



# Little Sprouts Preschool Parent Handbook

(863) 937-8420

926 South Tennessee Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803  
[www.littlesproutspreschool.net](http://www.littlesproutspreschool.net)



## Our Mission

Rooted in faith. Watered in knowledge. Grown in love.

Little Sprouts Preschool exists to teach young children about God's love, emphasize community, and create a safe and healthy environment for the whole child. Our commitment is to support each child's social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and linguistic development. Within an academically aligned teaching environment, children ages 8 weeks-5 years learn that they can have a deep relationship with Jesus Christ. Little Sprouts provides intimate academic and biblical instruction suited for each classroom. We use a faith-based curriculum and age-specific materials that stimulate education in each child. We believe that community involvement is essential to the development of children. Therefore, we have implemented monthly activities that will bring in artists, bakers, musicians, and many more to teach the children about the world around them. Our teachers are experienced and trained to educate in a loving and nurturing manner. Little Sprouts is an equal opportunity Early Learning Program that celebrates each child's diversity and culture.

## Admission

Enrollment for Little Sprouts Preschool will be open between January and June each year. During this time, we will accept new student applications. All student applications received during this open enrollment period will go onto a waiting list unless there are immediate openings. Priority will be given as follows:

- Children of Staff Members
- Siblings of current Little Sprouts students
- Children on waiting list

## Placement

In February of each year Little Sprouts Preschool will send a re-enrollment form home with children that are currently enrolled. On this form parents will indicate whether or not their child will attend for the summer program as well as for the new school year. The forms and registration fee are due by March 1<sup>st</sup> in order to save your spot for the new school year. If you decide after March 1<sup>st</sup> to remove your child for the summer, you are forfeiting the safety of your child's spot for the new school year and we may move onto our waiting list to fill the spot.



Children will move to the next age group classroom in August of each year. We believe that this makes the transition easier so that friends will be moved together to the next classroom. Due to summer scheduling or potential lower enrollment some children may be moved up to the next classroom at the beginning of the summer. Placement is based on scheduling and the ages of the children by the time the new school year begins.

## Curriculum

We are excited to be using Frog Street and Experience God curriculum in all classrooms!

FrogStreet is a comprehensive program destined to meet the needs of diverse learners. FrogStreet is organized around thematic units integrating literacy, math, science, social studies, social-emotional connections, STEAM, technology, assessment, and family engagement.

Experience God features a new bible story each month that includes story cards and daily activities. Children learn one memory verse each month and complete Christian art projects that correlate with the bible lesson.

## Calendar/Schedule

Our operating hours are from 7:00am until 5:30pm Monday through Friday. Please check our current school year calendar for school closures as dates may change each year. With the exception of full week closures (Thanksgiving and Christmas Break), tuition will still be due in it's entirety. This includes family vacations, sick days, etc.

## Tuition

Each year a \$100 non-refundable registration fee is due by March 1<sup>st</sup> or upon enrollment. Tuition is due on Monday of the current week. Tuition can be paid in the following forms: cash, check, Brightwheel debit/credit, or Brightwheel ACH transfer. Please note that if you choose to via Brightwheel, there is a 0.6% (with a minimum of \$0.25 and a maximum of \$2) transaction fee for ACH payments and a 2.95% transaction fee for Debit/Credit payments. If tuition is not paid by the following Monday, a late payment notice will be sent home stating that an additional 20% fee is due. If a late payment notice is sent home on more than two occasions, Little Sprouts Preschool will require automatic payments through Brightwheel for the remainder of your child's attendance. If you choose to withdraw your child, Little Sprouts Preschool requires a two week written notice.



\*Little Sprouts Preschool offers a 15% discount for the eldest child if both children are enrolled full time. If your family has more than 2 children, the discount is applied to both of the oldest children. Up to 2 children may receive the discount per family.

## Arrival and Departure

Arrival- Little Sprouts Preschool opens at 7:00am daily. From 7:00am-9:00am all parents must enter through the gate off of Charles Street. We ask all parents to have their child in class by 9:00am so that your child does not miss the start of curriculum or the lesson for the day. If your child has a doctors appointment or any other event that will cause them to arrive at school after 11:00am we will ask that your child stays home for the remainder of the day, as to not disturb the routine of the day. Upon arrival to the classroom, it is the parent's duty to sign in their child(ren) on the Brightwheel App using our tablet. If your child will be absent for the day, please call the office at (863) 937-8420 or send a message notifying your child's teacher by 9:00am.

Departure- The gate will re-open at 3:00pm for parents to pick up their children, please sign your child out using your 4-digit code on the tablet. If someone new is picking up your child in the afternoon, parents must notify the teacher and/or the owners. We will check ID's upon their arrival. If you arrive any time between 9:01am and 2:59pm you will enter through the front door off of Tennessee Avenue.

Late Pick Up- We close promptly at 5:30pm, parents/guardians will be charged \$1 per minute after 5:30pm, so please make sure you arrive on time! Continuous late pick up can result in removal of the child.

## Health

At Little Spouts Preschool, we do our best to maintain a clean and healthy facility and need your help to do so! In order to keep our staff and children healthy, your child may not attend school if:\*

- A fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, and may not return for 24 hours. The child must be fever free without medication in order for them to return.
- Vomited once in the past 24 hours
- An uncommon rash
- Diarrhea two or more times in a 24 hour period

\*If your child is sent home for any of the reasons above, they may not return to school for 24 hours. All families must still follow Little Sprouts attendance policy upon the



child's return. If a child is sent home after 11:00am on one day, they may not return until the opening on school on the second day.

**EXAMPLE:** Child is sent home at 1:00pm with a fever on Monday. This child may not return until the opening of school on Wednesday.

\*If you are called to pick up your child due to illness, the child must be picked up within 1 hour of the call time.

\*\*A child may not attend school with:

- Noticeable signs of Hand, Foot, and Mouth (may not return until ALL sores are completely invisible). Must remain out of school for 5 days after diagnosed.
- Pink Eye
- RSV
- Measles
- Lice
- Mumps
- Chicken Pox

\*\*If your child is sent home with any of the reasons above, a doctor's note will be required in order for them to return to school.

\*\*If your child is sent home with lice, the child may return after 24 hours after treatment and the combing of bugs. The child may only return if ALL live eggs and bugs are removed. A doctors note is not required upon returning to school.

PLEASE CONTACT THE SCHOOL IF:

-You or your child have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

-Your child is showing symptoms of COVID-19.

-Your child or a family member that lives with the child tests positive for COVID-19.

We will require your child to remain out of school for 10 days since the last encounter with a person or persons who have tested positive for COVID-19 OR the child must test negative and supply Little Sprouts with appropriate documentation.

## Records

It is required by Florida Law that all children in a childcare setting must be vaccinated or provide an exemption form. Little Sprouts Preschool expects all parents to provide up-to-date



immunization and physical records upon enrolling their child into preschool. Once we obtain the records, we will notify parents 1 month prior to the expiration date on the forms. Updated forms are due on/before the expiration date. If we do not receive the new forms by the expiration date, your child will be temporarily dismissed until we receive them. Tuition will continue to be collected during this temporary dismissal. Failure to provide updated forms will result in permanent dismissal from Little Sprouts Preschool.

\*We want to advise all families that there may be children enrolled in the preschool that have a medical/religious exemption form from the State of Florida and therefore may not be immunized according to the Department of Health guidelines.

## Medication

The staff at Little Sprouts Preschool will not dispense any medication to the children in our care. If your child needs to take medication, it is up to the parent to come and administer it to the child. Children may not bring medication to school to self-medicate. If medication is found in the possession of a child, the medication will be removed and stored in a locked office, the parent will then be notified.

For children with allergies who require an Epi-Pen, the following is required: The Epi-Pen must be in its original box with the child's name and expiration date on the box. A note from a doctor must be stored with the Epi-Pen.

## Emergency Plan

Little Sprouts Preschool conducts emergency drills each month. We are required by the Department of Children and Families to complete 10 fire drills, 1 lockdown, and 1 tornado drill each year. In doing so, the children and staff are well prepared to take cover in case of a real event.

Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. In the event of an emergency Evacuation-In the event of an emergency in which Little Sprouts Preschool must be evacuated, all staff and children will relocate to:

College Heights United Methodist Church  
942 South Boulevard  
Lakeland, FL 33803



Parents will be notified upon arrival to College Heights United Methodist Church by Brightwheel message. It is imperative that parents have Brightwheel notifications turned on at all times in case of emergency. Little Sprouts Preschool will follow the Polk County School Board for school closures due to hurricanes or natural disasters.

Pandemic- In the event of a Pandemic, Little Sprouts Preschool will set forth an additional illness policy that will include stricter and more specific guidelines regarding attendance of the children and staff. During a pandemic, parents will not be allowed to step inside the classroom and the children's temperatures will be taken each morning to ensure that they do not have a fever. If a child or staff member contracts a disease or virus relating to the pandemic, they will be required to follow the guidelines distributed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Little Sprouts Preschool will then contact these entities to notify in this order:

DCF

Local Health Department

DCF

\*The Pandemic Policy is at the discretion of Little Sprouts Preschool and is subject to change at any time without written notice.

## Events

Each month, Little Sprouts will host an event based on a holiday in the month or a community visitor! To expose children to the world around them, we will invite a local business or community oriented person to our school. These events will be listed on your child's monthly calendar and parents are always welcome to join in the fun! In the past we have had visits from the Winter Haven Police Department's K-9 Unit, a local author, the Easter bunny, the Lakeland Fire Department's fire engine, and many more!

## Food

Little Sprouts Preschool supplies snack twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Snack includes a fruit (apples, oranges, bananas) and a cracker (animal cracker, goldfish). It is the responsibility of the parents to provide lunch for their child. Lunch must be in a labeled lunchbox with the appropriate utensils for each meal. All lunches must be packed with ample nutritious items with limited "treats". Every lunchbox will be kept in a refrigerator until lunchtime. We also have microwaves available to classrooms if any items need to be heated up.

-ALL children must bring a cup full of water to school.



- We do not permit food that needs to be “cooked” from home. This includes but is not limited to frozen meals and “Easy Mac”.
- All food (including fruit and meat) must be cut into ½ inch pieces prior to bringing it to school.
- All cups, bottles, or water containers must have a straw or stopper in them. No open cups or bottles with full openings are permitted.

## Diapers and Potty Training

At Little Sprouts Preschool, we change diapers a minimum of four times daily for children over the age of one. The diapers of infant students are checked once an hour. It is required of the parents to provide the appropriate amount of diapers for your child on any given day. Teachers will notify parents when your child’s diaper supply is running low. All diapers and pull-ups MUST have Velcro strips on the side, please do not bring pull-ups that only slide up and down. If pull-ups without Velcro are brought in, they will be returned home. When your child is ready to begin potty training, please let your child’s teacher know that way we can work together to make this transition as smooth as possible! Please provide extra clothing during this time, as we expect the children to have accidents while they are learning.

Consent Form- If you desire for Little Sprouts staff to apply diaper cream or ointment, bug spray, or sunscreen we need the parent to fill out a consent form or provide a written letter of permission to place in your child’s file. This form will require you to indicate which you would like staff to apply, when, and how.

## Communication

Little Sprouts Preschool uses an app system called Brightwheel! This is an app that parents will download onto their phones in order to receive messages, pictures, and see what their child is learning about each day. Each teacher has a tablet in the classroom in which parents will sign their child in and out using a 4-digit code that is sent via Brightwheel upon enrollment. All friends or family members permitted to pick up your child will be added to your child’s profile within the app. This is our main source of communication between staff members and parents! If you need to contact in another way please use:

Office Phone- (863) 937-8420, Email- [brooke@littlesproutspreschool.net](mailto:brooke@littlesproutspreschool.net)

## Discipline Policy





We believe that it is our responsibility to provide children with positive guidance and to ensure that all children feel safe and loved. Our staff will handle each situation using the below procedures. If the behavior of a child continues after multiple attempts to correct, the teacher may speak with the parents to resolve the problem. If the behavior continues, a parent-teacher conference will occur and determine the next steps. We believe that with the below procedures implemented, that all children can succeed.

1. Encouraging the children to use their words in order to communicate clearly with the other children and adults. Teachers and staff will assist children in their attempts to settle their own disputes.
2. Redirecting children to a new area or toy when a problem arises.
3. Conducting a time out, separating the child from the group. One minute away for each year of age.
4. Speaking directly with the child on an individual basis about their behavior.
5. Parent awareness of disciplinary concerns (Incident Report).

## Expulsion Policy

Little Sprouts Preschool believes that any child can be successful at school! However, the staff at Little Sprouts Preschool has the right to remove or expel any child that:

- Demonstrates consistent destructive behavior
- Is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or him/herself
- Excessive biting (3 times or more in a one month period)
- Has ongoing verbal or physical abuse to staff or other children

The staff at Little Sprouts Preschool also has the right to expel a child whose parent:

- Does not provide proper and current paperwork
- Exhibits verbal abuse of staff
- Threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members
- Fails to pay
- Continuously pays late or only pays partially

## VPK

Little Sprouts Preschool is proud to offer Voluntary Pre-kindergarten to children who are 4 on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. This program consists of 540 instructional



hours. Our program begins promptly at 9:00am and ends at 12:00pm. VPK is free of charge to all parents. Wrap-around care will be available to all VPK students wishing to arrive earlier than 8:45am and/or stay later than 12:15pm. Please make sure to check the Little Sprouts Preschool calendar for VPK closures, as there will be days that VPK will not be in session, but the remainder of the school will.

\*Please be aware that our 3-year old classroom has a larger capacity/ratio than our VPK classroom. Therefore, our VPK class enrollment is limited.

Below is the attendance policy for the VPK program at Little Sprouts Preschool:

**Tardiness:** Arrival for the VPK program is between 8:45am and 9:00am. Upon arrival, the child's legal guardian will sign the child into the classroom. It is imperative that the children arrive on or before 9:00am to not miss any instruction. Children are expected to be in place and ready to start the day. A child may not be tardy (15 minutes or more) 3 times in one month. More than 3 late arrivals will result in termination from the Little Sprouts VPK program.

**Late Pick Up:** The VPK program ends at 12:00pm daily. A late fee of \$1 per minute will be assessed if your child is not picked up by 12:15pm.

**Absence:** Daily attendance is necessary for optimal learning. Little Sprouts Preschool will allow up to 3 non-consecutive absences per month. However, no more than 2 consecutive absences will be allowed. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, Little Sprouts must be provided a written note to document the child's absence for one of the following reasons:

- Illness or injury of the child or child's family member resulting in hospitalization
- Physician or dentist appointment
- Special education or related services for the child's disability

Please note: Absences of more than 3 consecutive days without a note will be considered an automatic withdrawal from the Little Sprouts Preschool VPK program. Withdrawals from the program will not be eligible for re-enrollment.

## Infant Care

We are thrilled to offer infant care to our Little Sprouts families! Our Lilies classroom cares for children starting at 8 weeks of age. For this classroom, the children will be sleeping in mini cribs on mini crib sheets provided by parents. Sleep sacks that do not constrict the child's arms are permitted. If you provide breast milk, you may bring frozen bags of milk or milk that is already in a bottle. If you provide formula, please pre-measure the powder and bottles prior to bringing your child to school. Once your child's bottle is prepared and offered, the bottle can only be given for up to 1 hour. When your child reaches 10 months old we will begin to implement the one year old schedule with them to ensure a smooth transition to the next classroom. We cannot accept opened



baby food jars, please keep all jars unopened or transfer baby food into a separate container. All food (including fruit and meat) needs to be cut prior to bringing it to school!

We are proud to be a Breastfeeding Friendly school! Our school has earned credentials from the Florida Breastfeeding Coalition. Our teachers have been trained in how to properly prepare and handle breast milk as well as care for breastfed infants. We are 1 of only 11 schools in all of Polk County to earn this credential!

## Nap Time

Each class conducts a two hour nap/rest time. Parents will provide a foldable plastic nap mat with a minimum of 1 inch thickness. Children are welcome to bring a blanket and SMALL pillow. Please do not bring a full sized pillow, as we store these items in the child's cubby.

## Clothing

The children at Little Sprouts will be exploring and learning through play every day! Please have your child wear play clothing with closed-back shoes. Each child will have two extra changes of clothes at all times in their cubby for potty accidents or major messes. Do not bring your child in clothing that you do not want dirtied.

- If your child cannot tie their own shoelaces, they are not to be worn at school. Shoes with Velcro straps are a great alternative.
- All dresses must be worn with shorts underneath.
- Rompers and overalls must have buttons if your child is in diapers/pull-ups. If your child is older, they must be able redress themselves and fasten the buckles without assistance.
- All shoes must have a secured/fastened strap across the ankle.
- Crocs are not permitted.

## Possessions

Please do not bring ANY toys with your child to school. The staff at Little Sprouts is not responsible for lost or broken toys. If you do bring a toy, it will be confiscated by



the child's teacher and be returned upon pickup that evening. We have plenty of toys for your child to learn and play with therefore we do not need extras!

\*All children, regardless of age are required to bring a FULL SIZE backpack.