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**CARE • DEVELOPMENT • PROGRESS**

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**A 21st-Century Early Learning Center**

## Family Handbook

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## **ABOUT US**

Little STEAMers Academy (LSA) is a family owned and operated year-round, full day early learning childcare center. LSA is currently licensed through the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). We are a premium full-service day care, focusing on STEAM-based curriculum in a safe, high quality and engaging learning environment.

We currently serve families with children ranging from two months to twelve years of age who are in search of:

Quality Service & Facilities  
Safe & Transparent Child Care  
Forward-Moving Programming & Development

## **OUR MISSION**

Little STEAMers Academy's goal is to provide a premium service to children and families within our community that leads in care, education, and development while producing experiences for children that prepare them for the next level. We pride ourselves on excellent care, a safe environment, and positive relationships.

## **OUR VISION**

Little STEAMers Academy strives to prepare children with a head start. To be ready for school and academic success, ensuring they have a childhood that is full of play, adventure, and investigation within a safe environment just as evolved as the world around them.

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

*HEALTH & WELLNESS ARE KEY TO DEVELOPMENTAL SUCCESS*

### “WHOLE-CHILD”



Research confirms that a whole child approach to learning will develop and prepare children for the challenges and opportunities of today and tomorrow by addressing their needs through the shared responsibility of families, learning centers, and communities.

A whole child approach, which ensures that each child is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged, sets the standard for comprehensive, sustainable learning and provides development for long-term success.

### **CURRICULA**

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each program. 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 programs are designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving,

responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

LSA uses a 21st century research-based education approach known as STEAM, which uses an interdisciplinary, hands-on approach relating to real world applications which are our tracks that guide our youth for progression in our ever-changing world.

## WHAT IS STEAM?

We have all heard of STEM, right? The new innovative acronym curriculum designed to meet Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics core subjects to engage children ages Kinder - High school to be competitive in technology development by bringing up generations of students who can excel in high-tech jobs. STEM needs to be incorporated as early as INFANTS! How do we do that? By adding an A for Art!

STEAM is STEM plus **A**rts as in humanities, language arts, dance, drama, music, visual arts, design, and new media! We encourage our children to express themselves creatively and incorporate the cross curricular collaboration of the four STEM core.

We use **S**cience by observing our environment, identifying objects, describing what they see, feel, hear, touch, and experimenting with new ideas and materials.

**T**echnology is not just the new iPads, video games, or state of the art interfaces. Technology can be described as advancing from one basic stage to a more advanced concept. Creating and progressing from one set of materials to the next to finally achieving the desired outcome.

**E**ngineering allows all children to build, design, make and construct their environments through play. They demonstrate this by active engagement, their discoveries visible in enthusiastic "aha" moments.

To foster **M**athematics, our children will use measurement, formulating, quantifying, and computing to understand how they came to their final product and how they can manipulate their findings to change their outcome.

As part of this curriculum, STEAM units or “monthly themes” will encourage all students to engage in their world of play and exploration. To monitor our progress, we gather information about each child’s developmental abilities and evaluate progress, so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom to deliver the best-individualized instruction for each child. Evaluations are communicated to families throughout the year.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL OBSERVATIONS**

LSA uses developmental observations. To coincide with curriculum-based assessment(s), we monitor each child's achievement of developmental milestones, share observations with families, and provide resource information as needed for further screenings, evaluations, and early intervention and treatment. The developmental screening process is a collaborative one, involving families and done in conjunction with the child's primary care provider and health, education, and early intervention consultants.

### **CARING FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

LSA believes that all children have the right to a safe and nurturing learning environment and accepts applications for children with special needs. We realize the benefits of supporting children with special needs and do our best to make appropriate accommodations where needed.

It may be necessary to turn down an application for enrollment or to terminate continued enrollment of a child with special needs when to do otherwise would jeopardize the safety and wellbeing of the child, the other children in the classroom and/or the staff. LSA can only provide services as are reasonable and beneficial to the class as a whole and do not cause undue burden to the program, staff and other children. Safety is always a top priority.

Communication is the key aspect to successfully support a child with special needs. The parents, teachers and specialists who work with the child with special needs are all equally involved in sharing information, communicating their needs and listening to each other.

A child with special needs should be assessed by an Early Intervention Team if the child is under 2.9 years, by the child's school system if he/she is older the 2.9 years, or other service provider. The evaluation will determine services which will benefit the child and the method by which the services will be provided. The Director will assist the parents with a referral if necessary.

At the initial meeting, the Director will meet with the parents/guardians to discuss the child's disability/special needs. The child's IEP/IFSP or other information will be discussed. With parental permission, specialists may be requested to attend. The Director, with parental consent, will identify in writing

the accommodations the center would have to make to meet the needs of the child, including:

- Change or modification in regular center activities
- Size of group and appropriate staff/child ratio
- Special equipment, materials, ramps or aids

If the accommodations cause undue burden, the Director must notify the parents in writing within 30 days. A copy of this notification will be kept on file.

If it is determined that LSA can accommodate the child, the parents, child and classroom teacher will meet to determine how and when the child will transition into the program if the child is new to the program. If the child has been enrolled, the staff and parents will discuss the new information. All records, screening/assessment information, IEP/IFSP, and observations will be placed in the child's folder and remain confidential. Parents may access their child's file at any time.

## OUR PROGRAMS

Programs	Age group	Max Group size	Teacher-Child Ratio
"Wanderers" Infants	2mos – 12mos	7	1:4
"Roamers 1" Waddlers	12mos – 29mos	10	1:7
"Roamers 2" Waddlers	12mos – 29mos	10	1:7
"Travelers 1" Toddlers	18mos – 36mos	10	1:7

"Travelers 2" Toddlers	18mos – 36mos	10	1:7
"Explorers" Preschool	2.5yrs – 4.3yrs	14	1:7
"Investigators" Pre-K	3.5yrs – 5yrs	20	1:10

### HOURS OF OPERATIONS

Our center hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30am-5:30pm.

Please note that staff may not always be available for walk-in meetings. If a meeting is desired, we will work with you to set an appointment that works for your schedule. Please feel free to contact us at 206.946.1926 or email us at [littlesteamersacademy@gmail.com](mailto:littlesteamersacademy@gmail.com).

### SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30 am – 8:30 am	Early Arrivals, Free Choice Activity
8:30 am – 9:00 am	Handwashing, Breakfast
9:00 am – 9:15 am	Clean Up, Diapering/Restroom, Handwashing
9:00 am – 9:15 am	Free Choice Activity
9:15 am – 9:30 am	Opening Circle Time, Music, Dance
9:30 am – 10:00 am	STEAM/Creative Curriculum Lesson
10:00 am-10:30 am	Story Time, Diapering, Hand washing
10:30 am – 11:00 am	Outside Play – Gross Motor Activity
11:00 am – 11:15 am	Diapering/Restroom, Handwashing
11:15 am – 11:45 am	Lunch
11:45 am – 2:00 pm	Clean up, Rest/Quiet Time
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	Diapering/Restroom, Handwashing

2:15 pm – 2:30 pm	PM Snack Handwashing
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Afternoon Activity - STEAM/ Creative Curriculum
3:00 pm - 3:30 pm	Free Choice
3:30 pm - 3:45 pm	Diapering/Restroom, Handwashing, Clean Up
3:45 pm - 4:30 pm	Outside Play – Gross Motor Activity
4:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Diapering/Restroom, Handwashing Free Choice Activity, Closing Circle
5:00 pm – 5:30 pm	Pick-ups, Quiet Activity

## HOLIDAYS & CLOSINGS

Childcare will not be provided on the following days:

*\* If a holiday falls on Saturday, we will close on Friday. If a holiday falls on Sunday, we will close on Monday.*

- New Year's Day, January 1
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Third Monday in January
- Presidents Day, Third Monday in February
- Memorial Day, Last Monday in May
- Juneteenth, June 19
- Independence Day, July 4
- Labor Day, First Monday in September
- Veterans Day, November 11
- Thanksgiving Thursday, the Fourth Thursday in November
- Native American Heritage Day, the Fourth Friday in November
- Winter Break, December 24 – December 31

Holiday closures do not affect your monthly childcare fee as agreed upon in the Fee Agreement and do not reduce your payment for the period in which they occur. No credit or reduction of rates will be given for these closures.

## ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT

### ADMISSIONS

LSA respects and values all families and children. Everyone is welcome at our school regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, language, creed, family composition, economic status or ability. We are seeking to build a school

community that is composed of families that are kind and committed to developmentally appropriate early childhood education.

We admit children on a first-come, first-served basis according to our admission priorities. If the applicable classroom is full at the time you apply, your child's name will be placed on a waiting list to fill vacancies as they occur. Open classroom slots are filled by first identifying all waiting children matching the age and attendance plan of the available slot and then applying the following admission priorities:

- Try to balance classrooms with girls and boys
- Serve siblings within families presently or recently enrolled
- Serve children of staff
- Serve new families in chronological order according to the date that the application is received

### **ENROLLMENT**

Before your child begins at Little STEAMers Academy an Orientation will be scheduled. The orientation is a chance for parents and staff to begin building a relationship, share information, review the Family Handbook and classroom schedule. We strive to make accommodations for all applicants. Children with special needs are always welcome.

*In some cases, specific equipment, training, additional staff, or specialists may be required in order to meet a student's needs and are at the parents' expense. The director may require a modified schedule.*

### **DUE UPON ENROLLMENT**

We require the following for enrollment:

*(Bring these items to your Orientation)*

- Annual **registration fee of \$200.00** (non-refundable)
- Completed enrollment packet including medical report and immunization record

***Continued enrollment of any student will be based on assessing the successful placement and supporting the needs of all the children in the class. The administration reserves the right to stop childcare services to any client at any time. If your child's enrollment is discontinued by the administration, you will be refunded the prorated balance of any paid tuition.***

## TUITION RATES & FEES

### TUITION

Tuition is due monthly, the month prior to care being provided. Invoices are sent out 10 days before the last day of each month when payment is due. Tuition payments can be made via mobile application, money order, or check.

### PROGRAM RATES – Effective 11/01/2023

PROGRAM	MONTHLY FEE
“Wanderers” Infants 2–12 months	\$2,600
“Roamers” Waddlers 12–23 months	\$2,350
“Travelers” Toddlers 18-35 months	\$2,350
“Explorers” Preschool 2.5 – 4 years	\$2,000
“Investigators” Pre-K 4 - 5 years	\$2,000

## FEES

### REGISTRATION FEES

The yearly registration fee is \$200.00 per child due upon enrollment. Continued enrollment will incur a \$200 per child yearly registration fee due the month of your yearly anniversary date.

### LATE TUITION FEES

Prompt payment is necessary to ensure proper day-to-day operations for our center. A late payment fee of \$35.00 will be applied to your account after the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. Care will be suspended after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month until payment is received.

### RETURNED CHECKS

Returned checks will incur a \$25.00 NSF FEE plus a \$35.00 LATE FEE will be assessed to our account. The acceptance of future checks will be at the discretion of the director.

### LATE PICK UP

There is a five-minute grace period for pick-ups after our center closes, after which an initial fee of \$5 will be charged to your account. Every additional minute after the first five minutes will be charged a \$2.00 per minute per child fee. Abusive use (more than once a month) of unscheduled overtime will be charged the rate of \$3.00 per minute and a family action plan will be discussed with the director. All overtime fees must be paid prior to the next day of care for your child.

### SPECIAL ACTIVITY

From time-to-time there will be additional fees associated with special activities. These fees are due prior to the event or activity. You will be informed of any activities two weeks prior to the date and will have the option to opt out however care may not be provided here at the center.

### HOLDING FEE

When LSA agrees to hold an opening, we give up the right to fill that position with another child who would be paying full tuition. For this reason, a non-refundable holding fee of 50% of the monthly tuition is required to save that opening. Holding Fees are available on a limited basis and only with prior approval from the Director.

### DAMAGE FEE

All materials have been hand selected for LSA and are carefully handpicked to be resilient and durable. However, misuse may cause permanent damage. You are responsible for any damage above and

beyond normal wear and tear, whether intentional or not, caused by your child while attending LSA.

### **VACATION**

Regular monthly tuition rates apply regardless of the number of days your child may be absent due to a scheduled vacation. This ensures that your child retains their enrollment spot.

### **TUITION CREDIT**

Credit may be applied for paid tuition if the center closes unexpectedly due to an emergency or any reason deemed appropriate by the administration. The amount of credit will be recorded on your monthly billing statement.

### **TUITION DISCOUNT**

Families with more than one child enrolled in the center receive a 10% discount for the oldest child.

### **SUBSIDY**

Parents who are receiving DSHS/WCCC childcare subsidy provided by the DCYF assistance must pay the full regular tuition rate until the authorizing paperwork is delivered to us for DCYF billing. Upon our receipt of payment, your account will be credited towards the following month. You are responsible to directly pay us your co-pay each month. Rates may vary according to disbursement. If subsidy billing lapses it is your responsibility to pay the full tuition amount until the DCYF notifies us otherwise.

### **REFUND POLICY**

Registration fees are non-refundable. Should your child's enrollment be discontinued within the first 14 days of the month, you may be eligible for a pro-rated refund based on the number of days your child was in care for the month. After 15 or more days of attending care, your monthly tuition is non-refundable. No refunds will be provided for absent sick days or vacation days.

*Fees will be re-evaluated annually and/or as the need arises. Please note that our fees are consistent with the standard rate-of-pay of most childcare providers and in general are quite competitive.*

## **FAMILY PARTNERSHIP**

Little STEAMers Academy parents play an especially significant role in our success. We believe that building partnerships with our families is a wonderful way to have a successful program because PEOPLE SUPPORT WHAT THEY HELP CREATE!

We pride ourselves on effective communication with parents. Our open-door policy means we encourage you to visit the center at any time and are always open to your suggestions or questions concerning your child's day.

You are welcome and encouraged to stop by anytime to visit or pick-up your child. This is YOUR childcare facility.

We offer many ways to communicate. Our staff is available daily to listen and discuss your concerns about your child's needs. Brief questions are welcomed and encouraged to strengthen the relationship of both the teacher and family. Longer discussions must be scheduled. Each day our teachers will give you a daily report to communicate your child's day. If for any reason your child's teacher is not available, you can share your comments or concerns with one of our directors.

We encourage parents to resolve classroom concerns with the teacher. These are to be scheduled by both the parent and teacher before or after the hours of care. These cannot be done during pick up / drop off times. If you are not satisfied with the response or need more clarification, please feel free to contact the Program Director. Communication is a vital part in the relationship we have with our families.

### **BRIGHTWHEEL**

Your child's records are located at a secure site on [mybrightwheel.com](https://mybrightwheel.com). All parents will receive an email notification inviting you to download the app and log in with your invitation we send you through your email. The best way to access this link is for you to download the application from your app store. Parents are encouraged to check their child's profile often to view tuition status, parent-teacher communication, and daily reports of your child(ren). Brightwheel is also used to track your child's attendance, immunizations, and your child's developmental learning experiences throughout their time at LSA. It is the parent's responsibility to check Brightwheel for their current tuition amount. Contact the office to receive your invitation if you have not received one. Inform the office if you need to be placed on our Parent Print-Out List.

### **FAMILY VISITS**

Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must sign-out upon leaving.

### **CONFERENCES**

Family & teacher conferences occur bi-annually. 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.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

People who dedicate time and energy at a childcare center have an opportunity to make a significant difference in the lives of children. This voluntary role requires demanding work, but it is rewarding for people who enjoy interacting with children and guiding them as they grow and learn. Volunteers usually perform a variety of duties as they help teachers. If you would like to take part in our volunteer program, please see the Director for an application.

### **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

As the parent/guardian of a child in our care, you have a right to access all areas of the childcare facility used by your child. We are delighted to have family members take part in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants\*.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times. Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not possible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

## STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Our childcare educators are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

Caregivers take part in orientation 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.

All staff must complete a department background check and provide documentation of TB testing or treatment, MMR and Covid-19 vaccination.

Role	Qualifications	Experience
<b>Lead Teacher</b>	High School Diploma WA ECE Short Certificate or equivalent - (20 credits) 30 hours Basic Childcare Training Infant/Child CPR & First Aid HIV/AIDS - Bloodborne Pathogens	2 years
<b>Assistant Teacher</b>	High School Diploma WA ECE Initial Certificate or equivalent – (12 credits) 30 hours Basic Childcare Training Infant/Child CPR & First Aid HIV/AIDS - Bloodborne Pathogens	1 year
<b>Center Aide</b>	High School Diploma	None Required

## **POLICIES**

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Unless we receive your written consent, information about your child will not be released with the exception of that required by the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) or other regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

Personal information that we gain and have access to as your childcare provider will be kept confidential. We will respect all families' right to privacy and staff will not copy or distribute children's medical records or developmental information until family consent has been obtained. Representatives of regulatory agencies do have access to children's files and family accounts during inspections and audits.

The exception to this policy is if there is reason to believe that a child's welfare is at risk. Little STEAMers Academy is obligated to share confidential information with agencies that may be able to intervene on the child's behalf. If a staff member is concerned that a child's welfare is at risk, they are obligated with the responsibility to follow the mandated reporting procedures.

### **WHAT TO BRING & LEAVE TO LSA**

#### **WHAT TO BRING TO LSA**

- 2 extra outfits including shirt, pants, underwear, and socks (all ages). These extra clothes should be changed as the seasons change and be replaced as needed. We ask that you label each item with your child's name.
- A week's supply of disposable diapers/pull-ups and wipes (if needed)
- Pacifier (if needed)
- 1 Blanket for rest time (all ages); LSA will wash blankets weekly
- 1 favorite snuggly stuffed toy for comfort/rest time (all ages); brought home on Fridays to be washed
- 1 pair of rubber rain boots for outdoor play in wet or slushy weather (all ages)

#### **WHAT TO LEAVE AT HOME**

- Children's toys, jewelry and personal belongings should be kept at home because they can create tension or feelings of jealousy, they may hurt or injure other children, they may be lost or broken, and teachers are not expected to monitor these items.

- If your child is finishing a meal prior to entering the building, please allow your child to finish eating completely before coming inside.
- No medications, lip balms, cough drops, etc. can be left with children, in cubbies, backpacks or diaper bags.
- No gum or candy.
- For safety reasons, flip-flops, open-toed sandals, cleats and high heels (except for dress-up use and approved by director) are prohibited.

## REST TIME

Children are provided a place and time for quiet rest each day. Each child has a personal crib or cot. Students may bring a light blanket and a snuggly soft toy to school for use at rest time. *Personal snuggle items and blankets are to be taken home every Friday for laundering and returned the following Monday Morning.*

Sleeping is encouraged but not forced. During the first part of rest time, children are expected to sit or lie down quietly on their cots. Quiet music and/or audio books are played while caregivers help children. After the first hour or so of rest time, non-sleeping children are given quiet activities such as books, drawing, manipulative toys, clay, watercolor paint, or sticker activities.

## ATTENDANCE CHANGES & WITHDRAWALS

A written notice, provided to the director at least 14 days in advance is needed should you wish to change your attendance plan or withdraw your child's enrollment in good standing. Tuition may be prorated when giving adequate notice, however paid tuition cannot be refunded for voluntary withdrawal. On or about your child's last day of attendance, you may be asked to complete a withdrawal questionnaire.

## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

To support optimal child development, our teachers use individual child development profiles to document learning progress for each preschool student. At periodic parent-teacher conferences, your child's learning progress will be reviewed with you. At the conference the teacher will show you samples of your child's creative work, go over their developmental progress, plus give you the opportunity to share and ask questions. The information shared at conferences helps families and teachers identify strengths and set learning goals for the classroom and at home. This process helps ensure that each child is challenged at his/her own individual level. Upon graduation or withdrawal your child's portfolios become property of your family. These records are a valuable keepsake and also support kindergarten transition.

Parent-teacher conferences can be held by means of an in-person meeting, phone call, or videoconference. Teachers and parents/guardians are expected to complete at least one face-to-face conference per year. These important meetings are usually offered as follows:

- January (For the period of September – December)
- May (For the period of January - April)
- September (For the period of May – August)

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO IMAGING

Children may be videotaped and photographed for the purpose of classroom display, memorabilia, documentation of behavior, portfolio development, and Little STEAMers Academy advertising. In addition, teachers and child development interns occasionally have assigned early childhood projects that involve observing and photographing/recording children. We utilize Facebook as a platform for social sharing and promoting our preschool community. At your written request we can avoid featuring cover images with your child as the primary focus, but we are not able to guarantee that your child will not be recorded or photographed.

## ILLNESS

Please send a message in Brightwheel by 7:30am if your child is going to be absent or tardy for any reason. If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness you will need to inform us immediately, so we can notify other families of their child's possible exposure.

Attending LSA with a mild cold is fine. However, if a child is observed to have symptoms of significant illness, they cannot be accepted at drop off time. If such symptoms develop during the day, a parent will be called to come pick up the child immediately. If you cannot be reached, we will notify the people you have designated as emergency contacts. Sick children must be picked up within 45 minutes of notification. We will try to make the child comfortable until you arrive.

Your child must be kept at home until he/she is clear of the following symptoms for a full 24-hour period (without medication) and they are well enough to participate in all parts of the class schedule:

- Fever at or above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Pain
- Seizure
- Persistent cough
- Heavy nasal discharge
- Inconsolable discomfort or lethargy
- Unusual rash, open blisters, or sores
- Eye Discharge
- Vomiting (1 episode)
- Diarrhea (2 episodes)
- Lice or nits

## MEDICATION

Medicines such as antibiotics and cold remedies (that should be recommended by your pediatrician or doctor) can usually be given at home. If your child needs any medication, all medications must have written signed consent and will be used until the date of expiration, doses filled, and/or symptoms have cleared. We must return a child's unused medication to that child's parent or guardian. If this is not possible, a provider must follow the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommendations for medication disposal. We will follow all the directions on the medication label and use appropriate cleaning and sanitizing medication-measuring devices. No medications, lip balms, cough drops, etc. can ever be left in a child's possession or in backpacks, diaper bags, or cubbies. A medication log will be kept at the center and documented when we administer any medication.

For **prescription medications**, we will only administer this medication to the child named on the prescription. Your doctor must prescribe these. These also must be accompanied with a medication authorization form that has the medical need and the possible side effects of the medication.

Prescription medications must be labeled with:

- Your Child's First and Last Name
- The date the prescription was filled
- The name and contact information of the prescribing health professional
- The expiration date, dosage amount, and length of time to give the medication; and
- Instructions for administration and storage.

**Non-prescription oral medications** must be brought to LSA by a parent or guardian in its original package. Non-prescription over-the-counter medication needs to be labeled with child's first and last name and accompanied with medication authorization form that has the expiration date, medical need, dosage amount, age, and length of time to give the medication. We will only administer this medication to the child named on the authorization form.

For **non-prescription medicine**, LSA must have a written authorization form with a prescriptive authority prior to administering items that do not include age, expiration date, dosage amount, and length of time to give the medication. These can include vitamins, herbal supplements, fluoride supplements, homeopathic or naturopathic medications and teething gels or tablets. Amber necklaces are prohibited as they are deemed a choking hazard.

For **nonmedical items**, a parent or guardian must annually authorize LSA to administer the following items: diaper ointments (will be used as needed and

returned when rash clears), sunscreen (used during our warmer months), lip balm or lotion, hand sanitizer or hand wipes with alcohol (which may only be used for children over 24 months old), and fluoride toothpaste for children two years or older.

### **CONDUCT FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS**

At LSA we expect our students to behave well and use manners. We expect that children will occasionally need coaching and extra attention from their teacher. As young children are learning how to express their feelings and share, we expect that sometimes there will be disagreements between children. We believe children's conduct should be guided so as not to cause harm to themselves or others. Children's conduct should not markedly disrupt classroom activities.

Our curriculum goals include helping children show care and concern for others, speak up for themselves, respond appropriately to teacher guidance, and participate cooperatively in a group setting. When children make mistakes our teachers model self-control and use gentle, verbal techniques to help children to regain calmness, take responsibility or make amends, as they are developmentally ready. Superhero play (Spiderman, Ironman, Batman, etc.) is fine if teachers observe the play to be safe. Make-believe fighting, wrestling, gun, and swordplay are themes that we will redirect toward other activities. Through coaching from teachers and participation in social-emotional activities, children are supported to learn to increase self-regulation and socially acceptable ways to realize their wants and needs.

Here are some of the strategies we use to prevent and minimize behavior problems:

- Build trusting and meaningful relationships with children and families
- Respond with sensitivity and affectionate interactions
- Speak to children calmly, model composure, self-regulation, and kindness
- Listen to children and respect their perspectives, validate children's desires and feelings
- Overlook minor misbehaviors such as stamping feet or needing a reminder to follow instructions
- Follow a predictable daily routine with well-organized transitions
- Offer songs, activities, books, conversations, and breathing exercises that teach self-regulation
- Arrange smaller groupings for some routines
- Remind children of rules, explain rules to children on their developmental level
- Organize classroom materials with labeling and a carefully planned room arrangement

- Give positive encouragement, attention, and praise for good behavior
- Present challenging activities
- Provide the children with natural and logical consequences to their behavior
- Set rules and limits, emphasize safety, and offer choices when conflicts occur
- Provide children time to cool down before discussing a conflict

As children mature, we encourage them to lead one another in following the rules of our LSA community and choosing safe behaviors. Children who are responsive to these techniques thrive at our learning center. It is of key importance that all the children in the classroom are safe and receive a supportive amount of teacher attention. At LSA, we like to focus on the positive interactions and redirection of distracting behaviors.

To protect and value the children, we do not spank, “pop,” shake, bite, push, pull, slap, jerk, squeeze or otherwise physically punish the children. We do not make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children. We do not shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur. We do not deny food or rest as punishment. We do not relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping. We do not leave children alone or without supervision, nor do we place children in locked rooms, boxes, or closets as punishment. We do not criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

Little STEAMers Academy believes it is the responsibility of families to set expectations for proper behavior in any learning environment and exercise family-based discipline at home. Families will need to leave work/class and promptly make themselves personally available to support their child as needed at the center to address any serious behavioral situations. It is our goal to help children and families work through social- emotional challenges displayed at the center.

We recognize that it is our teacher's role to communicate what we are seeing to our families and develop individualized strategies to support the child to act safely and appropriately at school. We will always take the child's age and developmental stage into account. As needed, we will coordinate behavioral conferences to discuss challenges and plan strategies collaboratively. We will also propose added outside resources for help. It is the director's role to help the teachers with parent communication, developing strategies, and accessing outside resources. It is also the director's role to limit the disorder caused by behaviors that disrupt or strain the classroom. Our staff will collaborate with families and other resource personnel toward correcting serious or problematic

behaviors for a period of up to six months. Descriptions of serious behaviors and the steps we use to work through them are detailed below.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

In compliance with WA childcare regulation, children are taken outdoors every day that weather permits. We encourage playing outdoors in snow, mud, and light rain. In mild temperatures, children may spend 1-2 or more hours outdoors daily. When there is a current weather advisory due to very hot or very cold weather, we will take a brief outdoor play period. On the rare days that air quality or temperatures are declared dangerous we will stay indoors. It is important that you dress your child appropriately for the weather. Please send coats, hats, and gloves in the winter. During warm months dress your child in light clothing and apply sunscreen before drop-off.

### **PROPER CLOTHING**

As children will be taken outdoors daily, they should wear shoes that strap/tie securely, cover and protect their toes year-round. Your child should enter the center wearing sneakers, closed-toed “explorer” sandals, or other rubber-soled shoes to stay safe.

Please remove all strings on coats and hoods, which can easily get caught on playground equipment.

Children should wear washable play clothes to the center, and everything should be labeled with the child’s name. Active learning can get wet and messy! We encourage creativity and exploration and do not scold children for being messy or rough on their clothing. LSA is not responsible for clothing or any other items that are lost, torn or stained during our care hours.

Being messy usually means that your child has been fully engaged with all their senses, worked with friends, created a work of art, or just had a fun time! If you will be taking your child from the center to an appointment for which you would like your child to be “dirt/sand/paint” free, we suggest that you bring a clean set of clothing with you, so you can change your child before departure. As always, if you have a question, suggestion or concern please feel free to discuss it with your child’s teacher.

### **COMMUNITY WALKS AND VISITS**

Our center recognizes the importance of children feeling safe and confident in their surrounding community. Weather permitting; children may go on walks supervised by staff in the surrounding area. Skyway Park may be a destination park for our Preschool, Pre-K, and school age students for their daily outdoor play times. Our Infants and young toddlers are transported in a buggy or stroller. Children may be taken to the Skyway Library for story time and may visit the Fire Fighters for a field trip, which are not part of our licensed premises.

## MEAL SERVICES

Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are included with paid tuition. We ask that parents be mindful of our mealtimes to help our daily routine flow smoothly.

MEAL SCHEDULE	BREAKFAST 8:30am- 9:00am	AM SNACK (Optional) 10:00am- 10:30am	LUNCH 11:30pm- 12:00pm	PM SNACK 2:15pm- 2:45pm
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### Sample Menu:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Breakfast</b> Fruit Smoothies Cheerios Milk	<b>Breakfast</b> Pumpkin Bread Raisins Milk	<b>Breakfast</b> Bagels w/cream cheese & fruit Milk	<b>Breakfast</b> Life Cereal Bananas Milk	<b>Breakfast</b> Cinnamon Raisin Bread Apple Slices Milk
<b>Lunch</b> Chicken Nuggets Taters Fruit Milk	<b>Lunch</b> Grilled Cheese Pickles Milk	<b>Lunch</b> Spaghetti Apple Slices Milk	<b>Lunch</b> Turkey & Cheese Sandwich Carrot & Celery Milk	<b>Lunch</b> Pizza Apple Slices Milk
<b>PM Snack</b> Pretzels Water	<b>PM Snack</b> Granola Bars Water	<b>PM Snack</b> String Cheese Water	<b>PM Snack</b> Veggie Sticks Water	<b>PM Snack</b> Cereal Mix Water

If you will not arrive at LSA in time for the start of breakfast, you must feed your child before bringing them into the center. Our Breakfast time is at 8:30 am sharp and will end at 9:00 am. Our center cut off time is 9:00 am. Once the food service cart has left your child's classroom, meal distribution has ended. In consideration of the class, children should always finish eating foods prior to entering the center. Partially eaten food should not be brought inside the center.

Our staff is trained in first aid and Infant/child CPR. Family style meals have been discontinued and teachers will eat meals separately from children. To reduce the spread of germs, meals and snacks will be prepared and served to the children on individual plates and sharing of food between children will be avoided.

## **INFANT & TODDLER CARE**

### **NURSE CARE CONSULTANT**

LSA keeps in communication and has scheduled monthly visits with our contracted nurse care consultant to support our teachers and the needs of our infants. Observations are conducted to ensure proper health practices are followed including, but not limited to cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting; observing and assessing behavior, development, and health status of individual infants in care; making recommendations to teachers or families for further assessment if appropriate. A copy of reports is available for review and any recommended follow up actions are addressed appropriately.

### **WHEELED BABY WALKERS**

The use of wheeled baby walkers is prohibited.

### **BOTTLE PREPARATION**

Parents are allowed to bring from home, filled bottles clearly labeled with the date and infant's first and last name for daily use. Bottles will be immediately refrigerated.

Bottles are cleaned using warm soapy water and a bottlebrush and sanitized. Sinks are cleaned and sanitized. Water is obtained in a separate sink from handwashing. Any cracked or damaged nipples or bottles will not be used.

Only glass or stainless-steel bottles, plastic bottles labeled with "1," "2," "4," or "5" on the bottle will be used. A plastic bottle must not contain the chemical bisphenol-A or phthalates.

Bottles will not be heated in a microwave. Bottles are warmed under running warm water, in a container of water, or in a bottle warmer.

Bottle nipples are covered if bottles are prepared ahead. Prepared bottles are stored in the refrigerator. Infants and toddlers are not allowed to share bottles or cups when in use and any contents not fully consumed within one hour will be discarded (partially consumed bottles are not put back into the refrigerator).

## **INFANT FORMULA**

Infant formula will be prepared according to manufacturer's directions and will not be served past the expiration date on the container.

## **INFANT AND TODDLER NUTRITION AND FEEDING**

Feeding plans are created and infants are fed when hungry and according to their nutritional and developmental needs, unless medically directed. Only breast milk or infant formula are fed to infants, unless the child's health care provider offers a written order stating otherwise. When an infant or toddler shows signs of fullness, they will stop being fed.

Infants or toddlers will not be propped with bottles or given a bottle or cup when lying down. When bottle feeding, the temperature of the bottle contents is tested to avoid scalding or burning the child's mouth. Infants and toddlers are held to make eye contact and communicate with them. Transitioning a child from a bottle to a cup is only initiated when developmentally appropriate.

Age-appropriate solid foods will be introduced no sooner than four months of age, based on an infant's ability to sit with support, hold his or her head steady, close his or her lips over a spoon, and show signs of hunger and being full, unless identified in written food plan pursuant to WAC [110-300-0190](#) or written medical approval.

Food, medication, or sweeteners will not be added to the contents of a bottle unless a health care provider gives written consent.

No juice or any sweetened beverages are served (for example, juice drinks, sports drinks, or tea) to infants less than twelve months old, unless a health care provider gives written consent.

Textures of food from strained, to mashed, to soft table foods will be introduced as a child's development and skills progress between six and twelve months of age. Soft foods offered to older infants are cut into pieces one-quarter inch or smaller to prevent choking; Older infants or toddlers are encouraged to self-feed soft foods.

Infants or toddlers who can sit up on their own are placed in high chairs or at an appropriate child-size table and chairs when feeding solid foods or liquids from a cup, and an early learning provider sits with and observes each child eating.

Food is not served to infants or toddlers using polystyrene foam (styrofoam) cups, bowls, or plates.

## **INFANT AND TODDLER SLEEP, REST AND EQUIPMENT**

Infants are provided a single level crib for sleep time and toddlers are provided a developmentally appropriate sleep mat. Infants and toddlers follow their own sleep patterns.

Cribs are arranged side by side and are placed end to end with a moisture resistant and easily cleanable solid barrier.

## **INFANT SAFE SLEEP PRACTICES**

All LSA staff are required to complete annual safe sleep training.

Safe infant sleep practices are followed when infants are napping or sleeping by following the current standard of American Academy of Pediatrics concerning safe sleep practices including SIDS/SUIDS risk reduction, these practices include:

- Actively supervising infants by visibly checking every fifteen minutes and being within sight and hearing range, including when an infant goes to sleep, is sleeping, or is waking up.
- Placing an infant to sleep on his or her back or following the current standard of American Academy of Pediatrics. If an infant turns over while sleeping, the provider must return the infant to his or her back until the infant is able to independently roll from back to front and front to back.
- Not using a sleep positioning device unless directed to do so by an infant's health care provider. The directive must be in writing and kept in the infant's file.
- Sufficiently lighting the room in which the infant is sleeping to observe skin color.
- Monitoring breathing patterns of an infant.
- Allowing infants to follow their own sleep patterns.
- Not allowing blankets, stuffed toys, pillows, crib bumpers, and similar items inside a crib, bassinet, or other equipment if occupied by a resting or sleeping infant.
- Not allowing a blanket or any other item to cover or drape over an occupied crib, bassinet, or other equipment where infants commonly sleep.
- Not allowing bedding or clothing to cover any portion of an infant's head or face while sleeping, and readjusting these items when necessary; and
- Preventing infants from getting too warm while sleeping, which may be exhibited by indicators that include, but are not limited to, sweating; flushed, pale, or hot and dry skin, warm to the touch; a

sudden rise in temperature; vomiting; refusing to drink, a depressed fontanelle; or irritability.

Notices of any safe sleep violations are posted for two weeks or until violations are corrected per WAC [110-300-0505](#); and families are notified within 5 business days with a letter describing the safe sleep violation.

## **INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

LSA supports all of our children's culture, language, and family.

An adequate supply of age and developmentally appropriate program materials and equipment is provided for our infants and toddlers. Materials and equipment meet individual, developmental, and cultural needs of children in our care, and are:

- Clean and washable or disposable;
- Nonpoisonous, free of toxins, and meet ASTM D-4236 labeling requirements for chronic health hazards;
- Large enough to prevent swallowing or choking;
- Safe and in good working condition;
- Child size;
- Accommodating to a range of abilities and special needs of enrolled children;
- Accessible for children to find, use, and return independently; and
- Removed from the early learning premises as soon as we are aware of any recalls by CPSC.

## **INFANT AND TODDLER DEVELOPMENT**

Infants and toddlers are exposed to a developmentally appropriate curriculum. A developmentally appropriate curriculum may include, but is not limited to:

- Developing infant and toddler language and communication by:
  - Talking and listening to children, encouraging soft infant sounds, naming objects, feelings, and desires, and describing actions;
  - Giving individual attention to children when needed;
  - Playing and reading with children;
  - Mirroring similar infant sounds and sharing a child's focus of attention;
  - Communicating throughout the day and during feeding, changing, and cuddle times; and
  - Providing materials and equipment that promote language development and communication such as soft books, interactive storybook reading, rhymes and songs, and finger puppets.
- Developing infant and toddler physical and cognitive abilities by:

- Allowing each infant actively supervised tummy time throughout the day when the infant is awake;
- Providing infants and toddlers freedom to explore and learn on their own on the floor;
- Providing infants and toddlers access to active outdoor playtime.

Sun safety precautions for infants younger than six months old is enforced by keeping them out of the direct sunlight and limiting sun exposure when ultraviolet rays are strongest (typically from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.).

Infants and toddlers are encouraged to play, crawl, pull up, and walk by using materials and equipment that promotes:

- Physical and cognitive activities, for example rattles, grasping and reaching toys, busy boxes, nesting cups, small push and pull toys, riding toys, balls, squeezable toys, books, dolls, press-together blocks, and limited use of equipment such as bouncers, swings, or boppies.
- Spatial and numeracy understanding, for example counting toys, soft blocks and toys with different sizes such as measuring cups or spoons, and toys with different shapes and colors to help introduce sorting and categorization.

Infant and toddler social and emotional abilities are developed by:

- Providing social contact with infants and toddlers in addition to time spent feeding, diapering and bathing by playing with children, naming and acknowledging emotions, and encouraging peer interaction;
- Immediately investigating cries or other signs of distress;
- Providing comfort to an upset or hurt child;
- Positively responding to a child's verbal and nonverbal cues;
- Intervening during negative peer interactions such as when a child grabs other children's toys, pulls hair, or bites;
- Providing physical stimulation through holding, cuddling, rocking, talking, singing, playing, carrying, and changing positions; and
- Providing materials and equipment that promote social and emotional activities such as pictures of children and adults exhibiting different emotions, pictures of infants and family members, dolls and soft toys, rattles, music, and dancing scarves.

## MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCES AND CELEBRATIONS

Each family has its own distinct beliefs and familiar culture. At LSA diversity among families is respected and celebrated. Enrolled families will be encouraged to share knowledge and celebration of their own culture/religion and experience many others as well. Children will be exposed to languages, cultural arts, and food from around the globe.

They will be invited to observe, and experience age-appropriate customs practiced by their diverse classmates and members of the community. A short blessing may be spoken at mealtime, and the name of religious figures may be mentioned. No child will ever be forced to actively participate. The purpose of this is that children are positively exposed to a broad awareness of diversity and develop diverse friendships; all while holding true and being proud of the beliefs of their own family.

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 world and the diversity of life upon it.

Please plan to spend some time with us sharing special activities, traditions, songs, foods, etc. to help us celebrate special times observed by your family, including birthdays. For health & safety reasons, latex balloons are not allowed. Healthy party treats are encouraged. Some recommended party treats are listed below:

- Traditional cultural foods and special family recipes prepared in our kitchen
- Pretzels with fun dips (yogurt or fruit dip with sprinkles)
- Mini-cupcakes or cake with light/whipped frosting
- Yogurt or pudding with fun toppings, squeezable yogurt
- Fun shaped cheese cubes and crackers
- Fruit kabobs
- Smoothies or ice cream
- Fruit popsicles or low-fat fudge popsicles
- Snack mix (Combine Goldfish crackers, mini marshmallows, colorful real fruit chews, & Cheerios)

## PROCEDURES

LSA is committed to each child's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all children have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in our LSA community.

Thoughtful direction and planning are used to prevent problems and encourage positive 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, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

## **DROP-OFF & PICK-UP**

### **GENERAL PROCEDURE**

Cut off time for dropping off your child is at 9:00 a.m. It is normal for children to be hesitant and sometimes even cry when dropping them off. Please be brief during drop off times out of courtesy to other families waiting; also, the longer you prolong the departure the harder it gets for your child. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is all you need to do. Our LSA directors and teachers are more than happy to help you with this process. Please also remember to be brief at pick up times.

Safety is important! Do not allow children to run in the parking lot or in/around the center. Each child must enter and leave the center with a parent present. For your child's safety, please do not allow your child to touch the exit door handles or open the doors and/or play yard gates.

Drop off and pick up times are busy and are not the best times to address issues that may require more in-depth time for discussion, we would like to be able to focus and dedicate our undivided attention to any concerns or issues. We encourage parents to resolve classroom matters directly with the teacher. If a situation that requires time and attention is concerning you, please schedule a meeting with your teacher outside of drop off and pick up times. If you are not satisfied with the response or need more clarification, please feel free to contact the Director and schedule an appointment. Communication is a key part in the relationship we have with our families.

Our center opens at 7:30 a.m. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in on our center tablet. Please ensure you digitally sign in & out and if your child is running late or absent, send a message through Brightwheel.

Our center closes at 5:30 p.m. Please plan enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time. Late pick up fees will apply should your child be picked up after closing.

All Roamers children must be signed in and out in the lobby. Once you have signed in/out your child, please continue to the Roamers classroom located at Suite #4.

## **AUTHORIZED & UNAUTHORIZED PICK-UP**

Your child will only be released to you or those listed in Brightwheel as Authorized Pick Ups. Emergency Contacts must also be given Authorized Pick-Up access. If you want a person who is not identified as an Authorized Pick-Up to pick-up your child, **you must let us know in advance**. Your child will not be released without prior authorization. The person picking up your child will have to show a photo ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

To safeguard your child, we will need copies of any court ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

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 Authorized Pick-Up contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child for up to 45 minutes. After 45 minutes, and repeated attempts to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and/or Authorized Pick-Up contact, we will call the local Child Protective Services (CPS) agency and 911. Please note that late pick up fees will apply (see Late Fee Policy for fee detail).

## **UNSAFE RELEASES**

We may refuse to release children to anyone we feel is believed unsafe. We make it our responsibility that if any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child, to protect your child, we will request that another adult listed as an Authorized pick-up come to pick up your child or we will call 911 to prevent potential harm to your child. Recurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program or a report of the actions as child endangerment to CPS.

## **WELLNESS**

Hand washing, cleaning, fresh air ventilation, and Disease Control Methods of Diapering are used to reduce the spread of germs. It is required by state policy that your child's hands be washed with liquid soap according to the posted hand washing procedure upon arrival and throughout the day. Classroom surfaces are sanitized and/or disinfected with bleach solution recommended by Seattle & King County Public Health. Washington State guidelines require that up-to-date immunization records be kept on file for each child. You will need to provide LSA with a new copy of your child's vaccines each time they are updated. As a preventive measure, we use non-toxic pest control services to treat our center and playgrounds in the spring, summer, and fall.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

To protect all children and staff, each child in our center has a completed and signed Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) on site. The official CIS form or a copy of both sides of that form is required. (Other forms/printouts are not accepted in place of the CIS form.) The CIS form is returned to parent/guardian when the child leaves the program.

The Director reviews immunization records quarterly until the child is fully immunized.

Children are required to have the following immunizations:

\*Important: It is your responsibility as parent or guardian, to maintain up-to-date immunizations and physicals for your child (ren). Updates must be reported to the center director in writing. The Washington Department of Health requires the following immunizations:

### Children Ages 2 Months through 3 Months

- 1 dose of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DPaT)
- 1 dose of polio vaccine
- 1 dose Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine (HIB)
- 1 dose of hepatitis B vaccine
- 1 dose pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)
- \*\*MMR and Varicella not given before 12 months of age

### Children Ages 4 Months through 5 Months

- 2 doses DPT2 doses polio vaccine
- 2 doses Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine
- 2 doses hepatitis B vaccine
- 2 doses pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)
- \*\*MMR and Varicella not given before 12 months of age

### Children Ages 6 Months through 18Months

- 3 doses DPT2 doses polio vaccine
- 2 doses Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine
- 2 doses hepatitis B vaccine
- 3 doses pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)

### Children Ages 19Months through 4 Years

- 4 doses diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DPT)
- 3 doses polio vaccine
- 4 doses pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)
- 3 doses hepatitis B Complete series, or
- 1 dose Haemophilus influenza type b(Hib)
- 1 dose measles, mumps, rubella vaccine
- 1 dose Varicella

Little Steamers Academy does not allow immunization exemptions for medical, religious, or personal/philosophical reasons.

Children who are not immunized may not be accepted for care during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease. This is for the protection of the unimmunized child and to reduce the spread of the disease. Public Health's Communicable Disease and Epidemiology division will make this determination.

## HANDWASHING

Liquid soap, warm water (between 85 degrees and 120 degrees F), and paper towels are available for staff and children at all sinks, at all times.

All staff wash hands with soap and water:

- Upon arrival at the site and when leaving at the end of the day
- Before and after handling foods, cooking activities, eating or serving food
- After toileting self or children
- Before, during (with wet wipe - this step only), and after diaper changing
- After handling or coming in contact with body fluids such as mucus, blood, saliva, or urine
- Before and after giving medication
- After attending to an ill child
- After smoking
- After being outdoors
- After feeding, cleaning, or touching pets/animals
- After giving first aid

**Children** are assisted or supervised in handwashing:

- Upon arrival at the site and when leaving at the end of the day
- Before and after meals and snacks or cooking activities (in hand-washing sink, not in food prep sink)
- After toileting or diapering
- After handling or coming in contact with body fluids such as mucus, blood, saliva or urine
- After outdoor play
- Before and after water table play

## HANDWASHING PROCEDURES

The following handwashing procedure is followed:

1. Turn on water and adjust temperature.
2. Wet hands and apply a liberal amount of liquid soap.
3. Rub hands in a wringing motion from wrists to fingertips for a period of not less than 20 seconds.
4. Rinse hands thoroughly.
5. Dry hands using an individual paper towel.
6. Use hand-drying towel to turn off water faucet(s) and open any door knob/latch before discarding.
7. Apply lotion, if desired, to protect the integrity of skin.

**Handwashing procedures are posted at each sink used for handwashing.**

## DIAPERING

Parents are to provide all diapering needs which include:

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Medication authorization for diaper cream/ointment/lotion

If your family participates in using cloth diapers, you are responsible for providing fresh clean cloth diapers, a sealable wet bag for spoiled diapers and wipes. AIOs (all-in-ones) or pre-stuffed pockets are generally easiest for clean up and are preferred but not required. We will not reuse covers for the cloth diaper. Each diaper change will require a fresh cloth diaper, liner, and any safe to use diaper cream.

Children are **never** left unattended on the diaper-changing table. Safety belts are not used on the diaper-changing table. *(They are neither washable nor safe.)* **The diaper changing table and area are used only for diapering.** Toys, pacifiers, papers, dishes, blankets, etc. are not placed on diapering surface or in the diapering area.

Diaper changing pads are replaced when they become worn or ripped. No tape is present on diaper changing pad. Diaper changing pads have a smooth, cleanable surface with no ridges, grooves or stitching.

The following diapering procedure is posted and followed at our center:

1. Wash Hands.
2. Gather necessary materials. If using bulk diaper ointment, put a dab of ointment on paper towel.

3. Put on disposable gloves, if desired.
4. Place child gently on table and remove diaper. *Do not leave child unattended.*
5. Dispose of diaper in hands-free container with cover (*foot pedal type*).
6. Clean the child's diaper (peri-anal) area from front to back, using a clean, damp wipe for each stroke.
7. Wash hands. If wearing gloves, remove gloves and wash hands. Please note: A wet wipe or damp paper towel may be used for this handwashing only. *Do not leave child unattended.*
8. If parent/guardian has completed a medication authorization for diaper cream/ointment/lotion, put on gloves and apply to area. (*Please refer to the Medication section.*) Remove gloves.
9. Put on clean diaper (and protective cover, if cloth diaper used). Dress child.
10. **Wash the child's hands** with soap and running water (or with a wet wipe for young infants).
11. Place child in a safe place. Do not touch toys, play equipment, etc. and return to the diaper area for step 12.
12. Clean diaper changing pad using the 3 Step Method (clean, rinse, disinfect)
13. **Wash Hands.**

*Please note: Even if gloves are used, all of the above handwashing must still be done.*

## STAND-UP DIAPERING FOR OLDER CHILDREN

We do stand-up diapering as appropriate and for those who are transitioning from diaper changing to potty training. Stand-up diaper changing takes place: in the bathroom or diapering area. Diaper changing procedure is posted in stand-up diaper changing area. Stand-up diaper changing procedure is as followed:

1. Wash hands.
2. Gather necessary supplies (diaper/pull-up/underpants, wipes, cleaner and disinfectant, paper towels, gloves, plastic bag).
3. Put on disposable gloves, if desired.
4. Coach children in pulling down pants and removing diaper/pull-up/underpants (and assist as needed).
5. Put soiled disposable diaper/pull-up in a covered, hands-free, plastic lined garbage can (or assist child in doing so).

6. Cloth diapers/underpants are put in a plastic bag and put into a covered hands-free, plastic lined container (individual for each child), then returned to the family at the end of the day.
7. Coach children in cleaning diaper area front to back using a clean, damp wipe for each stroke (and assist as needed).
8. Put soiled wipes in plastic bag (or assist child in doing so).
9. Remove gloves, if worn.
10. Wash hands (in sink or with wipe) and coach child in doing the same.
11. If a signed medication authorization indicates, apply topical cream/ointment/lotion using disposable gloves then remove gloves.
12. Coach children in putting on clean diaper/pull-up/underpants and clothing and washing hands (in bathroom/hand washing sink).
13. Close and put any bag of soiled clothing or underpants into child's cubby.
14. Use 3-step method on floor where change has occurred:
  - a. Clean with detergent and water.
  - b. Rinse with water.
  - c. *Disinfect* with bleach solution: refer to "Guidelines for Mixing Bleach" Allow the bleach solution to air dry or to remain on the surface for at least 2 minutes before drying with a paper towel.
15. Wash hands (in bathroom/hand-washing sink).

## POTTY TRAINING

After potty training has begun at home, LSA teachers will gladly collaborate with you to help your child gain this exciting new level of independence.

Some children show signs of readiness for potty training between 2 and 3 years of age, while others are ready before or after this age range. Signs of readiness include staying dry for at least 2 hours at a time, having regular bowel movements, being able to follow the simple instructions, being uncomfortable with dirty diapers and wanting them to be changed, asking to use the potty, or asking to wear regular underwear. You should also be able to tell when your child is about to urinate or have a bowel movement by their actions, facial expressions, posture, or by what he/she says.

Potty training begins at home and a long, uneventful weekend is a suitable time to start. During potty training, parents should bring disposable underpants (pull-ups) and 3 extra outfits to the center every day. Children should wear simple clothes that are easy to pull up and down. Cloth underwear can be worn at the

center when accidents have become infrequent. Our teachers will make every effort to take children who are potty training to the bathroom hourly. We do not scold, shame, or punish children for toileting accidents. We praise children's efforts and successes and let them take a safe active role in cleaning up after an accident.

### **TRANSITIONING TO A NEW CLASSROOM**

Children are initially placed in a classroom according to their age, development, and/or space availability. All our classrooms age ranges are within proper developmental stages and geared towards one-to-two-year age difference. We strive to fortify each classroom with interesting and challenging opportunities for an array of abilities. While we outline an age range for each of our classes, children may attend a classroom above or below the average chronological age for a given class for a variety of reasons. We aim to be responsive to each child's unique needs and respect children to move at their developmentally appropriate pace.

We embrace the saying "*Childhood is a journey, not a race.*" Individual children change classrooms based on observation of their developmental need for mental peers and challenging materials, situational circumstances, and space vacancy. Children may spend up to 24 months in a particular classroom. Please speak to the teacher and/or director if you have any concern about your child's classroom placement.

When parents and teachers agree that a child is ready, the child is then placed on the list of children waiting to move up into the next class. Some move-ups occur occasionally throughout the year when vacancies become available while most move-ups occur in the summer as our oldest students transition to the next classroom. Parents and caregivers work together to prepare a child for transition from one class to the next.

### **RECORDS AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER SCHOOLS**

As a support to parents our director will help you with documentation for verification of enrollment and records of childcare charges and payments. At your request, our staff will refer and recommend enrolled children to preschool-age programs that are outside the Seattle area and to any kindergarten-age school classroom. We will also collaborate with any student's parent, therapist, or special education team to transfer the student according to his/her exceptional developmental needs. Records and forms will be released if there is no administrative hold due to an account problem and we have your consent.

## **COMMUNICATION AND RESOLVING CONCERNS**

Please keep your child's teacher(s) up-to-date and informed about how things are going for your child and family. Communication is the key to our successful home-care partnership and your concerns and suggestions are welcomed.

Compliments, concerns, and complaints should first be brought to the attention of the teacher if it relates to a classroom matter. After the Director learns about a compliment, the teacher(s) involved will be individually recognized and honored for their outstanding success.

Please schedule an appointment to highlight a concern. This will give you enough time to discuss your issue and come up with a comprehensive plan of action with the teacher. A persistent classroom issue or any item that relates to a teacher or the center in general should be brought to the Director. If possible, the concern should be stated in writing. After the Director learns about a concern or suggestion, a mutually convenient appointment time will be set to discuss the matter and develop strategies/solutions. Concerns are discussed in a calm, thoughtful manner with open and direct communication. Discussion of emotionally charged situations will be postponed allowing everyone involved the ability to communicate calmly.

## **MINOR ALTERCATIONS**

When a quarrel appears among the children, we often use the following procedure:

- The teacher will calmly approach the situation.
- The teacher will encourage the children to discuss what happened.
- The teacher will restate the problem.
- The teacher will encourage and model to help students express their emotions and respect one another.
- The teacher will help the student(s) come up with a solution, their own solution if possible.

If the teacher sees that a quarrel has resulted in an injury, the situation will be documented in Brightwheel. An Incident Report will be completed for any injury requiring medical attention and will be reported to licensing. A Behavior Report will document any unusual emotional behavior or a serious act of aggression.

## **SERIOUS CHILD BEHAVIOR & CHILD IMPROPER CONDUCT**

If serious child behaviors become recurrent or improper, family direction should occur. The following procedures will be used as a guide:

In acute situations where child safety, extreme classroom disruptions, or Family Handbook policy violations are an issue, the director reserves the right to modify

a child's schedule or stop enrollment of any student/family at any time, to protect the safety and/or peaceful operation of the classroom or center. The first three months (90 days) of enrollment are a probationary period to assess the goodness-of-fit between the child, family, and the center. During this time participation may be stopped without documentation. A two-week notice will usually be given.

If a child is unable to regain control of their behavior after 20 continuous minutes of one-on-one behavioral support from a teacher or director, a parent may be contacted. If a child repeatedly acts out with periods of aggressive or oppositional behavior in a single school day, family will be contacted. When contacted, the family member must come to the center within 45 minutes of receiving the call and provide the child with one-on-one support to finish the day or take the child home.

When a serious or concerning behavior occurs, a teacher will complete a Behavior Report. A copy will be given to the family member the same day, or the next day and a copy will be kept on file. The report will be classified as either: **(A) Guidance Note, (B) Warning, or (C) Behavior Report**. The most concerning type of report is the Behavior Log. The accumulation of Behavior Logs, as explained below, may lead to discontinuation of enrollment. Examples of serious behaviors include, but are not limited to the following list:

At Little STEAMers Academy there can be absolutely NO:

- Causing injury to a person (cut, bruise, bite, swelling, etc.)
- Hitting, kicking, biting or another aggressive act toward a person
- Throwing or kicking objects in a destructive or dangerous manner
- Spitting on a person or using profanity
- Verbal insults or shunning targeted at another person that persists for more than a 3-day period
- Inappropriate behavior involving nudity or touching private parts
- Damaging, marring, or stealing school property or a person's property
- Rule breaking or risk-taking acts/behaviors which present a safety hazard
- Refusal to accept redirection/inability to regain self-control, for more than 20 continuous minutes
- Violent temper tantrum(s) lasting 20 minutes or more

The first time that one of the above behaviors occurs, in the event of a severe case we may have to restrain your child. Please see our Child Restraint policy below. A written warning will be documented. Each future occurrence of the same behavior will result in a written Behavior Log.

**When a child accumulates 3 Behavior Logs, a Behavioral Conference will be held (as soon as possible).** At least one family member, one teacher, and one

director must be present for a Behavioral Conference. The conference agenda will include discussing the child's strengths, interests, problem behavior, collaborative home-school strategies, and other resources to support the child.

Options for added support services include: an extra teacher to provide one-on-one support, behavioral consultation, developmental evaluation, therapy, specialist, etc. The cost of any added support services will be the responsibility of the family. The goal is to help the child reach zero Behavior Logs within a 90-day period starting from the 3rd Behavior Log (then the added support services may be tapered off).

Should a 4th Behavior Log be needed within the 90-days a conference with all participants will meet again to review the child's progress and discuss the continuation of the child in their program. Families should note that their child is at risk of losing their center enrollment if a 4<sup>th</sup> Behavior Log is needed. The continuation of a child in our program will be case by case and at the discretion of the Directors.

While it is not our desire to ever dismiss a child, it is not in the student's best interest to stay in an environment that is not meeting his/her needs, nor is it in the center's best interest to deny a class of children the best learning environment we can provide. The director will offer resources to help the family find a new setting. In case of a program dismissal due to documented behavioral issues there will be no refunds issued, unless decided otherwise by a director.

### **EXPULSION/TERMINATION**

A child may be expelled if he/she shows behavior that presents a serious safety concern for themselves or others; and he/she is not able to reduce or end the safety concern through reasonable modifications.

If a child is expelled, the expulsion policy will be reviewed with the family; a record will be provided to the family about the expulsion and the steps that were taken to avoid expulsion. The record will include the date, time, name of teacher(s) involved, and detail of each incident that led to expulsion. Community-based resources that may help the child will also be provided.

A report will be provided to the DCYF licensor when children are expelled. The information will include:

- Child demographic data including, but not limited to, the age, race, ethnicity, and gender of the child;
- The reason the child was expelled; and
- The resources that were provided to the parent or guardian of the child.

LSA may end the enrollment of a child if the child's needs cannot be met, the safety/care of other children is in jeopardy, and/or accommodations for the child cause undue burden to the Center. Parents will be notified of the reasons for termination and conditions for re-enrollment (if any), in writing, a minimum of one month prior to the termination date. However, if the reason for termination is serious, termination can be immediate.

Before the implementation of the termination of a child due to challenging behavior, the staff will take the following steps:

1. Meet with parents to discuss other options;
2. Provide referrals for evaluation and services;
3. Pursue consultation and training for the program;
4. Develop behavioral intervention plan at home and in program.

LSA reserves the right to end services to children and families for the following reasons:

- If tuition payment is not received on or before the 15th of the month;
  - Extraordinary circumstances, which make it impossible to keep payment current, should be discussed with the Director promptly.
- If a child's individual developmental needs cannot be met by the staff or within the daily program, then parents will be referred to appropriate services after each of the steps outlined in the referral policy have been taken. This would include conditions or behaviors which cannot be managed effectively by the staff, or which pose a potential threat to the safety and wellbeing of his/herself, the other children, or staff.
- If a parent or family member displays inappropriate behavior, either physically, verbally, or sexually, toward any staff member, child, or parent, then termination/referral procedures can be started.
- If a parent's child rearing philosophy or beliefs conflict with that of the Center, the Director will review the conflict and decide if the Center can accommodate the parent's request. If the parent's request is contrary to the Center's published philosophy and educational and care giving goals, then the parent will be notified, and termination procedures may be started.

Parents will be notified in writing at a face-to-face meeting when possible, including the reasons for termination. A copy of this letter will be kept in the child's record.

The Director will inform parents of the availability of information and referral for other childcare services. When a child's enrollment is terminated from the Center, whether initiated by the Center or the parents, the child's teacher will prepare the child and family for their departure in a manner that is professional, respectful, and developmentally appropriate with regards to the child's level of understanding.

## **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Physical restraint will only be used if a child's safety or the safety of others is threatened, and will be:

- Limited to holding a child as gently as possible to accomplish restraint;
- Limited to the minimum amount of time necessary to control the situation;
- Developmentally appropriate; and
- Only performed by early learning providers trained in a restraint technique pursuant to WAC [110-300-0106](#)(9).

No teacher may use bonds, ties, blankets, straps, car seats, highchairs, activity saucers, or heavy weights (including an adult sitting on a child) to physically restrain children.

All teachers and staff must remove him or herself from a situation if they sense a loss of their own self-control and concern for the child when using a restraint technique if another teacher is present.

If a teacher sees another teacher using inappropriate restraint techniques, the teacher must intervene.

The use of physical restraint is reported to the family as soon as possible, but no later than the release of the child at the end of the day, and to the DCYF licensor within twenty-four hours, pursuant to WAC [110-300-0475](#).

Any incident of physical restraint is assessed to determine if the decision to use physical restraint and its application were appropriate.

Documentation of the incident is kept in the child's file, including the date, time, teacher(s) involved, duration and what happened before, during and after the child was restrained.

A written plan is developed with input from the child's primary care or mental health provider and family, to address underlying issues and reduce the need for further physical restraint if:

- Physical restraint has been used more than once; and
- A plan is not already a part of the child's individual care plan.

We will notify the DCYF licensor when a written plan has been developed.

### **NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE**

Our center must be informed by contacting the program supervisor or director of any of the following changes:

- address and/or phone numbers, or e-mail address
- parent/guardian employment,
- health/immunizations up-dates, or;
- other pertinent information related to your child.

### **ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES**

Young children are naturally prone to injuries and accidents, and none will escape childhood without getting hurt. It is LSA's responsibility to provide supervision and a structurally safe environment. LSA is not responsible for medical expenses resulting from normal childhood incidents such as falls, bites, contagious illness, peer quarrels, temper tantrums, etc. First-aid supplies are kept in each classroom and in playground packs for staff to administer non-emergency first-aid. Parents are notified in Brightwheel to explain minor injuries observed during the day.

In an emergency, 911 will be called. There is staff on duty at all times that hold current CPR/AED First Aid Infant/Adult certification. In case of accident, injury, or sudden illness, proper first aid will be administered as needed and then the parent will be notified right away. In some situations, an administrator may provide transportation to a medical resource. LSA prepares Incident Reports for injuries that involve professional medical attention and parents are asked to sign this form. Incident Reports are sent to the licensor within two days.

### **MANDATED REPORTERS - CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

LSA maintains compliance with the state and local requirements for reporting suspicions of child abuse.

LSA Staff are mandated reporters and must report the following immediately:

Any instance when a staff member has reason to suspect the occurrence of any physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse or child neglect, child endangerment, or child exploitation.

It is everyone's legal responsibility to report suspicions of child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect. To learn more about child abuse visit <http://www.childwelfare.gov>.

### **SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS**

Please note that LSA is not a gluten-free or nut-free center. In cases of severe or multiple allergies we will need documentation from a medical professional as to what foods your child cannot have and allergic reaction protocols. If your child has food allergies or if you simply prefer, they eat something specific, you are responsible for providing approved substitutions to the planned menu. Food substitutions must be sent in on a routine basis. The food items you send in must meet the requirements of the meal pattern or a physician's written instructions.

Except for special celebrations, the following foods are not allowed in meals or snacks: potato chips, fast food, hot dogs, Lunchables, fruit juice, soda, PopTarts, cakes nor candy.

All containers and food/drink brought to school must be clearly labeled with 3 pieces of information: (1) child's name, (2) date, (3) meal type (breakfast/lunch/snack).

If your child has special dietary needs, we will accommodate them by establishing DAILY ROUTINE of:

- Providing vitamin fortified soy milk
- Serving lactose-free milk or organic milk (provided by parent/guardian)
- Serving another type of fluid milk (provided by parent/guardian, a doctor's note is required)
- Serving a complete meal/snack from home every day
- Substituting 1 approved item from home in place of 1 school-prepared item on a child's plate

### **WEATHER AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In case of acts of nature or an unexpected emergency, you will need to have a back-up childcare plan in place. While we do not anticipate difficulties, it is best to be prepared.

Inclement Weather: When bad weather is forecasted parents should watch the local news station. We encourage all families to follow the Renton School District school closures during inclement weather and emergency procedures. In the event of snowy or icy weather, the decision for a late start will usually be made before 7:30am. If snow begins falling during the school day with accumulation on the roadways, we may decide to close early so that families and staff can travel home before driving conditions become hazardous. If severe weather makes it unsafe to travel, access adequate staff coverage, food, or supplies, the

program may be closed for a full day or more. If a state of emergency is declared the period of school closure may be prolonged.

**Fire:** Fire drills are practiced monthly. In the event of a fire we will evacuate the building immediately and gather directly across the parking lot lining up alongside Holy Temple Evangelistic Center building.

**Tornado/Wind/Rain Storm:** When a warning is issued, we will go to our “shelter in place” areas away from the windows and outside walls. Children will be helped to crouch down and cover their heads.

**Power Failure:** Depending on the temperature, natural light, and time of day, LSA may need to close due to a power outage. If this occurs, parents will be called to pick up their children.

**Water Loss:** Due to Environmental Health rules, if running water is unavailable for more than 30 minutes, parents will be called to pick up their children.

**Evacuation:** In the event that we need to evacuate the building, staff will escort the children to our safe gathering site at Holy Temple Evangelistic Center building. Our secondary evacuation site is the Skyway fire station, located 2 buildings northeast of the facility. Parents will be phoned if an evacuation is necessary.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN**

If a teacher has questions about the possibility of a developmental delay, and/or there is a need to promote pro-social behavior, dental health, good vision, hearing acuity, etc. we may refer the child to be evaluated by professionals or a specialist outside our center. Families will have the opportunity to consider proposed support staff, resource agencies and/or services. Families will be notified before their child is evaluated or special services begin. Families are responsible for the cost of evaluation, support staff, resource services, special equipment and/or therapists. Health insurance sometimes covers all or part of such expenses.

Generally speaking, additional resources are an option for families and our teachers will encourage you to try services and/or equipment intended to provide additional support toward meeting your child's needs. However, if special equipment is necessary for basic safety or care, or a child has accumulated 8 or more Behavior Logs in a two-month period, the family must accept the referrals or employ similar services/equipment within 30 days of receiving the referral(s) in order for the child's enrollment to continue.

# HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT AGREEMENT

By signing below, I verify that I am the parent/guardian of

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_.

I verify that I have received a copy of Little STEAMers Academy Family Handbook. I understand and agree to all of the policies and procedures herein.

\_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Parent/Guardian Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Parent/Guardian Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

*Thank you for taking the time to read our Family Handbook! Your comments, concerns, questions and ideas are always welcomed.*

**Newly Enrolled Families:**

**Attach Copy of Parent/Guardian Driver's License**

**or WA issued identification card.**