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[www.littlefootprintschildcare.com](http://www.littlefootprintschildcare.com)

# PARENT HANDBOOK

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the licensing authority by which Little Footprints Child Care is regulated. The Quincy EEC Office is responsible for monitoring our compliance to the regulations. You may contact them for any reason, including a regulatory compliance history of Little Footprints Child Care, at 617-472-2881. The Quincy EEC office is located at 1250 Hancock St. Suite 120-s, Quincy, MA 02169

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Dear Families,

Welcome to Little Footprints!

The goal of Little Footprints is to partner with parents and offer Infants and Toddlers a high quality early education and care program to help learn and grow physically, socially and emotionally. Here at Little Footprints your child is free to explore and learn in a safe and loving environment.

This handbook will introduce you to Little Footprints and answer many of your questions about the center. Remember we are here to for you and your child so at anytime you are welcome to contact us with any questions, concerns and/or suggestions.

We know that there are many programs out there to choose from so we would like to thank you for choosing Little Footprints. The first years of your child's life are the most important. She/he will go through many wonderful changes and we look forward to joining you in their adventure!

Sincerely,

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Program Director  
Little Footprints Child Care

## ***About Little Footprints***

### **Our Mission**

The Little Footprints Child Care, is a caring educational partnership between our program and families, designed to ensure that all children are afforded a safe and healthy learning environment in which they develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to reach their full academic and personal potential. This partnership is dedicated to providing all children with a 21<sup>st</sup> century education that will enable them to be life-long learners and contributors to a diverse and rapidly changing world.

### **Our Objective**

- provide children with a safe, secure, and nurturing environment
- promote independence, self-confidence, self-esteem and an enthusiasm for learning
- plan learning experiences that foster children's growth across a range of developmental and content areas
- provide a range of activities to foster the development of motor skills

### **Our Curriculum**

Our curriculum is developed based on standards-based developmentally. Experiences with paint, play dough, water, sand, blocks, puzzles and other manipulatives; music and movement activities; books; dramatic play; and cooking are available. The daily schedule is intended to balance indoor and outdoor periods; active and quiet times; individualized, small group, and large group activities.

Much emphasis is placed on the children's capacity to enjoy friendships, appropriately resolve conflicts and respect feelings and ideas of others. The program values each child's learning style and allows the child to progress according to his or her own ability. Children are encouraged to respect and appreciate differences and the unique qualities of all people.

### **Our Days/Hours of Operation**

Little Footprints is open year round ***Monday thru Friday 7:00AM to 6:00PM.***

Little Footprints is closed during the following Federal holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day (observed)
- Independence Day
- Labor Day (observed)
- Columbus Day
- Thanksgiving and day after

- Christmas Day

Along with these Federal Holidays the center closes every year in the summer for one week around the Independence Day holiday, this is for cleaning and repairs that are necessary to maintain the center. Parents will be notified every year of the exact dates in order to make proper arrangements.

### **Daily Schedule**

<b>7:00 AM – 8:00 AM</b>	Drop-off
<b>8:00 AM – 8:15 AM</b>	Potty Time
<b>8:15 AM – 9:00 AM</b>	Free play / Dramatic Play
<b>9:00 AM – 9:30 AM</b>	Story Time
<b>9:30 AM – 10:00 AM</b>	Snack
<b>10:00 AM – 10:15 AM</b>	Potty Time
<b>10:15 AM – 11:30 AM</b>	Art / Music / Floor Activities
<b>11:30 AM – 11:45 AM</b>	Potty Time
<b>11:45 AM – 12:30 PM</b>	Snack
<b>12:30 PM – 12:45 PM</b>	Wash up!
<b>12:45 PM – 2:45 PM</b>	Nap / Quiet Time
<b>2:45 PM – 3:00 PM</b>	Potty Time
<b>3:00 PM – 3:30 PM</b>	Snack
<b>3:30 PM – 4:45 PM</b>	Outside Play!
<b>4:45 PM – 5:00 PM</b>	Potty Time / Wash up
<b>5:00 PM – 6:00 PM</b>	Free Play / Pick-up

*This Schedule is a guideline for our day. Actual times and activities will vary depending on the children's needs and interests.*

### ***Infants***

While we do have schedules for Infants, we believe that infants should be fed when hungry and put to bed when they are tired. Infants should be talked to and played with on their own schedules.

### **Meals**

Little Footprints will not provide full meals instead a series of nutritious snacks will be provided. Arrangements can be made to bring in food for children with special dietary needs established by a physician.

- ***Please inform us of any food allergies that your child has.***

### ***Infants***

If your child is breast fed please let us know what accommodations we can make to help meet your needs.

## **Family Involvement**

Informal parent participation at the center is always welcome.

Parents are invited to visit their children at any time.

On some occasions such as field trips, parent's help may be requested.

## **Clothing and Supplies**

Parents are responsible for maintaining a spare set of clothing in their child's cubbies. Babies grow fast, so please check frequently to make sure the spare set of clothing matches your child's current size. Also please dress your child in comfortable and washable clothes. Children play with a variety of materials and clothing may become soiled as children learn and explore hands-on. Sneakers are the recommended footwear as children will be running, climbing, jumping, etc. both indoors and out.

Outside play is a part of our daily curriculum. Unless the weather is extremely adverse, we go outside. Depending on the weather, a raincoat, boots, hat, mittens, snow pants or snowsuit, or a warm coat greatly contribute to outdoor play being a fun and important part of your child's day.

*Little Footprints is not responsible for damaged clothing.*

### ***Infants***

Parents are responsible for supplying diapers and creams for their babies.

## **Enrollment**

To enroll your child you will need the following:

1. Enrollment Form
2. Child Health Exam Form
3. Immunization card

## **Attendance**

Your child is expected to be present all of the days based on the chosen care plan (*5/4 Day, 3 Day or 2 Day* plan).

In case of absence Little Footprints must be notified by 10:00 AM. Excessive uninformed absences may result in removal from the program.

## **Snow or Inclement Weather Cancellations**

The Director of Little Footprints will determine if the center must be closed due to bad weather situations. If the center is to be closed for the day, parents will be notified by telephone.

## **Fees and Tuition**

### ***Registration Fee***

There will be a \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee

### ***Security Deposit***

Upon being enrolled there is a required security deposit equal to 1 week's tuition.

### ***Late Child Pick-up fee***

Parents/Guardians are responsible to pick up their child on time. There will be a \$10.00 charge for every 15 minutes beyond normal pick up time.

## **Tuition and Payment Plans**

Little Footprints offers parents various flexible payment options. Infants and Toddlers may be enrolled in 5/4 Day programs or 3 Day programs.

### ***Plan A: Pay Monthly***

### ***Plan B: Pay Weekly***

If you want to spread out your payments then opt for our weekly pay plan. Weekly payments can be made by Cash, Check or Credit card. Payment must be made every Friday on the week prior in order to continue enrollment.

**Please contact us for availability and prices**

### **Contract**

Little Footprints requires a 3 month contract for enrollment (except with Plan C). Children may be released from their contract in outstanding cases of medical leave or financial hardship. If the parent/guardian wishes to cancel their contract for any other reason is required to provide a written 30 day notice. After contract period is over the parent may remove their child for any reason by providing a 2 week written notice.

### **Illness or absence**

There are no adjustments in payment due to illness or absence. In the case of chronic illness a child may be released from their contract

### **Child Behavior**



While attending Little Footprints your child is expected to follow three basic rules.

1. Respect the teachers and assistants at all times.
2. Respect all other children at the center. This also means that children will keep their hands, feet and other objects to themselves. (So no hitting or kicking.)
3. Property and program materials are to be respected.

### **Extreme Behaviors**

The safety of all children under our care is our first priority. So when a child's behavior becomes uncontrolled or extreme the following will occur:

- Program Director will speak with parent regarding the behavior and how to resolve the issue.
- If behavior continues, the parent will be contacted and child may be asked to leave for the remainder of the day.
- If behavior persists and every attempt has been made to resolve it, the child may be required to leave the program.

### **Child Injury Form**

We at Little Footprints take every effort to ensure the safety of all children under our care. Unfortunately accidents do happen. In the event of an accident an Injury Form will be filled out by a staff member. A copy of the form with the parent's signature will be kept in the child's file. If a child comes to the center with existing injuries, it may be required to fill out an injury form and then signed by parent prior to starting the day.

### **Drop-off and Pick-up**

All children must be escorted into the building and record arrival time on attendance sheet. When picking up your child, the pick-up time must be recorded on the attendance sheet.

#### ***Authorized Individuals***

On the enrollment form, there is a space for all names of the individuals that you authorize to pick-up your child. There is no limit to how many authorized individuals you may have listed. All individuals picking up your child will be asked to provide a valid I.D. Any unauthorized person will not be allowed to pick up your child so make sure you keep this list of authorized persons up to date.

### **Health and Well Being**

In order for your child to be enrolled in the program there are two forms required to be in your child's file.

- Medical Examination Form (signed and dated by the child's physician)
- Immunization card

We appreciate your cooperation in keeping these forms current.

## **Progress Reports**

### ***Infants***

A written progress report shall be prepared every three months detailing the progress of each child in the program. A parent conference may be scheduled with the parent/guardian of each child within 2 weeks of the distribution of the progress report.

### ***Toddlers***

A written progress report shall be prepared every six months detailing the progress of each child in the program. This progress report shall be based on observations and documentation of the child's progress in a range of activities over time and may include samples of the child's work.

A copy of all progress reports will be given to the parent and a copy kept in the child's record

## **Health Policy**

We make every effort to keep your child safe through supervision. However minor accidents are inevitable. Minor injuries will be taken care of by the Little Footprints staff at which point an Injury report will be filled out. In case of an emergency requiring immediate attention, 911 will be called and you will be notified immediately. If you can not be reached, we will contact the emergency contact listed in your child's file.

For the safety and protection all children in our care, we request that your child stay home if they show any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever within the last 24 hours
2. Diarrhea (3 or more times in the past 24 hours)
3. Vomiting (2 or more times in the past 24 hours)
4. Eye infections
5. Sore throat
6. Skin rash other than diaper rash
7. Lice
8. Any Communicable Disease

If your child exhibits any of the above symptoms during our care we will contact you to pick-up your child as soon as possible. We realize this may be a large inconvenience to you. However this is necessary to maintain the well being of all the children in our care. We appreciate your cooperation in this regards.

## **Medication**

If your child is required to take medication you must fill out a medication consent form. All medication must be in the original bottle labeled with your child's name. All medications must be given personally to a staff member along with a signed consent form. If your child requires medicine at an exact time interval then it must be noted on consent form. If your child is sick, please remember that he/she needs to be fever free (without use of medicine) for at least 24 hours.

## **Immunizations**

Little Footprints requires that you provide proof (state form) of up to date immunizations prior to admission.

## **Maintaining Children's Records & Confidentiality**

1. Information contained in a child's record is privileged, confidential and will not be given to anyone not directly involved in maintaining records for the child without the written consent of the child's parents.
2. Children's files are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the director's office.
3. Staff at Little Footprints may not have access to health information about your child unless you so authorize.
4. Parents are always entitled to access to a child's records. A conference is scheduled with parents and staff to facilitate the request for access.
5. Little Footprints will not charge for copies of any information contained in a child's record.
6. Parents have the right, according to standard EEC procedure, to amend their child's record in any way.
7. When a child is no longer enrolled at Little Footprints, parents may transfer the child's record by requesting that in writing.
8. Children's records, along with all other school records, are always available to the Department of Early Education and Care.

## **Plan for Prevention of Abuse & Neglect**

1. Mandated Reporting
  - a. In order to insure the well-being of the children in our care, the staff of RRDC has a continuing duty under law to report incidents of possible neglect or abuse, including physical, sexual and psychological abuse, to the Department of Children and Families, and to cooperate in any investigation of possible neglect or abuse (Massachusetts General Law chapter 119, section 51A).
  - b. We do not have discretion in this matter, but must make such referrals whenever we have reasonable cause to believe that a child might have been harmed by anyone, including non-family members. We may be subject to criminal penalties if we fail to report such possible harm.
  - c. Moreover, in grievous cases, we may refer the matter directly to the police or consult with the District Attorney as well.
  - d. Any educator accused of abuse or neglect of a child in a 51A report to DCF will not be permitted to work with children until the DCF report is completed and for such additional time as EEC requires
2. Little Footprints acts to protect the children in our care and custody from abuse and neglect in the following ways:
  - a. By training staff to be sensitive and perceptive.
  - b. By building a trusting, sharing relationship with parents

### **Statement of Non-Discrimination**

**Little Footprints Child Care welcomes all families regardless of race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, ancestry, marital or parental status and physical, mental emotional or learning disability.**

## **Procedures for Emergencies**

Emergency plans for fire are posted by each exit and are practiced monthly, so that your child is familiar with the drill and not alarmed in case of a real emergency.

In the event of a medical emergency, staff will call for an ambulance or police depending upon the situation, then organize the remaining children into a group and bring them to a different area. The parents will be notified immediately by phone by the director or staff in charge. If the parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be notified.

In the event of an emergency occurring during a field trip, the same procedures will be followed. An accident report will be filled out immediately. One copy will go to the parent or medical personnel and another copy will be placed in the child's file.

### ***Contingency Plans for Emergency Situations***

In the event of natural disaster or a situation which may necessitate an evacuation of the building. We will assess the situation and decide if the children and staff need to vacate the premises immediately, If the situation will allow the center to continue operation while awaiting local authorities to determine whether to evacuate or if the situation will allow the center to continue operation while still meeting the full needs of the children, operations will resume.

### ***In the Case of a Fire***

Children will immediately exit the building. Staff and children will follow the policy set forth for fire drills. Monthly fire drills are conducted.

### ***In the Case of a Power Outage***

In cold weather the center will stay open providing the heat is maintained not less than 65 degrees. In warm weather, we will take appropriate measures to protect children from health risks associated with excessive heat. Full telephone service and fire detection alarms must be in working order.

### ***In the Case of a Loss of Water***

Staff will depend upon bottled water unless the amount is inadequate and can't be delivered to meet the requirements for flushing of toilets, diapering, hand washing and dishwashing (if necessary) without running water.

### ***Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)***

To guard against SIDS, all infants shall be placed on their backs during sleep time. "Back to sleep" is the only safe position for a sleeping baby unless the child's health care provider advises otherwise.

### ***In the Case of Student Not Arriving on Premises***

If a child does not arrive on the premises within 2 hours of scheduled arrival, a phone call shall be placed and messages left for the child's parent/guardian. If child does not arrive by end of day, a phone call shall be placed to the child's emergency contact. If child does not arrive for three consecutive days a call shall be placed to Child Services.