocational certificate in child care and successful experience working with small children. They also participate in continuing education classes each year.

Our teacher aides must have a high school diploma and successful experience in working with small children.

Each staff member must have training in first aid, CPR, child abuse recognition, and management of communicable diseases.

Clothing:

Please dress your child to be comfortable during an active day. We move a lot and sometimes get messy. Please consider your child's ability to dress and undress himself/herself. Although the teachers are always willing to help, it becomes frenzied when everyone needs help buckling, hooking suspenders, etc. Especially difficult are jumpers that must be unbuttoned the entire way and undershirts that snap at the crotch.

A change of clothing may be sent in the event the need should arise. For example, your child may need a change of clothes if they should spill their snack juice. Please send them in a bag clearly marked with the child's name.

Supplies:

A backpack or tote bag may be useful for carrying art projects, letters, etc. All items brought to Little Friends need to be clearly marked with your child's full name. The school will not be responsible for toys or personal possessions brought from home. If items come from home it is with the understanding that we share at school and sometimes things get lost or broken.

Absences:

Please call the school at (330) 332-4905 as soon as you know your child will not be in school that day.

Outdoor Play:

Children will play outside daily in our fenced in playground. We will not go outside if the weather is inclement, including rain and heavy snowfall. We will not go outside if the temperature is below 25 degrees or above 90 degrees. If we are not able to go outside, children will have large motor playtime inside in our Fellowship Hall. Please dress your child appropriately for outdoor play.

Makeup Days:

Due to staffing schedules, days missed during the school year may be made up **ONLY** in the event of serious illness or cancellations for snow, if less than a full time student. Salem City Schools allows 5 snow days during the school year. If your child is a full time student, you will receive a partial reimbursement for any days exceeding 5 snow days. Scheduled holidays and breaks are **not** included in makeup days. All holidays and breaks have been calculated in to the price of your monthly tuition giving you one low cost throughout the school year.

Assessment Policy:

Little Friends Preschool performs formal assessments on children throughout the school year. These assessments help teachers and staff to better serve each individual child at their level. Assessments include academic, behavioral, emotional and physical. These assessments are for the benefit of Little Friends Preschool teachers, staff and parents ONLY. No Assessments are turned into our local Ohio Department of Job and Family Services or the State of Ohio.

Parent Confirmation

Parents, after reading the handbook please sign and return this page to the administrator. This is due before the child attends the center. Please feel free to ask the administrator questions about any policies in the handbook.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the parent handbook for Little Friends Preschool and have had the policies reviewed with me. I agree to follow all policies outline within.

Child's Name: _____

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

Signature of parent/guardian