



Parent Handbook

July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025

Please keep this handbook

For future reference!

Program Operations

Little Tree Playschool, 7275 Santa Teresa Blvd. San Jose, Ca 95139
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www.littletreeplayschool.org
(408) 972-9200

Little Tree Playschool is owned and operated by New Creation Church. The Program is licensed as a family child care program. Our program has served the greater South San Jose, Ca area since 2008. We are small, child focused center that believes children are capable, curious learners who must be free to learn for themselves and express their thoughts and ideas.

We have been certified by the State of California as a Child Care Center, License No. 434410620, since 2008.

We have a Preschool Program for ages 2 through 5 years of age.

Our current hours are: 7:00am until 5:00pm, Monday-Friday.

Field Trips

We do not offer Field Trips in our program.

Transportation

Transportation to and from our facility is the sole responsibility of the child's family. We do not provide any type of transportation at this time.

Hours of Operation

We are open from 7:00am until 5:00pm, Monday- Friday. Preschool program families will need to have their child here by 9AM every day. This helps with classroom management and child transition into the class.

We are open an average of fifty weeks each year. Our program follows the school year starting in August and ending May31st. We have a summer program that runs June 1- July 31st.

Our program has listed days off each year, which include, but are not limited to:

Labor Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving and the Friday following

Winter Holiday (2 weeks TBD)

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

President's Day

Good Friday

Monday after Easter

Memorial Day

4th of July

Our full calendar can be found in the office. A copy was also given with this handbook.

Our Philosophy

We believe that all children grow and develop at their own pace. While it is important to ensure children are ready for kindergarten and for life experiences, we also feel they should not be hurried through childhood. Our goal is to provide a safe learning environment where kids can simply be kids.

We feel play is an essential aspect of young children's lives...it is an important part of their well-being and development. During play, children can learn to communicate their thoughts, feelings and begin to learn the needs of others. We feel that by arranging our child care areas to offer challenging, interesting play and learning choices, at a range of developmental levels, children can learn important life skills.

Our philosophy is that children learn through their experiences, and that the child guides their learning. We choose curriculum activities based on where the child is leading us. We feel this is important to help each child succeed at his or her own level. We strive to use teachable moments with our children, whether that is helping them work through an emotion, or helping them learn to ride a tricycle. We strongly feel that developing their love for learning and exploration is every bit as important as their care and safety.

We believe social and self-help skills are essential for each child's development. We believe in truly listening and engaging in conversations with the children. This can provide numerous opportunities for the development of emotional, language and social skills as well as the enhancement of self-esteem. We strive to be sensitive to each child's social/emotional, intellectual and physical needs. We work to meet individual needs, as well as striving to meet their needs as a group. We believe given these experiences and opportunities, children will develop positive self-esteem and a love of learning that will follow them throughout their lives.

Parent Communication

We use Brightwheel as our primary communication tool. This has been an effective way of communicating with parents. This, of course, is not intended to replace verbal communication, but is used to enhance it, and make it easier when you need to send a quick note. We strive to be as available as possible to talk with parents each day. Sometimes, a classroom may be busy, and a teacher may not be available at that moment to talk, so please feel free to contact the teacher or the director through messaging on Brightwheel to schedule a time for a discussion.

We use Brightwheel to update families with pictures of what the children are doing throughout the day. This has been a fun way to show the child's family what is going on in the classroom and outdoors.

Signing In and Out Procedures

Children will need to be signed in and out on a daily basis using the Brightwheel app. Every authorized pick up person and parent will be issued a unique four-digit code that will be used to sign your child in at drop off and out at pick up. If you intend on having someone other than the usual person do drop-off or pick-up, please notify us through Brightwheel. This person will also need to be an approved pick-up person through Brightwheel. If the person has not dropped-off or picked-up the child before, we will need to see the persons photo ID to verify their identification.

Arrival and Departure Routine

Preschool children must be accompanied by a parent or other authorized adult. (Authorized adults must be listed on your child's Enrollment Form, and included in the Brightwheel information) all children are encouraged to take care of their own belongings.

ARRIVAL

- Have your child put their things in their cubby, take care of jacket, etc.
- Share any valuable information with staff (schedule changes, how the child is feeling, etc.)
- Say good-bye to mom/dad/authorized adult.
- Make sure to check-in using our Brightwheel app.

If your child is going to be arriving late or will be absent for the day, message us by 8:30AM so we can plan our day and won't be waiting for your child to arrive. If you are going to be detained at pick-up by more than half an hour OR after 5:00PM, please notify us so we can reassure your child and plan for staff to stay with your child. **Please note there is a \$1.00 per minute charge for pickups after 5PM.**

DEPARTURE

- Encourage your child to get ready to go home themselves as much as possible. This teaches them responsibility and prepares them for school (and life.)
- If your child is outside, they will not be allowed to leave the play yard until you sign them out using our Brightwheel app and have made contact with the teacher.
- If someone other than parent (guardian) will be picking them up, please notify us in advance. **The person will need to have photo ID if it is the first time they are picking up from the center.**

Orientation to our Program/Separation Anxiety

Starting in a new setting is an exciting experience for a young child, however it can also be a difficult one initially. Even children who are very excited about “starting school” may suddenly realize that you are not going to be there. The apprehension that accompanies that realization is a normal reaction. We would like to offer several suggestions to help your child with the adjustment process.

- Relax! Children will sense your apprehension; therefore, it is important that you feel comfortable with the routine. If you have questions or concerns, please ask us.
- Come and visit with your child before the first day of attendance.
- Learn the names of your child’s future play mates and the teachers who will be caring for them.
- Read books to your child about school, preschool, or childcare so they have an idea of what to expect.
- In their first days, use Brightwheel pictures/ updates as a conversation starter with your child. What do you think you would like to do there? What did you play with today? Did you like the ____? etc.
- Actively listen to your child as (s)he talks about their day. This will give insight to help the next day. If you know they like the blocks, that might be a great direction to get them thinking about the next morning.
- Establish a “goodbye routine” and even practice it at home when leaving your child with a grandparent or spouse who typically doesn’t drop off. Try for example a special phrase like see you later alligator, one hug and two kisses. Try not to get trapped in the “one more hug, kiss etc.” Kids are amazing at this game! Unfortunately, it usually just makes a tough goodbye, tough for an even longer period of time.
- Figure out what works best for your child. For most children a quick departure is best. It doesn’t prolong what they are dreading (you are leaving). Usually by the time parents have pulled out of the driveway, a crying child has stopped and is involved in playing.
- If you are wondering how they are doing, please message the teacher through Brightwheel to see how they are doing. We don’t want you spending the day worrying about them and totally understand how difficult this transition is on parents as well as children. The teacher will also post updates about how your child is doing throughout the day.

Health & Medication

Your child's health is important to all of us. Please inform us of any special health precautions, medications or other concerns you may have about your child. In accordance with state law, immunization records must be on file at the center on the first day of enrollment for all children. If you choose not to immunize your child, we must have a written record of this for our file. Please update records after each immunization.

Authorization for medical treatment must be completed and signed by a parent and be kept on file for each child enrolled in our program. Our emergency medical facility is typically Kaiser Hospital unless another facility is dictated by your insurance carrier, you, or the severity of the emergency. In case of emergency, we will call 911 and also make every effort to contact the child's parent. Children requiring emergency treatment may be transported by a teacher or EMS for minor injuries requiring immediate treatment.

Staff are trained in CPR, First Aid, and Basic Water Safety.

Illness: Parental cooperation is necessary to promote a healthy environment for all the children attending our program. Please do not send your child to the center if they show any signs of illness in the morning.

Parents need to have an alternative plan for illness of their child/children arranged in advance. When we call to inform you that your child is sick and needs to be picked up, we expect you or someone to pick up your child within 90 minutes.

Children should not return to the program until a full 24 hours after a fever has ceased (without the use of a fever reducer) and diarrhea or vomiting has stopped. In addition, children must be on medication for any communicable disease for 24 hours before returning to the center. I understand this is a hardship for working parents, but we must think of all the other working parents and the other children's health.

Medication: Staff will dispense either prescription or non-prescription medication under the following conditions:

- Medication is in the original container which is labeled with the child's name.
- An authorization to administer medication has been signed.

Please give all medications including cough drops to a staff member for storage and administration. You may choose to complete a form to authorize administration of non-prescription medication for minor occurrences (headaches, fevers, coughs, sore throats, etc.) For children in child care, I would recommend sending a fever reducer and cold medicine for minor symptoms that do not require removal from child care or so that your child may begin receiving relief before you are able to pick him or her up. Please label with your child's name. Medications are kept out of reach in a locked box.

Safety for your Child:

- No child will be released to any person not listed on the child's enrollment form without prior approval for the child's parents.
- When someone other than normal pick up people comes to pick up a child, prior permission from parent is required. The pickup person MUST have photo ID
- Playground and classroom equipment is cleaned and inspected regularly.
- Children and staff use proper hand washing procedures before and after each meal, toileting, diapering, etc.
- Child records are kept up to date and are located where all staff member can quickly access in case of emergency.
- Monthly fire drills are held at various times of the day using different exits. Fire extinguishers and wired/battery fire alarms are installed and inspected regularly.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors are located throughout the building.
- State Fire Marshal inspects premises annually.
- State licensing inspector visits the premises each year. This is an unannounced visit.
- Staff are mandated reporters of suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

Food Service

We serve well balanced meals and snacks. All food preparation is handled in accordance with accepted safety practices. We used mealtimes as a perfect opportunity to practice manners, such as please and thank you, not interrupting others when they are talking, chewing with mouths closed, not talking with food in their mouth and sitting at the table without getting up and down during the meal. We encourage each child to take a “no thank you bite” of each item served, although not required. Children learn about responsibility as they clean up their dishes and spills.

Each day children are served an AM snack and a PM snack. Due to recent USDA recommendations, we never will serve fruit juices of any kind.

Snacks: Snacks are served typically at 9:30 AM and 3:00 PM for the children. Snacks are simple and nourishing and include food such as fruit, milk, crackers, breads or muffins, etc.

WE ARE A PEANUT/NUT FREE FACILITY

NAPPING POLICY

All children will be given the opportunity to rest during the day. Children are not forced to go to sleep but, are required to be on their mats for the entirety of the napping period. Please see your child's classroom schedule for specific times and duration.

Parents are required to provide a small blanket, small pillow (if applicable), and crib size sheet. These are generally brought at the beginning of the week and taken home to be laundered at the end of the week by the family. If the bedding is forgotten, the child will be given a clean sheet from the center. Please make sure to launder this sheet and return to the center as soon as possible.

Social & Self-Help Goals

We feel social and self-help skills are as important as academics. Each program has different expectations for children, so we wanted to outline some of the goals and skills children in our program will be working on. We DO NOT expect your child to come in our program knowing how to meet these expectations. It is a growing and learning process. The goals we have for the children in our care are all in place for a reason. They may be for health and safety reasons or developing self-help skills they will need for kindergarten and beyond, or social skills they need to navigate through life.

General Manners and Expectations:

- Children will learn to say please and thank you regularly.
- Children will learn to say excuse me when appropriate.
- Children will learn to share and take turns as developmentally appropriate.
(Preschoolers will not be able to do this at all times – this is a goal to work towards.)
- We do not allow children to exclude anyone who wants to play with them, yet we also want to respect when a child prefers not to play. Developing a respect for autonomy, and the right for a person to say no to someone is important as well. (They can have alone time, but we try to eliminate the “I only want to play with _____”)
- Children are expected to help clean up the classroom at clean up times. We also encourage children to get in the habit of putting things away when they are done playing with it.
- Children are expected to use a gentle touch, we discourage rough play and pretend guns.

- Children are expected to be respectful of their teachers and other children.

Preschool Program – 2 through 5 years

Our preschool schedule has a flexible, full time, schedule intended to help meet the needs of the community. We offer a 5-day program, and 3-day program. We also offer a “buy a day option”, in which you can buy a Monday or a Friday to have a 4-day program. All of which are full days. Our teachers use weekly and monthly themes, designed to meet curriculum needs and to build upon the interests of the children. Activities are designed to have children learn and discover new things each day, and more importantly, develop a love of learning.

Curriculum Goals are based on the new Early Learning Guidelines which aligns with the California State Learning Standards.

Social Skills- (manners, kindness, playing cooperatively, taking turns, compassion, respect, handling emotions).

Self-help skills- (washing hands, brushing teeth, dressing self, handling bathroom needs, cleaning up toys, taking care of their possessions)

Gross Motors Skills- (climbing, running, hopping, jumping, balancing, catching and throwing balls)

Fine Motor skills- (puzzles, Lego’s, blocks, manipulative toys, lacing beads, drawing, coloring, writing, cutting, play dough.)

Math Skills (counting, patterns, simple addition and subtraction, one to one correspondence. We use a wide variety of manipulative activities and incorporate math during our daily activities and circle time.)

Literature-based Activities (circle time, stories, charts, finger plays, songs, beginning reading and writing skills and dictating their own stories).

Letter and Number Explorations (activities including letter books, fun tactile activities, games, and a rich print environment.)

Handwriting Without Tears (handwriting program teaches proper letter formation from the start, yet in fun, easy ways designed for preschoolers to develop good fine motor skills)

Science (hands on explorations about our environment, animals, and nature)

Social studies (learning about our community)

Art Media Discovery (a variety of painting techniques, markers, glue, scissors, collage materials, beads, stencils, rubbing plates, play dough)

What to Bring to School

Casual clothing is strongly recommended. Please dress your child in clothing that they can play in and can manage on their own. Your child will get dirty, please make sure that all clothing that your child wears you understand the risks of that. We like to encourage your child to be able to put their clothing on themselves. Please do not send your child with a belts, suspenders, overalls, or shoes with laces unless they can fasten and unfasten them by themselves.

Please provide several changes of clothing for your child. We will place them in their cubbies for times we may need them. Dirty clothing will be sent home to be washed.

All children should have the following items:

Two complete changes of clothing including shorts, long pants, t-shirt, long sleeved shirts, socks, underwear and sweatshirt/light jacket.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS MAY BE NEEDED

- Swimsuit and beach towel with an easily recognizable character or design. (Summer)
- We ask that each family bring 1 bottle of sunscreen that is SPF 50 for their child labeled with your child's name on the 1st day of June and a completed sunscreen form. (Summer)
- Security item, stuffed animal or doll if your child needs it.
- Diapers and wipes pull ups, training pants (when child is ready for potty training) along with several changes of clothes for toddlers. We recommend that you bring a full package of diapers, so you won't have to bring diapers back and forth each day along with 1 package of baby wipes. We will send you a notice in your child's cubby when we need more of either.

What to Wear

Remember your child's comfort for outdoor play:

Winter Season: Please dress your child properly for the weather at all times. We typically go outside when the weather is lightly raining and cold. **Please label ALL** clothing. Rainboots are also a fun option in our winter season.

Spring/Fall Season: Please bring shorts, pants, t-shirts, sweatshirts and jacket. Often a chilly day turns very warm or a warm day turns cold.

Toys and Personal Items

We please ask that you do not bring personal items from home for your child. However, there may be days in which their teacher may ask them to bring a toy for sharing during circle time.

Child Guidance Policy

Our child guidance policy is designed to help children become independent and caring by learning self-control, decision-making skills and responsibility for their own actions. We believe that children should be treated with the same respect that we, as adults, wish to be treated. Some of our goals are to help children develop a positive self-esteem, learn to respect themselves and others and to discover socially acceptable ways of expressing their needs and feelings. This is accomplished through positive guidance and loving discipline when necessary. We use the general discipline principles as described in the book Positive Discipline by Jane Nelson. This book provides great guidance principles for parents if you are interested in reinforcing the same program at home. In general, the child is reminded initially of what they should be doing, and given choices to fix the situation. If child still can't make a choice, there will be a choice selected for him/her. They will be reminded that they will be given more choices in the future. Also, in the event the behavior can be handled with a natural consequence, the situation will be handled in that way.)

Our staff uses other guidelines and techniques to help children develop self-discipline and reduce problems before they start:

- A learning environment that promotes consistent routines and well-defined expectations.
- Use of praise through kind words and actions (hugs, smiles) to reinforce desirable behaviors.
- Redirection to another activity when a child displays undesirable behaviors.
- If a child caused physical or emotional harm to others, the child will be removed from the situation for a brief time to calm down. This is place would be the classroom library or a comparable place.

- Time is provided to talk with the teacher about how the child is feeling and alternative, appropriate behaviors at a time when the child has calmed down.

Parent Contact/ Ground for Dismissal

Your child's teacher will give you updates on your child throughout the week using our Brightwheel app. Our teachers are always available to schedule an appointment to speak in depth about your child's individual development.

If your child shows ongoing aggressive behavior such as hitting, throwing objects, biting, etc. the teacher will update the Center Director. The Center Director, Teacher, and Parent will schedule a meeting to discuss ways to help the child minimize this behavior. After, two meetings with the parents, the Center Director may ask the family to leave as a result of behaviors that are putting other children at risk.

We believe the primary responsibility for raising young children rests with the parents; however, the staff strives to assist parents in the training and guidance of their children. We will provide parents with feedback about their children (both positive and negative, if necessary). If you desire help in dealing with a specific behavior or issue, please discuss it with us. Parent support is expected for any guidance techniques used by staff to resolve unwanted behaviors. Staff are not allowed to discipline a child using prohibited methods (Title 22 regulations, Section 101223.2)

Personal Rights

The licensee shall ensure that each child is accorded the following personal rights:

- To be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationships with staff and other persons.
- To be accorded safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations, furnishings and equipment to meet his/her needs.
- To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse or other actions of a punitive nature including but not limited to: interference with functions of daily living including eating, sleeping, and toileting; or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication, or aids to physical functioning.
- To be informed, and to have his/her authorized representative informed, by the licensee of the law regarding complaints including, but not limited to, information on confidentiality and the address and telephone number of the Department's complaint unit. (See Form Lic 613A)

Tuition and Fees

Tuition: Tuition is based on enrollment (a reserved slot), not attendance and payment will be expected whether or not the child is in attendance.

Registration Fee: A one-time \$100.00 registration fee per family is required upon enrollment of child. This fee covers preparations for your child's arrival, such as setting up a cubby, reviewing and entering records into computer files, and filing forms, as well as holding their spot for up to 30 days until the time care is scheduled to begin.

Payment is expected on the first day of each month. If you want to pay by credit card/debit card, there will be a processing fee of **\$50.00** added to each tuition payment that will counter charges we incur from credit card/debit card companies. All payments will be automatically debited on the 1st of each month through our third party billing company, Brightwheel. Instructions on how to set this up will be given to you prior to your child attendance at our center.

Current rates are listed in the contract which you will receive a copy of for your records after it has been signed by parents and child care provider.

Sibling Discounts: In order to financially help families who may not be eligible for subsidy programs, we offer a sibling discount of **10%** of from your oldest child's tuition rate. No discount is applicable if you are receiving some other form of subsidy through the state or work to help pay for your child care.

Rate Increase: There will be a rate increase each year in August, that is based on evaluating operating costs throughout the previous year. You will be notified with a 30-day notice prior to any increase.

Tuition: Tuition payment is due on the **first** day of the month. There will be a \$2 per day late fee. There is a returned payment fee of \$25.00 if your ACH is unable to be completed. If your credit card is unable to be charged, we will contact you for another form of payment which needs to be paid within 48 hours. Your child may not be able to receive care from our center if your payment becomes more than 2 weeks past due. Thank you for your understanding.

Current Tuition Rates

Cancellation/ Termination Policy

Our center requires a 30-day notice with regard to termination of the child care contract. You will be responsible to tuition up to 30 days in advance in the event that timely notice is not given. This notice needs to be in the form of a dated letter, state your intentions to terminate your contract, and signed and dated by the authorized parent/guardian. **We will not except emails, text, or messages via our Brightwheel communication app.**

Required Admission Forms

- **Personal Rights**
- **Parents Rights**
- **Child's Pre-admission health history parent's report**
- **Identification and Emergency Information**
- **Consent for medical treatment form**
- **Immunization requirement**
- **Physical Examination requirements/ TB test requirement**
- **Admission Agreement**
- **Needs and Services Plan (Infants, Toddlers, and special needs children)**

