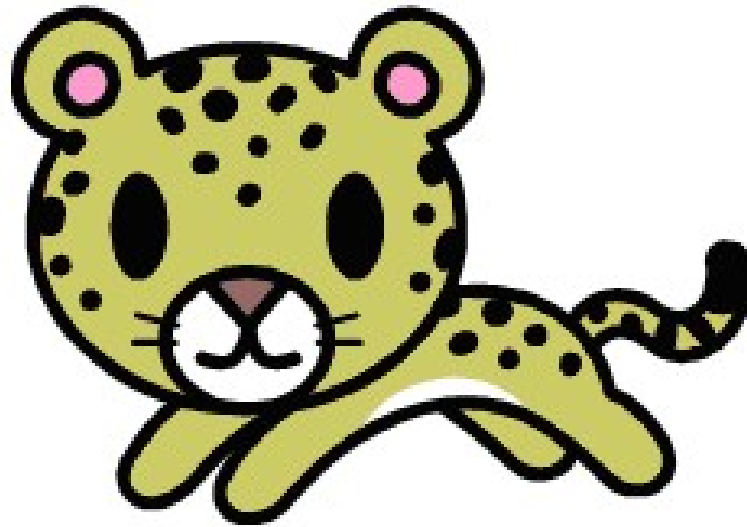


PARENT HANDBOOK

LITTLE LEOPARDS



CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

LOVEJOY ISD





2009

LITTLE LEOPARDS




CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER


Overview of Program

-  Little Leopards Child Development Center is a program developed by Lovejoy ISD in order to provide quality, safe care for employees children ages 18 months – 4 years of age. The program is located next to Hart Elementary and is a fee-based program. Program staff members are employees of LISD. The site will be managed by the Director of Childcare Services, Assistant Director, Lead Teachers, PPCD Teachers, and Assistant Teachers.
-  The program begins at 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. and operates 187 days during the school year. The program will be open on all regular school days and teacher professional development/work days.
-  Parents must walk children into the program and sign their children in each day.
-  Parents are allowed to visit the program at any time to observe their child.


Fees

-  An annual, non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00 will be charged for each child. Tuition \$435.00 per child / per month



Tuition will be made through payroll deduction only.

-  A late pick up fee of \$1 per minute per child for every minute past 5:30 pm will be collected at the time of pick up. Staff will go by the classroom clock to determine late fee amount.




Lunch and Snacks

-  Little Leopards Child Development Center serves a morning and afternoon snack/drink provided through food services. In the event your child has specific nutritional needs or allergies, please indicate them on the enrollment form. Lunches are also provided through food services and a menu will be posted in advance. Your child does have the option to bring a lunch daily, as long as it does not require refrigeration or heating.



Lunches and Snacks cont.

-  There are no charges for the provided snack or lunch. Snacks served and daily lunches do meet the Minimum Standards Rules for Licensed Childcare Centers.
-  Children are required to wash their hands before and after any snack or meal.


Staff

-  Little Leopards Child Development Center staff are trained in First Aid/CPR and defibrillator use. Staff are trained in handling procedures for fire, tornado, and lock down drills. The Director is your main point of contact and oversees the program and staff on site.
-  Until staff members become familiar with each parent/guardian, they may ask to check photo identification upon pick-up (i.e. driver's license or LISD badge as indicated on enrollment form). Please be patient, as it is for your child's safety that we maintain strict security policies at all times.
-  All staff receives criminal background checks and initial LISD orientation upon being hired. This training includes, but is not limited to, policies/ procedures, communication with children, behavior management and supervision of children, developmental stages, reporting child abuse / neglect and confidentiality of records.

Personal Belongings/ Clothing

-  Children will need to bring a change of clothes, all bathroom items, and soft sleep toy/blanket each day to the program. Each child will have a cubby to keep personal items. Little Leopards Child Development Center staff will attempt to help children stay organized; the program cannot be responsible for lost personal property. Children are discouraged from bringing personal toys, money, or other items not necessary for program activities.
-  Please send children in comfortable clothing – as our activities will have lots of movement and fun. Children must wear tennis shoes for safety reasons.

Attendance

-  If your child will not be attending Little Leopards Child Development Center because of a scheduled appointment, vacation or other planned absence, please notify staff in advance.

Child Health



Student's health/ immunization information is kept current along with the enrollment forms. Parents are also asked to include allergies, special diets, and/ or emergency health information.



Parents may be called in the event a child becomes sick and is not able to participate in our regularly scheduled activities. If a child becomes ill the parent will be contacted immediately to come for him/ her. For the protection of all children in our program, your child may not return to school within 24 hours from the time they are picked up with the following symptoms:

- Intestinal disturbance accompanied by diarrhea or vomiting
- Oral temperature of 100.4 or greater: armpit temperature of 99.4 or greater
- Any undiagnosed rash
- Discharge from the eyes/ ears or profuse nasal discharge
- Symptoms of possible communicable disease (such as sniffles, red eyes, sore throat, headache, and abdominal pain with fever)
- Symptoms that prevent a child from participating comfortably in childcare center activities including outdoor play.
- Any illness that results in greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
- A healthcare diagnosis of a communicable disease and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious



In addition we will not admit a child into our care that has the above mentioned symptoms.



Little Leopards Child Development Center staff are trained in administering medication. Parents who have students who have medication must complete an "Authorization for Dispensing Medication Form" prior to the child attending the program.



All medication administered at Little Leopards Child Development Center must be brought in the original container with a medication administration form completed to the Lead Teacher. Forms for medication administration may be obtained at the site.




With safety a major priority, we recognize that at times children will get minor scrapes, bruises, etc. To address this, the site will be equipped with first aid supplies. Staff utilizes incident reports to communicate information regarding any incident or injuries to parents, how it was handled and the care your child received.





In the event that a child receives an injury to the head, eyes, or ears parents will be contacted immediately to notify them of the situation. Should your child experience any changes in behavior, signs of dizziness, headaches, nausea, staggering, uncontrolled bleeding, difficulty breathing, or similar, 911 will be called.



Bathroom

-  During the early years, there are many transitions regarding bathroom use and personal needs. Little Leopards Child Development Center staff members are trained to be sensitive to these needs and utilize consistent methods. If your child is not yet potty trained, the staff members will continue to emphasize these skills at school. Parents will need to send any personal supplies daily (wipes, pull-ups, diapers, etc.). Parents will receive a daily summary informing them of their child's bathroom habits until they are fully potty trained.


Naptime

-  State Licensing guidelines require a supervised rest or sleep period to be held after the noon meal. During this time each child is provided with a cot, a cot sheet and is allowed a soft sleep toy and or blanket. The sheets are going to be washed daily and are not child specific. The sleep toys and blankets will be kept in the child's cubby, although we ask that you take them home on Friday for washing.
-  In the event your child is not sleepy or is "growing" out of a nap, we require them to rest for at least one hour. After the initial hour, if the child is not sleeping, he/she will be given an alternate quiet activity (i.e. books, computer games w/ headphones, puzzles, etc.).


Birthdays

-  Birthdays are special times for our children and we want to help you make them memorable. We are happy to replace one of our snack times with birthday items (i.e. cupcakes, ice cream, cookies, etc.). Please inform the teacher in advance that you would like to send a treat, if you are planning on being present and any other thoughts you may have.
-  In order to be appropriate to all involved, we ask that if you send favors to send one for each child in the class or if you send party invitations, that you send one for each child.





Photographs

-  Throughout the year, Little Leopards Child Development Center staff members will take photographs of the children participating in activities and events. If you do not wish for your child to be photographed, you may indicate on the form. Permission to Photograph forms will be available at the site.




Water Activities

-  At times the lesson plans may include water table play or outside water play (sprinklers or splashing/ wading pools). You will be notified before these activities occur and asked to send the children in appropriate attire.


Enrollment/ Child Pick-Up

-  Enrollment forms are collected on site at the actual campus or by mail. Little Leopards Child Development Center staff will ask parents throughout the year to check the forms for current information.
-  The parent who enrolls the child in Little Leopards CDC, and signs the enrollment form, has the right to list who can and cannot pick up the child from the program. In the case of shared custody or visitation rights, we must have a copy of the court document stating parent rights in regards to school forms. Corrections or additions to the form must be made in writing by the person who originally completed the form.
-  All persons allowed to pick up the child must be listed on the enrollment form. Staff will not allow a child to leave with a person who is not listed on the form. In the event a person not listed arrives to pick up a child, we will call the parents listed.
-  Authorized persons may pick up children at any time once the program starts, using the main doors of the program. All doors are secure and authorized persons will need to knock and must present picture identification in order to pick up their child. Authorized persons must sign the child out before leaving.

Immunizations/ TB Test/ Vision and Hearing Screening



-  Each child enrolled or admitted to child-care centers must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of Health Immunization Requirements in Texas Elementary and Secondary Schools and Institutions of Higher Education.
-  Requirements for tuberculosis screening and testing may vary across the state. If our regional TDH requires TB testing, then we must have documentation to indicate that each child is free of active TB.
-  First time enrollees who are four years of age or older and all children enrolled in programs who are four years of age by September 1 of each year will have a Vision and Hearing screening prior to the completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment, whichever is longest, or present evidence of screening conducted one year prior to enrollment. A licensed or certified screener or a health care professional must conduct the screening.

Inclement Weather/ Emergencies






-  In the case of inclement weather and Lovejoy ISD closes, Little Leopards CDC will also be closed. If the weather begins to worsen throughout the day and road conditions are poor, we ask that you try to pick up your child as soon as possible. This will allow our staff to get home safely, before conditions are not suitable for driving.

Inclement Weather / Emergencies cont.

When outside temperatures exceed 90 degrees Fahrenheit, outdoor activity may be limited. In addition, children will not be allowed outside during high humidity days or when Heat Alerts/ Advisories, Ozone/ Smog Alerts are in effect for the area.

-  When outside temperatures and/or wind-chill factors are below freezing, children will not be allowed outside. Please remember to dress children accordingly for cold weather days.
-  Staff are trained in basic emergency procedures and will conduct fire, tornado, and lock down drills. Should the electricity go out, staff is trained to move children into a lighted area and continue the daily routine. Parents will only be called to pick up their child early, should the facilities be deemed unsafe.

Communication

-  Communication with parents/ guardians is important to the development of a child. Lead Teachers and classroom staff will communicate daily with parents through conversation, email, daily sheets, or by phone. Parents are welcome to contact Little Leopard staff at anytime during our normal operating hours
-  In addition, we welcome your feedback and input. All questions regarding Little Leopards CDC should be addressed to the Director or Lead Teacher. Please do not contact the campus staff or principal, as the program is managed separately from the school.
-  Little Leopards CDC is a licensed day-care and is governed by the Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Childcare Centers by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Little Leopards CDC is associated with LISD and is operated by LISD employees.
-  Little Leopards Child Development Center has a direct line to speak to staff. The line may not be able to be answered immediately, as the program site does not have a receptionist and teaching is our first priority. In the event of an emergency, you may call the Director's cell number.
-  If you leave a message at the program, the staff will return phone calls during their office hours (i.e. nap time).

Phone numbers for Little Leopards Child Development Center:

Office	469-742-8150
Jungle Room (18 months – 2 ½ years)	469-742-8195
Savannah Room (2 ½ years – 3 ½ years)	469-742-8172
Mountain Room (3 years – 5 years)	469-742-8193
Arctic Room (3 years – 5 years)	469-742-8173
Rainforest Room (3 years – 5 years)	469-742-8184
Director of Childcare Services	214-585-7576

Change in Policy



In the event that a policy of Little Leopards CDC changes, parents will be notified in writing prior to the change.

Licensing Guidelines



Little Leopards Child Development Center is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The site has a posted license and follows the requirements set forth in the Minimum Standards for Childcare Centers. At anytime you may ask program staff to review the most recent Licensing Inspection Report or a booklet of the minimum standards. They may be reached in the following ways:



TDFPS 972-633-6600
Child Care Licensing
2205 Los Rio Drive FAX 972-516-5767
Plano, Texas 75074



PRS CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-254-5400



TDFPS WEBSITE <http://www.tdfps.state.tx.us/>

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

What is best for children?

These principles of development will guide you in making decisions that are developmentally appropriate.

1. Development follows predictable patterns. Children develop in stages and the sequence of these stages is the same.
2. There are large differences in the rate at which children develop. Even when children are the same chronological age, their level of knowledge and skills will vary widely.
3. Development is often uneven. Children may develop more quickly in some areas than others.
4. Development proceeds from simple to complex and from general to specific. Each skill is built on a simpler one until the child learns more refined skills and concepts.
5. Learning proceeds from the concrete to the abstract. Children need real-life experiences interacting with concrete objects in order to construct knowledge.
6. Development cannot be “taught” or hurried. If children are forced to perform beyond their abilities, it may damage their self-concept or cause negative attitudes about school.
7. Children have different styles of learning, as well as different interests, needs, and motivations.
8. Intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development are intricately interwoven. It is important to develop a well rounded child with experiences in all domains.

When you understand how children think and behave at different ages, you will know how to guide them, motivate them and how to provide optimum learning environments and experiences for them. An understanding of child development will also improve your confidence and will enable you to adjust your program to the individual needs of the children in your classroom.

How do children learn?

Children are natural learners—they are curious, interested, and enthusiastic about learning new things. The best way to teach children is to build on play and their natural learning styles.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH PLAY. Play is what children do best and enjoy the most. For children, play is their work. Play fosters total development and should be integrated into everything they do.

CHILDREN LEARN BY DOING. Children learn through active involvement with concrete objects. They need many first hand experiences with real things, such as science experiments, construction, art projects, dramatic play, and field trips.

I HEAR AND I FORGET

I SEE AND I REMEMBER

I DO AND I UNDERSTAND

Chinese Proverb

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH THEIR SENSES. Children learn by seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling. Think of each of the senses as a pathway to the brain; the more senses or pathways involved, the more likely learning will occur. Sensory learning also emphasizes the need for a variety of media and materials to stimulate children's senses.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH LANGUAGE. Children need to talk about their experiences and to verbalize what they are thinking. Teachers can foster language by describing what they are doing, labeling objects, clarifying children's thoughts, and asking and answering their questions.

CHILDREN LEARN BY MOVING. Children seem to be in constant motion. They have a limited attention span and cannot learn sitting quietly. Direct their energy with whole body experiences where they can move and use their hands, feet, heads, and bodies to learn.

CHILDREN LEARN BY BEING MOTIVATED. Motivation is a key ingredient to learning. Interesting materials and a stimulating environment will spark children's curiosity and inspire them to learn. Pleasing parents and teachers, praise, rewards, and other personal reasons further motivate children to learn.

CHILDREN LEARN ON THEIR OWN LEVEL. Assess each child's background and skills so you can build on their past experiences. If activities are too easy, children will become bored, but if they are too difficult, children will become frustrated. Breakdown difficult activities into small steps so each child can succeed and move from simple to more complex activities.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH PRAISE AND REINFORCEMENT. “Nothing succeeds like success.” Positive experiences and praise encourage children to learn more while building their confidence. Give children constant reinforcement with smiles, pats, and verbal encouragement.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH IMITATION. Children learn by observing others and then imitating what they see and hear. Children also imitate values and attitudes that they see in parents, teachers, and peers.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH REPETITION. Children build knowledge through repetition and through accumulated experiences. The amount of time that is spent on activities is another significant factor in learning.

CHILDREN LEARN BY EXPERIMENTING. Children need the freedom to experiment, explore, try things out, and to make choices. Since they learn through trial and error, accept their mistakes and offer feedback and support.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH EXPOSURE. Children are like sponges, learning more in the preschool years than any other period. They need to be stimulated with a wide variety of materials, activities, and subject matter.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH INTERACTING WITH FRIENDS. It is amazing how much children learn through talking, watching, and playing with their friends, siblings, and others. Peer teaching is a meaningful way of learning that should not be overlooked.

CHILDREN LEARN IN A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT. Children need to feel loved, safe, and secure in order to learn. An atmosphere of warmth and acceptance is much more conducive than one that is competitive or threatening.

CHILDREN LEARN WHEN THEIR PHYSICAL NEEDS ARE MET. Children who are hungry, sleepy, or under stress will have a difficult time learning. Make sure children receive good nutrition, proper rest, and emotional support.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH WHOLENESS. Learning is not isolated, but should be connected and integrated in all areas of the curriculum. Learning should also focus on the whole child by meeting their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.

When the above guidelines are followed, children will become independent learners who are excited about school and are enthusiastic about learning. They will have a strong foundation, confidence in their abilities, and lifelong skills that will help them continue to learn.

AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT

What are the major areas of development?

From the moment of birth, children learn and grow in many ways. These are the major areas in which development will occur:

- **Physical Development**-This involves the way children use their large and small muscles. Large muscles are used for activities such as walking, running, and throwing; small muscles are used for drawing, writing, feeding, and dressing.
- **Social Development**-Social development refers to how children interact with other children and adults in their lives. Social skills include sharing, cooperating, and following rules.
- **Emotional Development**-Emotional development includes children's feelings about themselves, their self-esteem, and their ability to express their feelings.
- **Language Development**-Language development refers to children's ability to listen, understand, speak, and eventually to read and write.
- **Cognitive or Intellectual Development**-Intellectual development involves children's ability to think, reason, and solve problems. It includes forming concepts, remembering ideas, and recognizing objects.

Should you rush or push children?

NO! NO! NO! There is a tendency in early childhood education these days to do too much, too soon, too fast. Many parents and teachers are falling into the competitive trap of hurrying children, and the long-term effects may be devastating. Children who are pressured may feel stress and may become burned-out. Further, if one area of development is sacrificed for another, such as an academic skill over creativity, children may suffer the consequences in the future and other gifts may remain neglected.

One of the best reasons for not pushing children is that it doesn't always work. No matter how hard you try, there is very little you can do to force a three-year-old to read or ride a two-wheeler. There is an optimum time for learning various tasks, and children will learn them in their own way, at their own time, if we provide them with the appropriate environment and experiences.

Children have a lifetime to be adults, so let them enjoy their childhood with playful, interesting, and developmentally appropriate activities. Stimulate children and open doors for them, but do not push or rush them. Keep in mind that growth and developments are unique to the individual, and try to be sensitive to each child's time clock.

ABCs for Happy Children

CHILDREN NEED:

A – Acceptance

B – Balance of activities

C – Creative expression in art, music, drama

D – Desire to learn and positive attitude about school

E – Exercise and nutritional food to eat

F – Fun! Play!

G – Group experiences

H – Hands-on learning

I – Independence

J – Jobs and responsibility

K – Kindness

L – Limits and rules

M – Manipulatives and tools

N – Nature exploration

O – Outings and field trips

P – Praise and positive reinforcement

Q – Questions and language

R – Rest and relaxation

S – Stories, stories, stories

T – Time to talk, explore, discover

U – Understanding adults

V – Variety of materials and experiences

W – Work that is meaningful

X – Xylophones and music

Y – “Yes” environment where they can be successful

Z – Zat’s not all!