



3 Rockhill St. Foxboro, MA
www.littlefootstepspreschool.com
(508) 838-4822
littlefootstepsfoxboro@gmail.com

Student Handbook
2016-17

Welcome to Little Footsteps Preschool

Please keep this handbook for your reference. It contains important information about Little Footsteps including our statement of services, philosophy, parents' rights, snack suggestions, rules and guidelines.

License 7.08(6)(m)

Little Footsteps Preschool is licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care. The regional office is found at 1 Washington St., Suite 20, Taunton, MA 02780 and the phone number is (508) 828-5025.

Staff 7.08(10)(a)

Nancy Kaeser	Director
Selena Cote	Assistant Teacher
Maureen Driscoll	Lead Teacher
Kathy Haapaoja	Lead Teacher
Diane Thies	Teacher
Pamela Winslow	Teacher
Sarah Hoyt, RN	Health Consultant

School Address

Little Footsteps Preschool
Bethany Congregational Church
3 Rockhill St.
Foxboro, MA 02035

Little Footsteps Preschool is located on the 3rd floor of the church's Family Life Wing.

School Phone, Email, and Website

(508) 838-4822 littlefootstepsfoxboro@gmail.com
www.littlefootstepspreschool.com

Emergency Numbers

Fire	911
Police	911
Ambulance	911
State Police (Foxboro)	(508) 543-8550
Caritas Norwood Hospital	(781) 769-4000
Poison Control Center	(800) 222-1222
Bethany Church office	(508) 543-5678
Department of Early Education and Care	(508) 828-5025

Referral Services

Foxboro Public Schools, Special Education	(508) 543-1645
Mansfield Public Schools, Special Education	(508) 261-7507
Norfolk Public Schools, Special Education	(508) 541-5478
Sharon Public Schools, Early Childhood Center	(781) 784-1594

Sharon Public Schools, Grades K- 5 Special Education (781) 784-1580
Early Intervention: Kennedy Donovan Center, Attleboro (508) 226-6035

Parent Information

Little Footsteps must provide to parents upon admission of their child: the program's written statement of purpose, including the program philosophy, goals and objectives and the characteristics of children served; information on the administrative organization of the program, including lines of authority and supervision; the program's behavior management policy; the program's plan for referring parents to appropriate social, mental health, education and medical services for children; the termination and suspension policy; a list of nutritious foods to be send for snacks; the program's policy and procedures for identifying and reporting suspected abuse or neglect; the procedures for emergency health care and the illness exclusion policy; the program's transportation plan; the procedure for administration of medication, and upon request, a copy of the complete health care policy; a copy of the fee schedule. All of this information is contained in this Parent Handbook.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Little Footsteps Preschool shall not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, creed, sex, or whether a child is toilet trained.

Table of Contents

<i>Statement of Purpose</i>	<i>Philosophy</i>	5
	<i>Goals and Objectives</i>	5
<i>Statement of Services</i>	<i>Characteristics of Children Served</i>	7
	<i>Registration</i>	7
	<i>Classes Offered</i>	7
	<i>School Year</i>	7
	<i>2016-2017 Calendar</i>	8
<i>Organizational Information</i>	<i>Operating Structure</i>	9
	<i>Tuition</i>	9
	<i>Absences</i>	9
	<i>Clothing</i>	9
	<i>Backpacks/school bags</i>	10
	<i>Nutritious Food List</i>	10
	<i>Birthdays</i>	10
	<i>Transportation</i>	11
<i>School Day</i>	<i>Three Year Old Class</i>	12
	<i>Four Year Old Class</i>	13
<i>Behavior Management Policy</i>		15
<i>Parents' Rights</i>	<i>Parent-Teacher Conferences & Progress Reports</i>	16
	<i>Enrollment Procedures</i>	16
	<i>Parent Visits</i>	17
	<i>Parent Input</i>	17
	<i>Children's Records</i>	17
	<i>Access to Your Child's Records</i>	17
	<i>Amending the Record</i>	17
	<i>Transfer of Records</i>	18
	<i>Research</i>	18
	<i>Photography</i>	18

Table of Contents (continued)

<i>Wellness</i>	<i>Health Care Policy</i>	19
	<i>Toothbrushing</i>	19
	<i>Toileting Procedure</i>	19
	<i>Injury Prevention</i>	19
	<i>Infection Control</i>	20
	<i>Procedures for Emergencies and Illness</i>	21
	<i>Care of Mildly Ill Children</i>	22
	<i>Managing Infectious Disease and</i>	
	<i>Illness Exclusion Policy</i>	23
	<i>Administration of Medication</i>	23
<i>Program Responsibilities</i>	<i>Referral Policy</i>	25
	<i>Providing Information to the Department</i>	25
	<i>Meeting Specific Health Care Needs</i>	25
	<i>Reporting Abuse or Neglect</i>	26
	<i>Notification of Injury</i>	27
	<i>Procedures to Avoid Termination and Suspension</i>	27
	<i>Child Guidance</i>	28
	<i>Availability of EEC Regulations</i>	29
	<i>Regulatory Compliance History</i>	30

Statement of Purpose 7.08(10)(a)

Mission Statement

Little Footsteps Preschool, a ministry of Bethany Congregational Church, is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, Christian environment for all children that encourages their spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth.

Little Footsteps Preschool is an inclusive program, respecting and accepting all children and families, and shall not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, creed, sex, or whether a child is toilet trained.

Philosophy

Our curriculum is flexible and child-centered, providing time for exploration and discovery, a balance of active and quiet time, small and large group interactions, individual play, and outdoor activities. Daily lesson plans include activities that foster development in the following areas: social, emotional, language, cognitive, physical, spiritual, and family. A key element of our program is the celebration of each child's God-given strengths. We give children many opportunities to be successful during their time with us, always focusing on their positive experiences and encouraging them to attempt more challenging tasks. We believe that parents are the most influential teachers that their children will ever have and strongly encourage parents to become active partners in Little Footsteps through a variety of parent involvement opportunities.

Goals/Objectives

Social

- ❑ Provide opportunities for children to plan, cooperate and carry out ideas together
- ❑ Help children develop leadership skills
- ❑ Provide settings where children can practice social skills
- ❑ Help children learn about their community

Emotional

- ❑ Provide an environment where children can develop a positive self-image; let children know how God views them: loved, valued, esteemed
- ❑ Model appropriate expression of feelings; provide opportunities for children to express their feelings appropriately
- ❑ Help children develop self-control
- ❑ Help children develop resiliency and perseverance
- ❑ Explore cultural, social and individual diversity while developing awareness, acceptance and appreciation of differences

Language

- ❑ Help children develop expressive and receptive language skills; listening and understanding, speaking and communicating

- ❑ Help children increase their vocabulary and use of age-appropriate patterns of language
- ❑ Help children verbalize their needs and feelings

Cognitive

- ❑ Provide an environment that promotes print awareness and concepts
- ❑ Help children develop an appreciation of books
- ❑ Provide opportunities to “write” and illustrate their ideas and thoughts
- ❑ Encourage problem solving, observation, and higher level thinking skills
- ❑ Introduce math and science concepts such as quantity, estimation, number sense, and predictions

Physical

- ❑ Provide opportunities for daily gross motor activities such as climbing, running, jumping, and skipping
- ❑ Provide opportunities for fine motor activities such as using scissors, drawing, coloring, painting, building
- ❑ Help children practice health/safety self-help skills

Spiritual

- ❑ Introduce children to the “basics” of Christianity: God is real, He knows and loves us, Jesus is God’s son and we can talk to God through prayer
- ❑ Model attributes of Christian living: prayer, worship, forgiveness, helping others, celebrating holidays in a way that emphasizes the religious over the secular
- ❑ Provide opportunities for children to grow in their faith

Family

- ❑ Provide opportunities for parents to be involved in their child’s Little Footsteps experience
- ❑ Support families in their spiritual growth
- ❑ Provide opportunities for parents to learn about their child’s developmental stages, and how best to support their child’s development

Statement of Services

Characteristics of Children Served

Children who are between the ages of 2.9 and 5 years old are eligible for admission to our program.

Registration

Prior to registration, the parents and student have the opportunity to meet with the director or a designee and to visit the classrooms. Please call the school to schedule a visit. All registrations are done through the director on a first-come, first-served basis.

Registrations are accepted from the public beginning the *third Friday in January*.

Parents of **current students** may register any day, **beginning January 2nd**. Parents of **Little Footsteps Preschool alumni** may register **beginning the *second Friday in January***.

During registration, you will meet with the director or a designee. A slot is reserved for your child upon receipt of your registration fee and admission form. However, enrollment is not complete until all required forms are submitted.

Classes Offered 7.08(6)(f)

First Steps Class	not offered 2016-17	
Preschool Class	Tuesday, Thursday	9:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
	<i>Students must be 3 years old by September 1st to attend</i>	
Pre-K Class	Monday, Wednesday, Friday	9:15 a.m. – 1 p.m.
	<i>Students must be 4 years old by September 1st to attend</i>	
Pre-K Plus Class	not offered 2016-17	
Preschool Plus Class	Wednesdays	9:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
	<i>Students must be enrolled in the Preschool class to attend</i>	

Cost:	Registration fee	\$60.00, non-refundable; due upon registration
	Preschool Class	\$225.00/month
	Pre-K Class	\$290.00/month
	Preschool Plus	\$110.00/month

Payments are due on the first of the month and must be paid by the 10th of the month to avoid a \$10.00 late fee. Please make checks payable to “Bethany Congregational Church.”

School Year 7.08(6)(f)

Little Footsteps is open from September through June. For the 2016-17 school year, school begins Monday, September 12th and concludes Friday, June 16th.

Children in the Pre-K Class will attend all together on their first day.

Children in the Preschool Class will attend one day during the first week of school. Half of the class will come on Tuesday and the other half on Thursday. You will be informed during your home visit which day your child will come for that first week.

Note: School will be canceled if the Foxboro Public Schools is closed due to snow. If Foxboro Public Schools has a delay, then Little Footsteps will be closed. The director reserves the right to cancel school even if Foxboro schools are open, if in her opinion, traveling to preschool would be dangerous for preschool families. Parents will be informed by email by 7 a.m. if Little Footsteps will be closed due to weather or other unforeseeable conditions and it will be posted on the website. Snow days are not made up.

2016-2017 Calendar 7.08(6)(f)

Sept . 12 - First Day of School 4's

Sept. 13 – First Day of School 3's (1/2 class)

Sept. 15 – First Day of School 3's (1/2 class)

Oct. 10 – No School, Columbus Day

Nov. 11 – No School, Veteran's Day

Nov. 23 – Nov. 25 – No School, Thanksgiving holiday

Dec. 23 – Jan. 2 – No School, Christmas vacation

Jan. 3 – School resumes

Jan. 16 – No School, Martin Luther King Day

Feb. 20 – 24 – No School, February vacation

Apr. 14 - No School, Good Friday

Apr. 17-21 – No School, April vacation

May 29 – No School, Memorial Day

June 15 – Last day of school, 3's

June 16 – Last day of school, 4's, Graduation Night for 4's

Organizational Information

Operating Structure 7.08(10)(a)

Little Footsteps Preschool is licensed by and comes under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. The teaching staff reports to the director. The school director reports to the church Elders.

The school director is responsible for the overall program and the day-to-day operation of Little Footsteps Preschool. If the director is absent, he/she will appoint a member of the teaching staff as interim director until his/her return.

If you have a concern or problem, please speak to your child's teacher first. If the issue is not resolved, please speak to the school director.

Tuition 7.08(6)(g)

Tuition is paid in ten (10) equal monthly installments, from September through June. Payment is due on the first of the month. Tuition is due even when your child is absent. If payment is not received by the tenth of the month, a ten dollar (\$10) late fee may be assessed. **Checks should be made out to Bethany Church;** they may be mailed to the school or placed in the tuition box. Returned checks will be subject to a \$20 fee. If you have any questions regarding your account, please contact the director.

A written 30 day notice of withdrawal is required.

Tuition cannot be prorated due to illness, vacation or other absences. Unpaid tuition may result in enrollment termination or suspension. Special circumstances should be discussed with the school director, and need the director's prior approval. A 5% tuition discount is applied when two siblings are enrolled at the same time.

Cost:	Registration fee	\$60.00, non-refundable; due upon registration
	Preschool (3's)	\$225.00/month
	Pre-K (4's)	\$290.00/month
	Preschool Plus	\$110.00/month

Absences

You are required to call the school anytime your child will be absent. If your child is home due to a contagious illness, please inform the school of this when you call (refer to the Wellness section of this handbook for more details).

Clothing

Our preschool is an active learning environment where children, run, climb, perform science experiments, and create works of art daily. We highly recommend that you dress your child in "play clothes" rather than "dress clothes." Comfortable, wash and wear clothes are best suited to preschool. In addition, sneakers or other rubber soled shoes are the best footwear for preschoolers. We are active each day, either in the gym or outside and sneakers provide the best support for children's feet. In warm weather, your child may prefer sandals, but we ask that you keep flip flops or very loose sandals for home. It

is difficult for children to be active – run, climb – while wearing flip flops and accidents can sometimes occur.

We will go outside each day, except during inclement weather. We ask that you send your child with all appropriate outerwear – boots, hats, mittens, coats, etc... Also, please label all of your child’s belongings; it makes it much easier to return lost items.

Backpacks/school bags

Please send your child to school each day with a backpack or school bag large enough to hold art projects and a change of clothes. The bag should have a handle so it can be hung on your child’s coat hook, and please label the bag.

Nutritious Food List

Little Footsteps strongly believes that healthy foods are a critical component of your child’s educational success. The following list of nutritious suggestions may be helpful as you prepare snack for your child.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Lowfat or skim milk (ex. plain, vanilla, strawberry or chocolate) | |
| Apple or orange slices | Trail mix (raisins, granola...) |
| Grapes, kiwi, or other fruit | Muffins |
| Yogurt | Cheese sticks |
| Cheese and crackers | Applesauce |
| Vegetables with lowfat dip | Bagels and cream cheese |
| Cheese sandwiches | Yogurt and fruit smoothies |
| Granola bars | Deli meat sandwiches |

We encourage parents to avoid sweets and treats. Chewing gum and soda are not allowed in class. If your child or any other student in the class has a food allergy, the appropriate adjustments will be made to insure the child’s health and safety at all snack and meal times. This may include prohibiting foods with the allergen from entering the class.

Birthdays

We celebrate child’s birthday on/near their actual birthday. You may choose to send in a special (non-food) treat for their birthday for the class. Examples include pencils, erasers, stickers...Summer birthdays will be celebrated in June. Your child is given a crown to wear and we will sing “Happy Birthday” during snack time. ***Due to food allergy safety, we will not celebrate birthdays with food.***

In order to avoid hurt feelings, we ask that you mail birthday invitations rather than hand them out at school. You will be given a school directory in September with classmates’ names and addresses to make this easier. We will not distribute invitations to parties (birthday or other events) unless there is an invitation for each member of the class.

Transportation 7.08(6)(e), 7.13(1)

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents/guardians. In the case of a medical emergency, an ambulance will provide transportation. If Little Footsteps has field trips, parent volunteers will be utilized to drive students when the field trip is not within walking distance. In this situation, parents will be required to sign a field trip form that will give permission for a specified parent to drive their child to and from the field trip site, on one specific day. Parent drivers will be required to submit a copy of their license, registration and proof of insurance. Teachers will not drive students at any time.

School Day

Preschool Class (3's)

Our school day follows a predictable routine:

- Discovery Time
- Circle Time
- Bathroom Break/Snack Time/Rest/Independent Reading
- Recess
- Story Time
- Discovery Time
- Music/Movement
- Recess (Gross Motor Development)
- Dismissal

Arrival – Parents are asked to walk their children into the building through the glass doors of the Family Life Wing and to proceed to the third floor. The classroom teacher will open the classroom door at 9:15, when parents can say good-bye to their children as the children come inside to start the day at Discovery Time.

Discovery Time – This is the “work” portion of the school day. During this time, students choose from a variety of areas for discovering and learning. The areas open may vary from week to week but include the following: reading, art, math/science, building, dramatic play, writing. During this time, there are opportunities for students to work independently and with teachers.

Circle Time – This whole group time emphasizes many important concepts for preschoolers, including: calendar, weather, counting, thematic instruction, job assignments, and prayer.

Bathroom Break/Snack Time – While children are able to use the bathroom at any time during the school day, this time is set aside for children to use the facilities if needed; all children wash their hands prior to eating snack. Each child brings a snack (a drink and one healthy food item) for himself/herself. During snack time the class sits together to share a meal and a prayer of thanks is said prior to eating. Food allergy restrictions must be adhered to, for the safety of all students; please speak to your child’s teacher if you are unclear as to any restrictions.

Rest/Independent Reading – During this time, children may rest quietly on the rug, looking at or reading books from the classroom library.

Story Time – Whole group reading happens daily as we read books related to our theme as well Bible stories. Parent readers also come in from time to time to share a story with the class.

Music/Movement – Each month we will learn new songs, poems and finger plays related to the theme. We incorporate instruments and movement into much of this fun time.

Recess (Gross Motor Development) – We go outdoors daily except during inclement weather for fresh air and exercise. Our play area is fenced in and contains grassy areas and a play structure. During rainy days or cold weather, we will use the gym for gross motor activities.

Dismissal – Children are dismissed one by one to their parent/guardian. Dismissal occurs from the playground (or gym, during inclement weather).

Pre-K Class (4's)

Our school day follows a predictable routine:

- Discovery Time
- Circle Time
- Bathroom Break/Snack Time/Rest/Independent Reading
- Recess (Gross Motor Development)
- Story Time
- Discovery Time
- Music/Movement
- Bathroom Break/Lunch
- Recess (Gross Motor Development)
- Dismissal

Arrival – Parents are asked to walk their children into the building through the glass doors of the Family Life Wing and to proceed to the third floor. The classroom teacher will open the classroom door at 9:15, when parents can say good-bye to their children as the children come inside to start the day at Discovery Time.

Discovery Time – This is the “work” portion of the school day. During this time, students choose from a variety of areas for discovering and learning. The areas open may vary from week to week but include the following: reading, art, math/science, building, dramatic play, writing. During this time, there are opportunities for students to work independently and with teachers.

Circle Time – This whole group time emphasizes many important concepts for preschoolers, including: calendar, weather, counting, thematic instruction, job assignments, and prayer.

Bathroom Break /Snack Time – While children are able to use the bathroom at any time during the school day, this time is set aside for children to use the facilities if needed; all children wash their hands prior to eating snack. Each child brings a snack (a drink and one healthy food item) for himself/herself. During snack time the class sits together to share a meal and a prayer of thanks is said prior to eating. Food allergy restrictions must

be adhered to, for the safety of all students; please speak to your child's teacher if you are unclear as to any restrictions.

Rest/Independent Reading – During this time, children may rest quietly on the rug, looking at or reading books from the classroom library.

Story Time – Whole group reading happens daily as we read books related to our theme as well Bible stories. Parent readers also come in from time to time to share a story with the class.

Bathroom Break/Lunch – While children are able to use the bathroom at any time during the school day, this time is set aside for children to use the facilities if needed; all children wash their hands prior to eating lunch. Students are responsible for bringing their own lunch from home each day. We encourage families to pack nutritious lunches, with a balance of protein, fruits/vegetables, and grains. Water is available, or students may bring a drink from home.

Music/Movement – Each month we will learn new songs, poems and finger plays related to the theme. We incorporate instruments and movement into much of this fun time.

Recess (Gross Motor Development) – We go outdoors twice daily except during inclement weather for fresh air and exercise. Our play area is fenced in and contains grassy areas and a play structure. During rainy days or cold weather, we will use the gym for gross motor activities.

Dismissal – Children are dismissed one by one to their parent/guardian. Dismissal occurs from the playground (or gym, during inclement weather).

Behavior Management Plan

7.08(6)(h) Little Footsteps uses behavior management that is positive, consistent, reasonable, and appropriate based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of the child. We encourage children to verbalize their feelings in appropriate ways through guided problem solving discussions. We use the following techniques: offering choices, redirection and turn taking. If further assistance is needed after trying these techniques, we will take the student aside to calm down and discuss the problem with the teacher individually.

The following practices are strictly prohibited and will never be used:

1. Spanking or other corporal punishment of children
2. Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, including any type of physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body, shaking, threats, or derogatory remarks
3. Depriving children of outdoor time, meals or snacks
4. Force feeding children or otherwise making them eat against their will or in any way using food as a consequence
5. Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or forcing a child to remain on the toilet or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting
6. Confining a child to any piece of equipment for an extended period of time in lieu of supervision
7. Excessive Time-Out. Time out may not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and must take place within an educator's view.

Parent Rights

Parent - Teacher Conferences and Progress Reports 7.08 (6)(b)

- A written progress report will be prepared in the fall and spring on the progress of each child in the program. Little Footsteps Preschool offers parents a conference to discuss the content of the report. A copy of the progress report will be given to the parent and a copy kept in the child's record. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher at any point during the year to schedule additional conferences to discuss any concerns or questions.
- Content: The progress report will be based on observations and documentation of the child's progress in a range of activities over time and may include samples of the child's work.
- The progress report will address the development and growth of the child including but not limited to the developmental domains of Cognitive, Social/Emotional, Language and Fine and Gross Motor and Life Skills. All educators, specialists and consultants working with the child in the program are offered an opportunity to contribute to the progress report of the child.

Enrollment Procedures

Enrollment Meeting. Little Footsteps Preschool provides an opportunity for and encourages parents to meet with the program administrator or his/her designee prior to admitting a child to the program in the following ways:

- **Home Visit** The lead teacher will conduct a "home visit" as the program's orientation for children and parents. Your child's teacher will contact you in August to arrange a home visit prior to school beginning. During the visit:
 - The teacher will read a story to your child, take your child's picture for use in the classroom (to label coat hooks and cubbies), and get to know you and your child through conversations.
 - Your child's teacher will collect any registration paperwork not previously submitted and will answer any questions you may have.
 - If your child is in a two day program, your teacher will tell you your child's first day of school.
 - The preschool teacher will seek information about each child's and family's interests and needs.
 - To support transitions and coordinate with services offered by other providers, the preschool teacher will request that parents share with them information about other therapeutic, educational, social and support services received by the child.
 - The preschool teacher will discuss each child's developmental history with his or her parents at the time of enrollment. The developmental history must be updated annually and maintained in the child's record.
 - Emergency/evacuation procedures for the program will be explained.

Parent Visits 7.08 (6)(a)

Parents are welcome to make unannounced visits to the school and their child's classroom.

Parent Input 7.08 (6)(a)

Parents are encouraged to make suggestions about the program. Suggestions may be made in written or verbal form and given directly to your child's teacher or the school director. At the end of the school year, parents will receive a questionnaire, asking for feedback and suggestions about the program.

Children's Records 7.08(6)(k)

Your child's permanent record is confidential. We will not distribute or release information in your child's record to anyone not directly involved in implementing the program for your child without your written consent. The director will notify you in writing if your child's record has been subpoenaed.

Access to Your Child's Record

As the parents, you have the right to access your child's record. Contact the school director to submit a request; you will have access to the record within two business days of making the request. Your child's entire record will be made available to you at that time. You are permitted to make copies of the contents for \$.05 per page. A written log will be maintained in your child's record to identify anyone who has accessed or received information out of the record. The log will include the following information: name, signature and position of the person releasing or distributing the information; the date; the portions of the record which were distributed or release; the purpose of such distribution or release; and the signature of the person to whom the information is distributed or release. This written log is only available to you, your child's teacher and the school director.

Amending the Record

As parents, you have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant materials to your child's record. You also have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information in your child's record. If you believe that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct the objectionable material in your child's record, you have the right to have a conference with the director to make your objection known. Within one week after the conference, the director will send you a written statement giving the reason for the decision. If the decision is in your favor, the director will take steps to put the decision immediately into effect.

Transfer of Records

When your child is no longer a student in our program, upon your written request, we will transfer your child's records to you, the parents, or any other person you identify.

Research

Little Footsteps Preschool will not conduct or participate in any research, experimentation, or unusual treatment programs.

Photography

Parents will receive a form to allow or deny photographs of their children to be taken at Little Footsteps Preschool.

Wellness

Health Care Policy

Copies of our health policies and procedures are located in the classrooms, the Director's office, and the parent handbook (abbreviated within this handbook). The complete health care policy is available to parents at any time; parents may request a copy from the director.

Toothbrushing

In accordance with state regulations, we will assist children who stay for lunch with brushing their teeth once during the school morning. Parents are required to provide a toothbrush for their child, which will be kept at school in a sanitary manner.

Toileting Procedure

Children may use the toilet at any time during the school day in addition to the bathroom break time. A staff member will supervise children when they leave the classroom to use the bathroom. We will encourage independence but will be available if the child needs help. The children will be taught to flush the toilet and wash their hands after using the bathroom.

We ask parents to bring in a change of clothes to be kept in their child's backpack in case of a bathroom accident or spill. In either case, we will help the children to change their clothes when necessary. The soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag labeled with the child's name and given to parents with an explanation.

Bathroom accidents will be handled gently with words of encouragement. Children will not be punished, scolded, or humiliated for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet at school. Frequent bathroom accidents will be reason for a parent/teacher conference, so that we can work together to create a plan to help the child with this developmental skill.

We recognize that learning to use the toilet is a developmental process and that no two children will learn this skill at the same time. As such, children who are using diapers or pull-ups are welcomed at Little Footsteps. Little Footsteps staff will change diapers/training pants as needed. Parents are asked to provide diapers and training pants. A separate changing station with disposable changing pads, gloves, wipes and separate covered trashcan will be maintained in a bathroom on the third floor.

Injury Prevention

The Director will evaluate the classroom and playground daily to ensure it is safe and free of hazards. Furniture and equipment will be inspected for protruding nuts and bolts, splinters, broken parts, etc. If safety hazards are found, the Director will either remove or fix the problem. Toxic or hazardous items such as medicines or cleaning fluids will only be stored in the classroom in a locked cabinet, drawer, or bag that is inaccessible to children. Little Footsteps is a non-smoking facility during school hours.

Proper supervision of children will go a long way in preventing most injuries that occur in the classroom or on the playground. At Little Footsteps children must be within sight and sound of a teacher at all times. Supervision means being alert and attentive to the children and the environment. This is especially true in the playground where children are climbing, running, etc. Whether in the classroom or playground, teachers need to position themselves so as to be able to observe all children at all times.

Teachers will also make sure children are not wearing anything that would promote injuries. Examples of clothing hazards are drawstrings on jackets and pants, dangling jewelry, big buckles, unlaced shoes, etc. Children need to be taught safe behaviors while learning and playing. This includes instruction on how to use equipment safely and only for the purpose for which it was designed. In the classroom, many children are injured when tipping their chairs backwards while seated at the table. They are also injured when struck with toys or other objects. When playing on the playground structure, children will be taught to use it correctly, e.g., no walking up slides.

Infection Control

Hand washing is the first line of defense against infectious disease. Unwashed or improperly washed hands are the primary carriers of infection. Little Footsteps staff members will protect themselves from infection by wearing medical grade gloves when appropriate and practicing compulsive hand washing. Vinyl gloves must be worn in any instances where there is a risk of exposure to blood or other body fluids.

Proper Hand Washing Technique

1. Use warm water.
2. Moisten hands with water then apply soap from dispenser
3. Wash well for 20 seconds, applying friction to all hand surfaces (front, back, between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, etc.).
4. Rinse well under running water for 30 seconds. Hold hands so that water runs from wrist to fingertips.
5. Dry hands with a paper towel.
6. Turn off the faucet with the paper towel.

All staff must wash hands:

- Upon arrival for the day
- Before eating or handling food
- After toileting
- After handling any body fluids (i.e. mucus, vomit, saliva, blood)
- After cleaning wounds
- After giving medication
- After cleaning duties

Children's hands spread infection just as efficiently as adult hands, and therefore, need to be washed often, especially at the following times:

- After each bathroom usage
- Before and after meals and snack times
- Before any classroom activity involving food
- Before and after water play
- After any activity involving handling of animals

Procedures for Emergencies and Illness 7.08(6)(d), 7.11(7)(f)

Procedures to Follow in Case of Illness, Injury or Emergency

All classroom staff is required to have CPR and first aid training. Emergency first aid procedures and the location of the first aid kit are posted in the classroom. When an illness or injury occurs a staff member will assess the severity of the situation and apply first aid as necessary. In the case of serious illness or emergency, paramedics (911) will be called and the parent/guardian will be contacted by phone. Parents will be reminded to make sure the information on their child's emergency contact card is always current, and to notify us immediately of any changes. An injury report will be completed for any incident that requires first aid or emergency care. Parents will receive a copy of this report within 3 business days of the incident, and the Department of Early Education and Care will receive one as required by regulations within three days. The teacher who administered the first aid will log the incident into Little Footsteps Injury Log.

Method of Transportation

If a child must be transported to a medical facility, they will be taken by ambulance to Norwood Hospital (in Norwood), accompanied by a staff member. In case of an emergency or serious illness during a field trip, paramedics (911) will be called and the child, if necessary, will be taken by ambulance to the nearest medical facility, accompanied by a staff member.

Notification of Parents

Staff will always notify parents of illnesses, injuries or emergencies. When a child receives minor first aid treatment, it is permissible for the staff to wait until pick up time to inform the parents. Staff should always use their best judgment as to the timing of informing parents; it is better to err on the side of caution and contact a parent immediately to inform them of a minor ailment rather than to wait until pick up time. In the case of more elaborate first aid treatment, injury, or an emergency, parents will be informed as soon as the treatment has been administered or the emergency personnel called.

Procedures When Parents Cannot Be Reached

In the event the parent cannot be immediately reached, the individual they identified on the child's emergency card will be contacted.

Care of Mildly Ill Children/List of Symptoms

When a child is mildly ill, but may remain in care, teachers should continue to monitor the child through observation, conversation, and as needed, temperature taking. If the child is able to play and participate in their normal manner, a teacher needs to only watch that this behavior continues or does not change, and to talk to the child about how s/he is feeling. Ask if the symptoms are worsening or staying the same. If the child begins to decline – to change the play behavior, to complain of symptoms, to cry or show other signs of distress, then the teacher should re-evaluate the child’s symptoms to determine if calling home is warranted.

If a child is mildly ill, but is feeling unwell and unable to play, the teacher will arrange a quiet corner of the room where the child can look at books or rest in a manner that is comfortable and safe. The teacher should continue to evaluate this child through observation and conversation to determine if going home is in the child’s best interest.

This list of symptoms is to serve as a guide to help teachers determine if a child should remain in preschool, or if s/he should go home. In each case, observing the child, and listening to what the child has to say about how s/he is feeling is extremely important, especially when the symptoms are mild. With mild symptoms, if the child is active and playing in his/her normal manner, remaining in school will often be the right decision.

- Mild Symptoms, in which children may remain in preschool care:
 - Cold symptoms including: runny nose with clear discharge, mild cough that does not interfere with breathing easily, sneezing
 - A low grade fever of less than 100 degrees
 - Mild stomach ache of no known cause (e.g., no diarrhea or vomiting)
 - Mild body aches or “growing pains” of no known cause (e.g., not the result of an injury at school)
- More Severe Symptoms, in which parents (or back up contact) must be notified to pick up the child
 - Cold symptoms that are severe or interfere with the child’s learning: e.g., a persistent, barking cough or a cough that takes a child’s breath away, nasal discharge that is green or otherwise unhealthy in color, excessive sneezing
 - A fever of 100 degrees or more
 - Vomiting or diarrhea
 - Stomach aches that cause moderate to severe cramping
 - Red, bloodshot eyes with a discharge
 - Any time in which the mild symptoms interfere with the child’s learning, contact the parent to assess together staying in school or going home

Managing Infectious Disease /Illness Exclusion Policy 7.08(6)(i)

For the protection of all children, our policy is that a child should be kept home from Little Footsteps on any day he/she shows any of the following symptoms:

- Cold symptoms that are severe or interfere with the child's learning: e.g., a persistent, barking cough or a cough that takes a child's breath away, nasal discharge that is green or otherwise unhealthy in color, excessive sneezing
- A fever of 100 degrees or more
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Stomach aches that cause moderate to severe cramping
- Red, bloodshot eyes with a discharge
- Any time in which the mild symptoms interfere with the child's learning/normal level of activity (e.g., lethargic)

If a child comes to school with any of these symptoms, the parent will be called to pick the child up. If a child becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated from the other students in the Director's office and the director or staff member will remain with the child until the parent picks him/her up.

When a child is confirmed ill with a communicable disease such as strep throat, conjunctivitis, head lice, etc. the Director will inform all school parents in writing. The ill child must meet the clinical definition of "no longer contagious" to return to school. Children receiving antibiotics for specific bacterial infections are not contagious after 24 hours of treatment.

Administration of Medication 7.08(6)(c), 7.11(2)(a)

Staff members will be trained annually to be authorized to administer medication.

A staff member will dispense medication with written parental permission, when the medication has been prescribed by a licensed health care practitioner. All medication, including but not limited to topical, oral, prescription or nonprescription, must be provided by the parent. This applies to both prescription and nonprescription ("over-the-counter") medication. All prescription medications must be in the containers in which they were originally dispensed and with their original labels affixed. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original manufacturer's packaging. All medications will be given according to the directions on the packaging, unless written orders from the child's health care practitioner authorize and state a change from the package's directions. Parents must provide written authorization by their child's health care practitioner for the school to administer any non-topical, non-prescription medication; this written authorization shall be valid for one year only. OTC medications, not prescribed by a health care practitioner or not accompanied by the health care practitioner's order indicating child's name, dosage, times/day information, will not be given. The only exception to this is sunscreen lotion that will be administered only with the parent's written authorization on file.

Any time a medication is given the teacher will record the date, time, name of the medication, dosage, method of administration, who administered the medication and sign

their name on the medication log. No teacher shall give the first dose of a medication to a child, unless under extraordinary circumstances, and with parental consent.

All medications kept in the classroom must be kept out of reach of children (on the top shelf of our overhead cabinets); medications the DEA has labeled as Schedules III through V shall be kept locked at all times unless being accessed by an authorized person. Emergency medications shall be kept immediately accessible to adults. Medicine that needs refrigeration will be kept in the school's refrigerator located in room 305, in a way inaccessible to children. The refrigerator temperature shall be maintained between 38 and 42 degrees Fahrenheit.

Unused, outdated, or discontinued medication shall be returned to the parents, and a note will be made in the log to indicate it was returned.

Program Responsibilities

Referral Policy 7.04 (17)(h)

Little Footsteps Preschool is committed to nurturing the well-being of every child enrolled in the program. Each child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development will be continually monitored. The following procedure will be used for making referrals, when necessary:

1. When the staff notices a child having difficulties or developmental delays, they will record their observations.
2. When the staff determines that the difficulties are consistent over an extended period of time, they will inform the Director. The Director will observe the child.
3. The Director and/or lead teacher will request a conference with the child's parents.
4. At the conference, the parents will be given a complete written summary of the staff's observations, the strategies that have been used to accommodate the child's needs, and the reason for recommending a referral.
5. Signed documentation of the parent conference will be kept on file in the preschool office.
6. Written permission from the parent will be required for all referrals.
7. The Director/lead teacher will contact the appropriate administrator of special education on behalf of the parents through written notice; however, the parents will have the option of directly contacting the appropriate professionals. (A list of area public school special education office phone numbers is on page one of this handbook, along with the number of the Foxboro Kennedy-Donovan Early Intervention Center.)
8. The Director/lead teacher will follow up with the parents to offer support and consistency in managing the child's difficulties.
9. All information pertaining to the child's referral will be kept confidentially in the child's records at the preschool.

Providing Information to the Department

Little Footsteps must make available any information requested by the Department to determine compliance with any Department regulations governing the program, by providing access to its facilities, records, staff, and references.

Meeting Specific Health Care Needs

If a parent or guardian informs Little Footsteps staff of a long-term or chronic health problem or concern, staff will request that the parent complete an Individual Health Care Plan. The information reported on this form will be used to alert and educate staff regarding any medical concerns or allergies, and appropriate actions to be taken. The parent, the child's licensed health care practitioner and child's teachers sign the Medical Alert form, and a copy is given to the parent, posted in the classroom (under cover to maintain confidentiality, but easily visible to all staff), and filed in the child's record. All children's medical record/information provided to the staff will be kept confidential.

Little Footsteps families provide a snack for their child's class on a rotation basis. They are provided a list of nutritious suggestions in the Parent Handbook. The four year old class has lunch each day, and students bring their own lunch from home. If a child becomes enrolled with an allergy to a food or substance, we will make the appropriate accommodations to ensure that child's safety, up to and including banning the food/substance from the classroom if indicated.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect

Any abuse or neglect of children while in the care of Little Footsteps is strictly prohibited. Little Footsteps and its staff will operate the program in such a way that all children are protected from abuse and neglect.

All Little Footsteps staff are mandated reporters. When any staff member feels there is reason to believe that a child has been/is being abused or neglected, they are required to report their suspicions to DCF (formerly known as DSS) and to the EEC. The DCF Child-At-Risk Hotline can be called any time day or night: 1-800-792-5200. The telephone number for the DCF office in our county (Norfolk County) is 781-682-0800 (So. Weymouth). The phone number of the Taunton office of the EEC is (508) 828-5235. Any calls to DCF will be documented in a DCF Reporting File, while observations that cannot be determined to be definite signs of abuse/neglect will be documented and kept in an Observations File in order to check for repeating patterns. The first-hand observer will report their findings to the Director of Little Footsteps. Massachusetts state law requires that the first-hand observer to immediately report allegations of serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse/neglect to DCF orally. The written report, Form 51A, must be completed within 48 hours of making the phone call. DCF will determine how the case will be handled, and maintains strict confidentiality regarding the identity of the observer/reporter.

Signs of abuse and neglect may include, but are not limited to bruising, burns, non-healing injuries. Staff will ask open-ended questions of the child, being careful not to lead the child in his/her responses. If sexual touching is indicated by the child's responses, the local DCF office will be called. Written information provided by DCF on how to recognize signs of abuse/neglect will be included in staff orientation materials and subsequent trainings.

If a 51A report is filed, or if the preschool learns one was filed, alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of Little Footsteps, the EEC will be notified immediately. The staff member will be suspended without pay until such time as DCF and the Department of Early Education and Care have concluded an investigation into the allegation. At that time, in accord with the findings of the investigation, the staff member's employment at Little Footsteps will either be reinstated or terminated.

Educators are responsible for abuse and neglect if: (1) the educator admits to causing the abuse or neglect, or (2) the educator is convicted of the abuse or neglect in a criminal proceeding, or (3) the Department of Early Education and Care determines, based upon its own investigation or an investigation conducted by the Department of Children and

Families subsequent to a report filed under M.G.L. c. 119, §§ 51A and 51B, that there is reasonable cause to believe that the educator or any other person caused the abuse or neglect while children were in care.

The EEC will be notified immediately if Little Footsteps learns that someone regularly on the school/church's premises has had a 51A report filed against them, alleging abuse or neglect of a child.

Notification of Injury

Staff will always notify parents of illnesses, injuries or emergencies. When a child receives minor first aid treatment, it is permissible for the staff to wait until pick up time to inform the parents. Staff should always use their best judgment as to the timing of informing parents; it is better to err on the side of caution and contact a parent immediately to inform them of a minor ailment rather than to wait until pick up time. In the case of more elaborate first aid treatment, injury, or an emergency, parents will be informed as soon as the treatment has been administered or the emergency personnel called.

Procedures to Avoid Termination and Suspension 7.08(10)(b)

It is the goal of the preschool not to resort to suspension; instead, every possible behavior modification and encouragement will be used before considering suspension.

Little Footsteps Preschool may suspend a student in situations in which the child's safety and/or the safety of others in the class are at risk, due to the child's actions/behavior. Should the Director feel that suspension is necessary, the parents will be notified and a meeting will take place in which the area of concern is explained in detail, along with modifications the staff has already tried. During the meeting, referral options for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services will be offered. The school will pursue options for supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training. A plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program will be created jointly. A suspension would occur for no longer than one week; at that time, the parents and Director would meet again to discuss ways the results of the home behavioral intervention plan. If the child successfully meets the plan's objectives, the parents and teacher will plan how to positively reintroduce the child to the class. Should this not be successful, termination may be considered.

Little Footsteps Preschool reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment in extreme situations. Termination of enrollment will only be considered after the staff and Director have worked with the child and parents to modify the child's behavior. Enrollment will be terminated under the following circumstances:

- The child is continually verbally and/or physically abusive.
- The child is uncontrollably destructive.
- The child is unable to control his/her behavior to the point that he/she is a threat to the safety of the other children, the staff, or him/herself.
- Failure to pay tuition; special circumstances must be discussed with the director and a solution must have the director's approval prior to any change in this rule.

Before terminating the child's enrollment, the following procedure will take place:

- The staff will document the child's behavior and notify the Director.
- The staff will inform the Director of behavior management changes they have made, and the results of those changes; the staff will also inform parents of the child's behavior and of the steps the staff has taken to manage/modify the behavior.
- The Director will contact the parents in writing explaining the situation and requesting a conference.
- At this conference, the Director will advise the parents of available resources to help the child; help make a referral; and/or provide other options for the child's preschool experience.
- The parents and staff will create a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in school. The parents and staff will meet again to review the success of the intervention plan. If the child meets the plan's objectives, s/he will be allowed to remain enrolled. If the objectives are not met, termination from the program will proceed.
- The Director and/or staff will prepare the child for departure in a way that he/she will understand.
- The Director and/or staff will explain the child's departure to his/her peers in a simple, sensitive manner.
- A child who is terminated from the program would be considered for readmission under the following circumstances:
 - The child has attended another school/child care program for a minimum of three months.
 - The parents provide a written reference from another school's director, documenting this child's progress in the area(s) that lead to termination.
 - The director is verifies the written reference by speaking with the other school's director.
 - The director, staff and parents meet to establish and agree upon expectations for the child; expectations would be written, and signed by all persons involved.
 - The program has space available.
 - The director shall have final say as to whether or not to readmit a child. It is our goal to provide opportunities for all children to succeed with us; however, in some circumstances it may not be possible to readmit a child.

Child Guidance 7.05(5)

Little Footsteps uses child guidance techniques that promote the positive interactions among students and staff. Our goal is to promote the growth and development of children while protecting (keeping safe) the individuals and group. (7.05 (7)).

- We encourage appropriate behavior and prevent challenging behaviors by using environmental modifications (e.g., giving a child preferential seating close to a teacher), activity modifications (e.g., changing an activity when it is clear it is too hard, too confusing, or too easy for children), adult or peer support (e.g., having a

- teacher stay close to a child during a known challenging situation, such as walking in the hall or sitting during story time) and other teaching strategies (e.g., using short, clear directions, giving positive feedback, giving expectations of what is to come – “we’re cleaning up in five minutes” and more).
- Teachers intervene quickly when children are physically aggressive with one another, moving quickly but not frantically to stop the situation. After first seeing that the children are not hurt, the teacher then helps them develop more positive strategies for resolving conflict by speaking to them away from other classmates about what happened. Each child is given the opportunity to tell what they feel happened. The teacher then guides the children through what they could have done instead of using physical means to get what they want. Questions such as “what could you have done instead of (grabbing the toy) (pulling his arm) to let him/her know you wanted something? Children will be encouraged and “taught” how to find a solution to the conflict that both are comfortable with. Teachers may also point out how the other child is feeling, and ask what the aggressor could do to “make it right” or “help the friend to feel better.” Teachers do not force children to apologize, but encourage them to consider others’ feelings, and try to see how another one is hurt.
 - When explaining rules and procedures and the reasons for them to children, and where appropriate and feasible, teachers allow children to participate in the establishment of program rules, policies and procedures. For example, at the start of the school year, teachers will talk with students about why rules are important (to keep us safe) and what rules they believe are important to follow. Little Footsteps uses the phrase “all our rules are to keep you safe” often to explain the necessity of rules.
 - Staff meetings will include discussing behavior management techniques to promote consistency. Staff are also encouraged to attend trainings on behavior management techniques.
 - (6) Teachers communicate effectively with each child by using a variety of methods, taking into consideration the individual needs of each child. For example, a teacher may use pictures and verbal directions for art projects. Physically demonstrating expectations can also be useful, especially for English Language Learners, or students with language processing needs. Simple written words and pictures can also be utilized for students who are emerging readers.
 - (7) Educators must direct child guidance to the goal of maximizing the growth and development of children and protecting the group and the individuals within it. This is reiterated above, in the first section.

Availability of EEC Regulations

Little Footsteps maintains a copy of the regulations, *102 CMR 7.00: Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Group Day Care and School Age Child Care Programs*, on the school premises. These regulations are available to anyone upon request. If you have a question about any of the regulations, ask the program director to show the regulations to you.

Regulatory Compliance History 7.08(6)(n)

Parents may contact the EEC for information regarding the preschool's compliance history at 1 Washington St., Suite 20, Taunton, MA 02780 or (508) 828-5025.