



**Little  
Sea Academy**  
DIVE DEEP INTO LEARNING

## Parent Handbook and Policies

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This handbook is intended to familiarize parents and staff members with current Little Sea Academy policies, practices, and standards. An electronic version (PDF) of the handbook is available on our website at [www.littleseaacademy.com](http://www.littleseaacademy.com). A print copy of the handbook is available upon request. Little Sea Academy reserves the right to revise its policies, practices, and standards as deemed appropriate by the Director. Parents and staff members will be notified of updates to the parent handbook as they occur.

## **Mission Statement**

At Little Sea Academy, our goal is to create an environment that inspires each student to dive deeper into learning.

We plan to provide quality childcare and education services to our community. All students that are admitted to our care will be met with a safe and loving environment filled with passionate and qualified educators to meet their needs. Through interactive experiences, real world applications, and modern technology, our program will allow traditional and non-traditional educational experiences to peak student interests. Our staff will be trained to focus on the whole student through activities that utilize social emotional learning, personalized learning, and a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate understanding of standards and learning targets.

## **Philosophy and Guiding Principles**

Our program is built around the concept that children are born ready to learn. As caregivers, we strive to create a learning environment that is safe, stimulating and encouraging. The following principles serve as the foundation for our curriculum.

- Children develop knowledge of their world through active interactions with caregivers, peers, materials, and events.
- Learning is sequential, building on prior understandings and experiences.
- Learning proceeds at different rates in each area and each child; children will show a range of skills and understandings in any one area of development.
- Learning in each area is interconnected. Young children learn best through experiences, which incorporate several areas of development.
- Learning is embedded in a culture. Children learn best when their learning activities are rooted in a familiar cultural context.
- Learning begins in the family, continues in early care and education settings, and depends on parent involvement and caregiver guidance.
- All children have the potential to achieve Learning Standards with appropriate support and instruction.

## **General Center Information**

### **Hours of Operation**

Little Sea Academy is open Monday through Friday from 6:00am to 6:00pm.

**Latest drop off 10:00 am unless previously approved by Little Sea Academy.**

**Little Sea Academy charges a late fee of \$1.00 for every minute a child is present past 6:00 pm.**

## **Closings**

The center is closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Eve	½ Day for Good Friday
New Year's Day	Memorial Day
Juneteenth	Christmas (2 Days)
Independence Day	½ Day on December 23rd
½ Day Wednesday before Thanksgiving	Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day	MLK Day
Black Friday	Presidents Day

## **Administration**

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- Assistant Director: Sherry Strickland
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## **Fees**

Childcare fees are strictly based on the scheduled hours of contracted childcare services. Little Sea Academy, LLC will not adjust childcare fees for late arrival, early pickup, or missed days. Therefore, the parent is responsible for paying regardless of child's attendance. This is to ensure the child's position will still be available. A \$3 fee will be added to all electronically made payments and credit/debit card payments.

## **Weekly Rates**

Registration Fee: \$50.00

Infant: \$165.00

1-3 Year old: \$160.00

3-5 Year \$150.00

Drop-in Rate: \$45.00

## **Past Due Payments**

Parents must pay childcare fees on or before the Friday day of each week. Payments may be

made by check, cash, and money order. If fees are not paid in full and on time, parents must pay a \$10.00 per day late fee.

### **Returned Check Fee**

The parent must pay a \$50.00 fee for all checks returned unpaid. If a check is returned unpaid, all future payments by the parent must be made in cash.

### **Overtime Fees**

Little Sea Academy, LLC will charge an overtime fee of \$1.00 per minute if a child is not picked up by the scheduled time. This overtime fee must be paid in full before your child can return.

The overtime fee is for any child not picked up from the center by 6:00pm.

### **Collection Fees**

If any payment obligation is not paid when due, the parent is responsible for paying all costs of collection, including reasonable attorney fees, whether or not a lawsuit is started as part of the collection process.

## **Trial Period and Termination of Child Care Services**

### **Trial Period**

The first 2 weeks of enrollment in Little Sea Academy, LLC is considered a "trial period." Childcare may be terminated by either the provider or the parent during this trial period without advance notice.

### **Termination of Child Care Services**

After the trial period has passed, childcare may be terminated by the provider or the parent only by providing the other party with 2 weeks advance written notice.

Little Sea Academy, LLC retains the right to terminate a child's enrollment without notice for the following reasons:

- A child's behavior is destructive, uncontrollable, violent, or threatening to the other children or providers at the care facility-. This determination is made in the sole discretion of the Provider.
- A parent's behavior is threatening or abusive to the other children or providers at the care facility.
- Child care fees are 7 days or more delinquent.
- A child is absent for 10 days or more without reasonable explanation or without payment from the parent.

**All terminations of this type can be made effective immediately.**

**At Little Sea Academy, we always maintain the following staff-to-child ratios in our classrooms:**

Age of Children.

18 Months and Under  
1 Year (walking)  
2 Years  
3 Years  
4 Years  
5 Years  
6 Years and Over

Minimum Ratio of Staff to Children

1 staff for every 6 children  
1 staff for every 8 children  
1 staff for every 10 children  
1 staff for every 15 children  
1 staff for every 18 children  
1 staff for every 20 children  
1 staff for every 25 children

Children of different age groups may be combined if the following guidelines are followed:

-Infants are never combined with children over the age of 18 months, except in certain circumstances (e.g., at open or close of the center, if children are siblings).

-Children 18 to 24 months may be combined in a classroom with children two years of age, as long as the ratio of 1 to 6 is maintained.

-Children 2 years old may be combined with children who are 3-5 years old as long as the ratio of 1 to 10 is maintained.

-Classrooms of children 3 years and older may be combined, with the ratio determined by the age of the majority of the children in the group.

-Children are allowed to combine the 1<sup>st</sup> and last 30 minutes of the day.

Volunteers such as high school students (at least 16 years of age), college students, parents, or retired individuals may be used to meet staff-to-child ratios.

**Supplies**

The parent is responsible for providing the following items to Little Sea Academy, LLC for the benefit of the child whenever reasonably requested by Little Sea Academy, LLC: diapers/pull-ups, change of clothes, blanket, wipes, and baby food. In addition, Little Sea Academy, LLC may request that the parent supply a specific item for the benefit of the child from time to time. Little Sea Academy, LLC will be responsible for providing the following items: all educational tools, books, crayons, markers, paper, soap, paper products, etc.

**Weather-Related Closings**

Little Sea Academy will remain open during most severe weather. We will however follow the recommendations provided by the public school system. If schools are closed, the daycare will also be closed, unless notified otherwise. The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day.

In the event that Little Sea Academy closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up within one hour of being contacted to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home. Families will still be charged during weather closings.

Earthquake, Tornado, and Fire drills will be practiced monthly.

## **Health & Safety Policies**

### **Illness**

Our first priority at Little Sea Academy is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. Children/staff will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- Fever** of 101 or greater, until 24 hours symptom free without fever reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing.
- Diarrhea** not associated with diet changes or medications; multiple loose or watery instances within an hour; or accompanied with fever and or vomiting) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not be infectious by a licensed healthcare professional. A child will be sent home after producing 3 bad diapers.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting** (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 24 hours or until a healthcare provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration. Children cannot return until they are medication free for 24 hours.
- Persistent abdominal pain** (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling**, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash** until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- Pink eye** (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours and no other symptoms.
- Head lice**, No nit/ no live bug policy.
- Scabies**, until after treatment has been completed
- Tuberculosis**, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend childcare
- Impetigo**, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth** sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- **Strep throat**, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.
- Chicken pox**, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- Pertussis**, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- Mumps**, until 9 days after onset of symptoms

- Hepatitis A virus**, until 1 week after onset of illness
  - Measles**, until 4 days after onset of rash
  - Rubella**, until 6 days after onset of rash
  - Unspecified respiratory tract illness** accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion
  - Coronavirus**, must quarantine for 5 day and must produce a negative test result
  - Herpes simplex**, until no uncontrollable drooling
- A child who becomes ill while at Little Sea Academy must be removed from the classroom to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease. An ill child will be sent to the office to wait for his/her parent to arrive.

Little Sea Academy reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed healthcare professional stating that the child is not contagious.

### **Notice of Exposure & Reporting Disease**

If a child or staff member is found to have a communicable disease, a notice will be posted on the door of all affected classrooms. In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Director will notify the health department.

### **Medical Authorizations**

Staff members may not administer medication to any child unless a parent has completed a Medication Authorization Form. Parents must indicate a start date and end date, a reason for the medication, and the dosage of medication cannot be administered. If a child becomes ill while at Little Sea Academy and a parent request that medication be given, verbal authorization can only be given to the Director and/or Assistant Director. A Medication Authorization Form will be completed by the Director and/or Assistant Director and must be signed by a parent upon pick-up.

Medications must be stored in a locked box (refrigerated medications) or in a high cabinet (non-refrigerated medications) while in use at Little Sea Academy. The Medication Authorization Form must remain with the medication at all times. Unused medications must be immediately returned to the family and will not be stored at Little Sea Academy.

### **Documentation of Accidents/Incidents**

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at Little Sea Academy using an Accident/Incident Report. Teachers will document all biting incidents as accidents. If a biter breaks the skin of another child, an accident/incident report needs to be completed for the biter as well as the child who was bitten. If the accident is severe, the parent will be contacted. Accident reports will be stored in the child's permanent file.

### **Documentation of Allergies**

All allergies will be posted in the kitchen cooking area, as well as in the classroom. If your child has severe/multiple allergies parents may want to consider sending meals.



## **Visitors**

All individuals who are visiting the center (i.e., someone who is not a parent or authorized pick-up person; or staff member) is required to sign in at the office before entering the center. The visitor is then required to sign out before leaving the building. Staff members should notify the Director and/or Assistant Director if expecting a visitor.

## **Curriculum Planning**

Curriculum at Little Sea Academy includes the child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and experiences offered to young children that support and enrich their development physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Little Sea Academy uses the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos and the Creative Curriculum for Preschool as guides for planning the curriculum in each of its program rooms.

-Each classroom has weekly lesson plans, posted in the classroom. These plans contain several activities designed to foster each child's development and the development of the group. Lesson plans should be changed to accommodate the children's changing interests.

-Each classroom is set-up in centers, which include blocks, dramatic play, books, gross motor, fine motor, and art. Outdoor play is important to a child's physical development and must be included in both the morning and afternoon schedule. Self-selection or "free-play" is a daily part of the curriculum and means a child has the opportunity to choose which center or activity he/she participates in. This promotes creative expression and development of important social skills.

## **Daily Schedule and Activities**

The Lead Teacher and Full-Time Assistant Teacher work cooperatively to create a daily schedule and plan activities that meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. Every staff member is responsible for carrying out the schedule and activities. The daily schedule and activities create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; small and large muscle activities; indoor and outdoor play times; as well as times for self-selection and teacher-directed activities.

Consistency from day-to-day is particularly important to the overall well-being of the children and classroom environment. Children thrive on consistency! Routines should be maintained whenever possible for arrivals and departures; meals and snacks; resting or nap times; personal care routines like diapering/toileting and hand washing; and transitions.

Little Sea Academy, LLC will provide daily activities, toys, and materials appropriate for each child's age level to entertain the child as well as facilitate the child's physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development. A child should not bring toys from home. Toy weapons, such as guns or knives, are absolutely prohibited.

Little Sea Academy, LLC will post a weekly activity chart, which will detail the activities for the upcoming week.

## **Toilet training**

Little Sea Academy, LLC will assist with toilet training. However, the parent should first initiate the training at home. When training has started, the parent must supply training pants, pull-ups, or underwear with rubber pants.

## **Discipline**

Little Sea Academy, LLC will explain the rules of the childcare facility to all children under its care, as appropriate. When a child understands the rules but chooses not to follow the rules, then Little Sea Academy, LLC may discipline the child using age-appropriate techniques, which consist of the following: time-outs if necessary and as the last result. If necessary, Little Sea Academy, LLC will discuss other options with the parent.

## **Field Trips**

Little Sea Academy offers a variety of experiences both at and away from the center. Field trips are a creative way to enrich a theme and expand the learning environment. The Director and/or Assistant Director must approve all field trips. Field trips outside the Athens city limits and/or longer than two hours require a parent to complete a "Field Trip Permission Form." These forms can be obtained from the Director and/or Assistant Director. Parents must be notified at least one week before the planned field trip.

Teachers may decide and are encouraged to conduct short, unannounced field trips including but not limited to: walks as a class around the perimeter of the building and/or nearby neighborhoods; trips to local playgrounds; trips to local businesses. Teacher-child ratios must be maintained at all times. Parents complete a "Parent/Guardian Permissions" form at enrollment for this type of field trip and do not need to complete a separate form for the above-named instances.

## **Rules Related to Transportation**

- Children are not allowed to sit in the front seat under any circumstances.
- Children under the age of six riding in a car or passenger van must be properly buckled in a federally approved car seat or booster seat. Older children and adults must be properly buckled in a seat belt.
- Doors should remain locked when the vehicle is moving.
- Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco products is forbidden when transporting children.
- Children shall enter and leave the vehicle curbside unless the vehicle is in a protected area or driveway.
- Head counts shall be taken before leaving the center, after entering the vehicle, during a field trip, after taking children to the restroom, after returning to the vehicle, and upon returning to the center.
- When children leave the vehicle, **the vehicle shall be inspected to ensure no children are left in the vehicle.**

Little Sea Academy has fifteen-passenger vans available for transportation to and from field trips. Staff members who operate a Little Sea Academy van must have a valid driver's license. Parents who volunteer to provide transportation for a field trip must be at least 21 and provide: proof of a valid driver's license; proof of insurance; completed driver information form; and signed waiver of liability form.

### **Meals and Nutrition**

Little Sea Academy follows the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) nutrition and practice guidelines for meals and snacks.

#### **Mealtimes are as follows:**

**Breakfast: 8:00 am**

**Morning Snack 10:00 pm**

**Lunch: 12:00 pm**

**Evening Snack: 3:30pm pm**

These meals will be served by Little Sea Academy, LLC and are included in the childcare fees. Little Sea Academy, LLC will post a weekly menu for parents to review. Parents should inform Little Sea Academy, LLC of their child's favorite foods. Little Sea Academy, LLC may incorporate these foods into its menu. Parents are not to send gum or candy.

### **Food from Home**

Children are welcome to bring in special treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we recommend supplying store-bought snacks still in the original packaging. Please check with your child's teacher before bringing any homemade snacks. A list of healthy snack options approved by the USDA and Georgia Department of Education is available from the Director and/or Assistant Director.

### **Infant, Toddler, and Two-Year-Old Program Information**

The following information is specific to the infant, toddler, and two-year-old program rooms:

- Parents must supply diapers, wipes, diaper cream, bottles, formula, baby food, extra clothing, pacifiers, blankets, and stuffed toys for rest time. Please label all items with the child's name.
- Breast milk must be brought in ready-to-use containers. For health reasons, we are not able to store bags of frozen milk for extended periods of time.
- We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before. Check with parents before introducing ANY new food.
- Children must be held when being fed – bottle propping is forbidden.
- No Hair Bead Policy- Due to the possibility of a choking hazard we prohibit hair beads and small hair bows

## **Emergency Procedures**

### **Missing or Abducted Child**

- In the event of a missing child, the Lead Teacher will search for the child in the immediate area, while another staff member calls the Director and/or Assistant Director to help with the search.
- If the child cannot be located in a reasonable amount of time, the Director and/or Assistant Director will notify the local police department and the child's parents.
- In the event of an abducted child, the Lead Teacher must **immediately** contact the Director and/or Assistant Director, the local police department, and the child's parents.
- In the case of a medical emergency, Little Sea Academy, LLC will obtain the necessary emergency medical care for the child, including but not limited to transportation to an emergency room. The parent will be responsible for all costs and expenses incurred in connection with any medical care provided to the child, including the cost of transportation.

### **Power Failure**

Staff members and children should remain in the classroom and if possible, proceed with activities as usual, or may go to the outdoor playground until power resumes. If power cannot be restored within 1 hour, the center will close, and parents will be contacted.

- Administration is responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the closing and of the need to immediately pick up their child.
- Activities will resume as possible until parents arrive.

## **Little Sea Academy Policies**

### **Pickup of a Child**

To ensure the safety of the children attending the childcare facility, Little Sea Academy, LLC has established the following procedures for the pickup of a child from its facility: ID must be shown. **The parent must inform Little Sea Academy, LLC in advance if someone other than the parent will pick up the child.** If the parent has not provided Little Sea Academy, LLC with such information, the child will not be released to the individual(s), and the parent will be notified.

### **Parent Participation**

Parents are welcome to visit the childcare facility at any time during which childcare is provided, except during scheduled nap times, and participate in any of the activities. Communication between parents and the provider is important in maintaining high quality childcare. All comments and suggestions regarding services are welcome.

### **Day Care Contract**

The parent must review and sign the Day Care Contract prior to the child's first day of care.

**Equal Opportunity**

No child will be denied care on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, age, national origin, or religion of either the parent or the child.

**Confidentiality**

Little Sea Academy, LLC will keep files on each child confidential. All private information exchanged between the parent and the provider will remain confidential.

**Child Abuse and Neglect**

Little Sea Academy, LLC will carry out its obligation to report all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities.

**Recording, videotaping, videoconferencing. & Photography from any device within the facility including, but not limited to classrooms, playgrounds, common areas, is strictly prohibited without gaining consent to do so from the director or assistant director. Individuals who violate this rule may be asked to leave the premises and forfeit their privilege to be on and/or around Little Sea Academy, LLC.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, affirm that have received and reviewed all policies and procedures required by Little Sea Academy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_