

TIMBERLIN CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Little Eagles Learning Center

Parent Handbook

2020-2021



Sarah Keeney, Director

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Timberlin Creek Elementary School

Little Eagles Learning Center

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Linda Edel
Principal

Heather Caldwell
Assistant Principal

Patrick Roach
Assistant Principal

Dear Parents,

We welcome you to the Little Eagles Learning Center. We are proud to provide a safe, nurturing, and healthy learning environment for your child. We offer developmentally appropriate activities for children ages one through Pre-Kindergarten. We teach through thematic units for ages one to three and use the Creative Teaching Strategies Curriculum Program and the Houghton Mifflin Pre- K Reading curriculum along with different monthly themes in our Pre-Kindergarten class. This packet is designed to introduce you to our Learning Center policies and procedures. We ask that you read through this manual and keep it as a reference to refer to throughout the school year.

Sincerely,

Linda Edel
Principal

Mission Statement:

We believe that every child is unique, important and should be valued as an individual. We commit to providing an environment of playful experiences that will increase the child's knowledge, self-esteem, and ability to interact with others. Activities and learning centers are designed with the age of the child in mind. Children will have the opportunity to actively participate in language, discovery, dramatic play, outdoor play, music, science, construction, and creative expression activities each day. Children will be encouraged to use their problem-solving skills in each activity and will develop the skills that are appropriate for them at their own pace.

LEARNING CENTER GOALS:

- Create a safe environment of warmth and security.
- Offer an easily accessible and convenient childcare Learning Center for St. Johns County School District employees and the surrounding community.
- Offer a variety of developmentally appropriate activities.
- Meet or exceed the County, State, and Federal Regulations related to childcare and early childhood education.

LEARNING CENTER STAFF:

Timberlin Creek Elementary will hire only the most qualified staff to work as child care workers. Employee requirements include having the 45-hour Child Care course and continuing in-service. At all times, there will be someone on-site at the Learning Center certified in First Aid and CPR. All staff will submit to fingerprinting and a local, state and national background check.

Learning Center workers are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Learning Center program. They will develop monthly plans using broad themes, monitor weekly plans, daily routines and schedules. They report directly to the Learning Center Director.

The Learning Center workers and Director work together to develop, implement, manage and evaluate the Learning Center program.

Any concerns you have regarding the Program should be directed to the Learning Center Director.

LEARNING CENTER DIRECTOR:

The Learning Center Director will oversee the operations of the Learning Center Program and communicate with the teachers and staff. The Director will see that adequate supplies, materials, and equipment are available for the Program. The Program Director will serve as a teacher as needed. S/he will also serve as the parent contact and supervise the Learning Center workers.

The Learning Center Director reports directly to the Timberlin Creek Elementary School Principal. The Director will keep the Principal informed of the Learning Center activities and operations.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

- The Learning Center is open from 7:00 am - 5:00 pm Monday through Friday.
- The Learning Center will be open during St. Johns County School District pre-planning days, school days, in-service and planning days as well as during post-planning days.
- The Learning Center will not be open on school holidays or during Spring and Winter Breaks. The St. Johns County School District calendar is followed.

REGISTRATION:

At the time of registration, parents/guardians will receive a registration packet containing enrollment forms and instructions concerning medical and immunization requirements. This packet will also include information regarding the Learning Center illness and discipline policies. Please read through the materials carefully. If you have any questions, please contact the Learning Center Director.

ELIGIBILITY AND FEES:

Our Learning Center program is open to the community for children between the ages of 1 - 5. This is a fee-supported program.

Children will be admitted based upon their needs and appropriateness of the program for the child. If determined that staff training, staff to child ratio, or facilities used create an undesirable situation for your child, other children or the staff, the Learning Center Director will advise the Principal and we will request the removal of your child from the Program.

Registration Fee:

There is a one-time, non-refundable registration fee of \$125/child per school year. Registration allows/ensures full-time, part-time and extended care enrollment.

Bi-Weekly SJCS D Employees tuition rates are as follows for all regularly scheduled school days:

<u>If your child is:</u>	<u>Bi-weekly rate tuition for SJCS D Employees</u>	<u>Monthly rate</u>
One year old:	\$420/SJCS D	\$840/SJCS D
Two years old:	\$376/SJCS D	\$752/SJCS D
Three years old:	\$376/SJCS D	\$752/SJCS D
Four years old/Non-VPK:	\$376/SJCS D	\$752/SJCS D
Four and five years old/VPK:	\$270/SJCS D	\$540/SJCS D

Bi-Weekly Non-SJCSD Employees tuition rates are as follows for all regularly scheduled school days:

If your child is:	Bi-weekly rate tuition for Non-SJCSD Employee	Monthly rate
One year old:	\$460/Non-SJCSD	\$920/Non-SJCSD
Two years old:	\$396/Non-SJCSD	\$792/Non-SJCSD
Three years old:	\$396/Non-SJCSD	\$792/Non-SJCSD
Four years old/Non-VPK:	\$396/Non-SJCSD	\$792/Non-SJCSD
Four and five years old/VPK:	\$290/Non-SJCSD	\$580/Non-SJCSD

- A sibling discount is offered at the rate of \$10/second and subsequent child per month. For example, if you have three children you pay full price on the first child and \$10 less for the second and third child.
- Tuition is due bi-weekly or monthly and, *per Florida State Law*, must be paid in advance of services being rendered. Please see the payment schedule provided in your registration packet.
- Full tuition is due regardless of your child's anticipated attendance for the next week.
- Full payment is due if Little Eagles has to close due to inclement weather.
- There will be a \$25.00 fee if your payment is late. Please see payment schedule for when payments are due.
- There are 20 equal payments/10 monthly payments for the school year and the rate will remain the same regardless of any Planning days, Teacher in-service days and holidays that may fall during the week(Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, and Spring Break, etc.). For the 2 weeks during Winter Break, there will not be an invoice. Please look at the Payment Policy for more details provided in your registration packet.
- Tuition may be paid via check made payable to Little Eagles Learning Center or TCE. Credit card payments are made via schoolpay.com where an additional transaction fee applies. Please send the director, Sarah Keeney, a copy of the receipt. SchoolPay payments will only be for VPK students or little ones who have a school-aged sibling with a student number.
- Checks returned by your bank are handled through Envision Payment Solutions, please call 1-887-290-5460.
- Tuition should be placed in the payment box at the Little Eagles front desk.

A receipt will be placed in your child's daily mailbox. At the end of the tax year, you may request an end-of-year tax statement from the Learning Center Director. For tax purposes, our tax ID number is 59-6000824.

CURRICULUM:

Each class has a unit of study based around monthly themes. Our curriculum will provide for individual learning and promote physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Our Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) class uses the Creative Teaching Strategies Curriculum. Our VPK teachers are certified in VPK and have completed the VPK standards course work. Teachers continue to take in-service classes to keep current with best practices. We use the Houghton Mifflin Curriculum for our one, two and three-year old children. Students use iPads and age-appropriate online learning tools when they are developmentally ready.

Little Eagles does participate in some designated activities during the school day at Timberlin Creek Elementary School. VPK students will participate in resources on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The resources will be art, music, media, and PE.

TRANSPORTATION

Little Eagles Learning Center does not provide transportation for students.

ARRIVALS/DISMISSAL

For the safety of all children, we ask that you walk your child into the Learning Center and pick him/her up in the same manner at the end of the day. All children must be signed in/out using your initials and the time your child arrived/is leaving.

You must have a Little Eagles parking pass in order to park. Please place it in your car so staff directing traffic can see it clearly. Please park in a 15-minute parking spot for drop off/pick up times. If you will be staying longer, please find another spot.

PICK UP PROCEDURES

- Each child must be signed in and out every day.
- At the end of the day, each child must be signed out and picked up by someone on your approved pick-up list. Please inform all parties on your approved list that they will need to provide a picture ID at pick-up.
- If changes need to be made to the parties on your approved list, we must receive those changes in writing from you.

- Children will not be released to anyone that is not on their approved pick-up list or those who cannot provide picture ID.
- The Learning Center charges a late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute per child for any child/ren picked up after 5:00 pm. This late fee is due at the time you pick up your child. If you believe that you may be late picking up your child, please make arrangements for your child to be picked up on time by someone on his/her approved list.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS:

The Learning Center will close when St. Johns County Schools are closed due to severe weather conditions or other emergency conditions affecting the county. In severe weather, the children will be brought inside Timberlin Creek Elementary School. If desired, you may check out your child during severe weather through the front office at Timberlin Creek. A sign will be posted on the gate indicating the Learning Center has relocated inside the school building. When we relocate to our safe area, we will contact you through email, ClassDojo and ClassTag.

OPEN DOOR POLICY:

Our open door policy applies to any parent whose child attends our Learning Center. You are welcome to visit at any time during our hours of operation. If your child has a difficult time with separation, we ask that you just "peek" or call and we can tell you how your child is doing and what activity they are involved in at that time. This will allow your child to continue his/her day without any interruption.

ACCIDENTS/ILLNESSES:

The safety of your child is the number one priority to us. The children will report any and all injuries and when they are not feeling well to the Learning Center teachers.

If a child is injured, the staff will make every effort to contact the parent(s). If you or other emergency contacts cannot be reached and the injury is considered serious, the ambulance service will be called and one of our teachers will accompany your child to the hospital. Timberlin Creek Elementary does have a registered nurse on campus. Our nurse will be called whenever an emergency situation arises. An accident/incident form will be completed and kept on file when an injury occurs.

All Learning Center workers are required to be trained in CPR and First Aid. Our staff is also required to attend training regarding AIDS, Hepatitis and other Bloodborne Pathogens. It is School Board Policy to use "Universal Precautions" and treat every person or incident as if there were possibility of transmission of disease. The use of approved disinfectant, rubber gloves and recommended precautions are all consistently reinforced to help maintain a healthy working and playing environment.

If your child arrives at the Learning Center ill, you will be asked to take him/her home. If your child becomes ill, you or an authorized person will be called to pick up your child. Thank you for picking up your child in a timely manner to help prevent the spread of germs. Please respect this request when made; it is meant to keep everyone as healthy as possible when they are at our Learning Center.

A healthy environment is very important to the success of our Learning Center. We also ask for your full cooperation in NOT sending your child to school with signs of an infectious illness.

Please keep your child home if the following occurs:

- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Symptoms of a cold or bad cough
- Discharge from the eyes or ears
- An unidentified rash
- Has had a fever within the last 24 hours

FORM REQUIREMENTS:

We must have a current Physician (Form 3040) and Immunizations (Form 680) Record on file. These must be received upon enrollment. This is a mandatory DCF requirement. Without the proper paperwork on file, your child will not be able to attend Little Eagles Learning Center.

The Department of Children and Family Services requires the removal of children who exhibit the following symptoms:

- Severe coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Stiff neck
- Diarrhea

- Temperature at 100 degrees or higher
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
- Untreated skin patches/rashes
- Lice
- Any suspected communicable diseases

Other conditions may warrant your child's removal from the Learning Center at the discretion of the Learning Center Director.

A physician's note will be required for re-entry to the Learning Center if a communicable disease is suspected or at the Learning Center Director's request.

It is the parent's responsibility to maintain an accurate list of emergency contact numbers. This allows the Learning Center to contact alternate individuals when your child is ill and we are unable to reach you.

The Learning Center Director will administer prescriptions and non-prescription medication as long as the required medication form is completed and signed by the parent. Additional paperwork and physician's signature/orders may be required in some cases. All medicines are to be in their original container with the original label. We cannot exceed recommended dosage instructions nor can we administer if a child's age group is not listed on the label. Please give medicine at home if possible and communicate with teachers so they know to look for any side effects. No medication may be left in a child's cubby, backpack or left unattended in classroom. All medicine gets locked up in the Director's desk.

Some children in the center may not have a current immunization/physical record. Parent/Guardian will provide as soon as they receive the forms.

Please be sure to note any medical issues, allergies or other concerns you have regarding your child on the *Special Instructions from Parents* form provided.

PERSONAL ITEMS:

All personal items brought to the Learning Center should be labeled before being dropped off with your child. The Learning Center is NOT responsible for any lost items.

Diapers, wipes, diaper cream, milk and other personal items must be provided by the child's parents. A list of additional items will be provided in the registration packet.

LUNCH AND SNACKS:

Parents are required to provide a nutritious lunch for their child. Please send your child's lunch in a lunchbox or bag with his/her name on it. Please use an ice pack for their lunch to keep it cold and fresh. Pack a lunch that the students can manage by themselves. A sandwich, fresh fruit/fruit cup and 4-5 snacks would be great. Please do not send candy and limit any cookies and sweets. Parents should send one drink and two snacks for morning and one drink and two snacks for afternoon plus a separate drink for lunch. Thank you for providing a spill proof sippy cup or spill proof water bottle. Please label all cups or water bottles with first and last name.

No baby bottles at Little Eagles please use a spill proof sippy cup.

NOTE: Environmental health regulations do NOT permit child care workers to prepare food or wash items.

DRESS CODE:

Please dress your child in:

- comfortable play clothes.
- appropriate clothing for all weather conditions.
- clothes that are easily accessible to diapering and toileting.

Please do not:

- send your child in with jewelry
- send your child with open-toe or backless shoes or cowboy boots. **Sneakers are the best shoe in which to send your child to school!**

Please leave 2 sets of extra change of clothes in a large zip-lock bag **LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME** and place in their cubby.

DIAPER CHANGING

We are required to change a child's diaper as soon as it is known to be wet or soiled. Please send in more diapers than you think your child will need. A medication slip must be completed for any creams, powders or ointments that you ask us to use on your child.

POTTY TRAINING:

We will work with each family when your child is ready to be potty-trained. We ask that you talk with the Learning Center teachers and let them know you are interested in potty-training your child. If you are NOT potty training at home, we will not potty train at school. Consistency at home and school is a MUST. If you and your child are ready, please supply plenty of clothes that are easy for your child and teacher to pull up and down (elastic waist) as this will help make potty training a success.

Children enrolled in VPK must be potty-trained prior to enrollment. If your child has three accidents in one week, at the discretion of the Director, your child may be removed from the VPK program. If your child is removed, we will hold your child's place for one week during which potty training must be successful before your child may return to VPK at Little Eagles Learning Center.

NAPTIME / REST TIME:

Parents please provide two crib sheets and a small blanket/cover for rest time. Please be sure to label all belongings. **NO LARGE BLANKETS, PILLOW PETS OR STUFFED ANIMALS, PLEASE!**

Rest time is a requirement of the Department of Children and Families. Children are not required to sleep, but all children will rest.

BIRTHDAYS:

Please notify the teacher several days in advance if you plan to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Please keep celebrations simple. No balloons or candles.

Little Eagles' staff is not responsible for handing out birthday invitations.

TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

We will have "Show and Tell" days and will notify you of these days. On all other days, please leave toys from home at home. We know these items can be special and want to prevent them from being lost or broken. Please do not send very small objects or coins that can be swallowed.

BEHAVIOR:

Discipline is used as a learning tool to redirect inappropriate behaviors and prevent problems. Florida state law requires that we give parents written notification of our discipline policy; this has been included in your registration folder.

At **NO** time will our staff use corporal punishment.

When difficulties arise, we will contact the parent and ask for your assistance if the problem is not easily solved by our staff. At that time, you may be asked to come in and conference with the teacher and Learning Center Director. We appreciate your time to work with us so that, together, we can solve the problem in a quick and efficient matter.

We do reserve the right to ask you to withdraw your child at any time.

REMOVAL FROM THE LEARNING CENTER:

Little Eagles Learning Center has the right to withdraw your child from the program if:

- Parent is repeatedly late picking up their child.
- Fees are not paid in advance or are continuously delinquent.
- Your child does not benefit from our program.
- Your child displays inappropriate behavior or if an incident warrants removal.

YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS:

Communication is a key element at our Learning Center. Please feel free to ask any questions of our Learning Center Director. Thank you for scheduling a parent/teacher conference for any concerns or questions. Please do not address any concerns to Little Eagles teachers during their time of teaching or taking care of a class. Please check your child's mailbox daily.

