



Lakeshore Little People's Place

**Parent Handbook  
Hamilton Reformed Preschool**

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## Introductory Information

**History.** Lakeshore Little People's Place (LLPP) is a Christian non-profit (501(c)(3) ministry. In 1993 a group of community members contacted the Holland Deacons' Conference (HDC) about the need for Christian childcare. The HDC is a coalition of area Christian Reformed churches working together to meet the needs in the community. After exploring many options, it was decided that the community's childcare needs could be met by partnering with churches to provide Christian childcare within the community.

In 1997 LLPP began with twenty preschool children at Maplewood Reformed Church. Within the first year our program grew steadily and by August of 1997 we were able to open two additional centers. LLPP now has four locations in the Holland/Hamilton area.

- Harderwyk LLPP is on the north side of Holland and cares for infants through kindergarten.
- Providence LLPP is on the south side of Holland and cares for infants through fifth grade children.
- Hamilton South LLPP cares for infants through fourth grade children and offers a tuition paid, free state-funded preschool program (GSRP).
- Hamilton LLPP is a preschool-only site for children between the ages of three and five.

**Philosophy.** We believe that children need support in order to develop spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, socially and physically. We want children to be able to:

- Develop ways to express themselves through language, music and art
- Develop independence, self-control, social skills and motor skills through a variety of activities
- Develop positive self esteem
- Develop relationships with other children and caring adults

We believe that parents and families also need support. Lakeshore Little People's Place seeks to create an environment where parents can feel comfortable and secure leaving their children. We work in partnership with parents and invite parent communication and participation.

We believe that our faith should shape the way that we care for children. Since our God is a God of all creation, our children are involved in many things, from painting and singing to counting and speaking – all of which show evidence of our Creator. In addition, there are activities that specifically show that our faith is evident: prayer at meals, Bible stories, memory verses, religious songs and the celebration of religious holidays. Whether specifically referenced or not, our faith in a loving God informs all of the activities that we engage in.

**Mission Statement.** Lakeshore Little People's Place is a ministry of the Holland Deacons' Conference which provides Christian childcare to meet the needs of working parents in the greater Holland area. The program offers:

- Quality, licensed, educational full time childcare for ages 6 weeks to 6 years
- Before and after school recreation activity and study time - licensed for kindergarten through grade five
- A caring community of professional care givers
- Intentional inclusion of children from low income families who are working toward self-sufficiency
- A church community for families who do not have a church home or who need more support than LLPP can provide

**Non-Profit Organization.** As a non-profit 501(c)(3), LLPP uses all of its income for the purpose of operating and improving and expanding its programs. The Internal Revenue Service has given exempt status to LLPP. Despite the obvious benefit of being exempt from most tax fees, it also allows donors to receive a charitable contribution deduction on their income tax return.

**Statement of Faith.** LLPP employees and board members are asked to sign a statement that they accept and agree with this Statement of Faith:

- I believe God is the creator and sovereign ruler of all things in the universe.
- I believe in Jesus Christ as the only true Son of God who became man.
- I believe He died and carried away all our sins, He arose and now He reigns in heaven with His Father.
- I believe God sends His Holy Spirit to comfort us and aid us in a life of Christian discipleship.
- I acknowledge my sinful nature, my salvation through Jesus Christ alone, and I am committed to a Christian lifestyle as an expression of my repentance and gratitude.

**LLPP Board of Directors.** Lakeshore Little People's Place is governed by a Board of Directors which includes one representative for each LLPP site, one representative from the HDC, and 5 other members. Board members are approved by the Holland Deacons' Conference and meet on a regular basis. It is the job of the board to set and review policy/procedures, financial information, and receive updates on the monthly functions of LLPP. The board is also comprised of several subcommittees that meet as needed. The Executive Director, Site Directors, and Education Director submit monthly reports and the Executive Director attends board meetings.

**Licensing Regulations.** Lakeshore Little People's Place is licensed by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. Each facility is assigned a Licensing Consultant who ensures the center follows "Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers" set forth by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Community and Health Systems. A copy of these rules is available, during business hours, on the parent table along with a licensing notebook where parents can review documentation of the renewal/interim inspection reports, as well as any documentation on special investigations and related corrective action plans for last 5 calendar years. Licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and corrective action plans from at least the past three years are also available on the childcare licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare). A license is granted for a two-year period and requires a full licensing inspection to renew. Every year the Licensing Consultant will also conduct an unannounced visit to further ensure all licensing rules are being followed by checking paperwork files and observing classrooms. In addition, the Licensing Consultant must approve any changes such as new classrooms or transportation and investigate any incidents reported by staff, parents, children or local authorities. LLPP is also inspected by and must meet regulations set in place by the Department of Environmental Health and Fire Safety.

**The Holland Deacons' Conference and LLPP.** The Holland Deacons' Conference (HDC) is the diaconal ministry of the Christian Reformed Church for Classis Holland. HDC carries out the calling from Jesus Christ - to show love and mercy, actively working in the community using God-given talents and gifts. The HDC combines the resources and visions of the Holland Classis churches to do what one church alone would not be able to do. LLPP intentionally partners with the HDC and local churches in order to foster Christian community and relationships that can provide services LLPP would not be able to offer on its own. LLPP is a non-profit corporation organized on a membership basis with the Holland Deacons' Conference being the sole member. The Holland Deacons' Conference has representation on the LLPP board and approves all LLPP board members. Joint meetings are held yearly with LLPP and the HDC.

**Partnerships and Collaborations.** LLPP partners with several organizations in our community to aid in providing appropriate comprehensive services and ensuring high quality care. LLPP has membership on the Great Start Collaborative, Great Start Collaborative Early Care and Education Committee, Great Start Readiness Program Administrative Committee, Ready for School, and the Lakeshore Association for the Education of Young Children. LLPP also works closely with the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District and local school districts. Participation in these organizations allows LLPP to work for the development of a common community philosophy for early childhood. The sharing of information on available community services allows a comprehensive, seamless system of services for all children and families.

## Admission and Withdrawal

**Admission.** Lakeshore Little People's Place admits children without regard to race, color, nationality, or religious background. Openings are filled on a first-come, first-served basis, although children who are siblings of a child in our care are given priority. All required forms must be completed and signed before a child may attend the program. Parents must agree to keep all information updated as necessary.

**Enrollment.** LLPP requires a minimum enrollment of two days per week. Parents will complete an enrollment application form and pay the non-refundable registration fee (when a space is available for your child). The Parent Handbook, Health Care Service Plan, and Crisis Intervention Plan can be accessed at [llpp.org](http://llpp.org) or a paper copy can be requested. Parents will also receive an enrollment packet containing the following required forms:

- [Health Form / Immunization Record](#) signed by a physician
- [Child Information Card](#) – updated yearly or with any change
- [Personal Information Form](#)
- [Parent/Agency Agreement](#)
- [CACFP Participation Form or Infant Food Program Waiver and Parent Providing Food Agreement](#)

**Schedule (Hours).** Preschool care is available during two sessions: Fours - Monday/Wednesday/Friday a.m., and Threes - Tuesday/Thursday a.m.

The Preschool will follow the Hamilton Community Schools (HCS) calendar and will **not** operate on any days HCS are closed due to Holidays, scheduled days off, or snow days. The site will also **not** operate if there is a fog delay.

**Arrival and Pick-Up.** Each child must be signed in upon arrival. Sign-in sheets are located by the door of the classroom. Parents should walk a child to the classroom door and alert the teacher to an arrival or departure. This is also a good time to talk to the staff about how your child is feeling.

All children must be signed out when they are picked up. Children will be released only to parents or persons authorized by parents and listed on the [Child Information Card](#). If you intend for someone not listed on the information card to pick up your child, notify the staff in writing. In emergencies, you may call the site. ID will be required at pick-up.

If a parent, by court order, is not allowed to pick up his or her child, a copy of the Court Order must be provided to LLPP and the child may be released only according to the court order on file. If the court order is not on file, either parent may pick up the child regardless of what the other parent has communicated.

**Late Pick-up Policy.** It is very important that parents pick up their children promptly after the preschool session end. There will be a \$20 fee assessed for late pick-up and dis-enrollment may occur after excessive late pick-ups.

**Withdrawal.** Two week written notice to the Site Director is required to withdraw a child from the program. If a two-week notice of withdrawal is not given, your account will be billed for the two weeks. The Site Director or Executive Director of Lakeshore Little People's Place may request withdrawal of a child from the program for the following reasons:

- For non-payment of fees
- For excessive late pick-ups (more than two in a three-month period)
- If a child endangers the health or safety of staff or other children
- If the director, in consultation with the staff, determines Lakeshore Little People's Place is unable to meet the needs of a child and/or a parent
- If conferences between the director and parents do not satisfactorily resolve inappropriate behavior
- If a parent does not provide the center with required paperwork concerning their child or refuses to abide by other licensing requirements
- If a parent behaves inappropriately in front of other parents, staff, or children

## Financial Information

**Payment Information.** A non-refundable registration fee of \$75 is due to secure your child's spot. A discount of 10% off the lowest tuition is given to families having two or more children.

Tuition is billed by the semester or weekly depending on the option selected. **Weekly tuition will be billed according to your child's schedule, whether or not your child is in attendance. Semester payment costs also remain the same whether or not your child attends.** Statements may be requested at any time.

For weekly payers, a late fee of \$15.00 per week will be charged if a payment is not received by the last day of the week your child attends. Non-payment or partial payment for two consecutive weeks may result in dismissal. A \$25 fee is charged for a returned check or insufficient funds.

**Methods of Payment.** LLPP accepts checks, cash or money orders. LLPP also offers parents the option to enroll for direct payment (ACH payment). ACH payments are electronic payments that are created when the parent gives LLPP the authorization to debit directly from their checking or saving account for tuition payment. Families may request these payments to be withdrawn weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. Monthly payments are billed according to the number of Mondays in a given month. Those interested in direct payment must fill out the [Authorization Agreement for Direct Payment](#) included in the enrollment packet. Direct payments are deducted from bank accounts on Tuesdays.

**Billing Concerns.** Questions regarding billing should be directed to the corporate office at [llpp.office@gmail.com](mailto:llpp.office@gmail.com).

**Tuition Assistance.** LLPP believes that children should have access to quality childcare and strives to make childcare affordable for families. The following forms of child care assistance are available for those families that qualify:

- **State Assistance.** LLPP is an eligible provider of childcare assistance through the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). The Child Development and Care subsidy program offers help for parents who meet eligibility requirements to receive assistance with the cost of accessing high quality childcare. Depending on income, MDE will pay a percentage of an hourly rate that is set for childcare. Families are expected to pay the difference between the MDE payment and the actual LLPP charge for tuition. Families may qualify for the Child Development and Care Program if they meet income requirements and need child care for: family preservation, high school completion, participation in an approved activity or employment.  
To determine eligibility and complete an application, visit [https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-landing-page?language=en\\_US](https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-landing-page?language=en_US). If a parent qualifies, a weekly parent co-pay will be determined based on the anticipated reimbursement from the State of Michigan. Full tuition payments are due weekly for childcare until an authorization notice from the state is received by LLPP.
- **LLPP Tuition Assistance.** Any family needing financial assistance for tuition payments is encouraged to apply for the LLPP Tuition Assistance program. All applications are reviewed by a committee that awards a weekly assistance amount based on income and expenses in relationship to childcare expenses. The amount of assistance given typically ranges from ten to twenty percent of weekly tuition costs, making quality childcare more affordable. Families may also apply if they typically have enough income to cover childcare expenses but have a special circumstance such as unemployment or medical circumstances. Funding for the LLPP tuition assistance fund comes largely from donations from area churches and the Holland Deacons' Conference. Ask your Site Director for a LLPP Tuition Assistance Application.
- **Ready for School.** Preschool tuition assistance may be available through Ready for School. If you have a three year old child (by September 1) and would like to apply for assistance, please see your Site Director for more information and an application.

## Inclusion

**Special Needs.** LLPP promotes inclusive practice when enrolling children with special needs and strives to provide appropriate learning opportunities for all children regardless of disability. In accordance with the MDE Early Childhood Standards of Quality, the curriculum is designed to provide an appropriate environment and adult guidance to enable the participation of children with special needs. Staff members working with special needs children will concentrate on the following five areas: early identification and early intervention, inclusive education, physical environment, partnerships with parents and multi-agency collaboration.

**Early Identification and Early Intervention.** Ages and Stages assessments are completed in conjunction with daily observations of children's play and progress for early identification of any special needs. Parents are able to complete the Ages and Stages Developmental Questionnaire (ASQ) online through the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District at [www.helpmegrowottawa.org/your-childs-development](http://www.helpmegrowottawa.org/your-childs-development). Children with an identified special need will be linked to area services that can aid families in understanding the resources available to them (see Multi-agency Collaboration for details).

**Inclusion.** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) entitles children with special needs to have access to the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). LRE means that young children with disabilities should receive services in typical community-based early childhood settings and programs whenever possible, and only go to more restrictive or specialized settings when their individual needs require it. Children with special needs and disabilities are fully integrated with other children in each aspect of the daily routine whenever possible. Activities are planned to raise children's awareness of special needs and disabilities in a positive way.

**Physical Environment.** Reasonable adaptations and arrangements are made so that children with special needs and disabilities can be included in all the indoor and outdoor play areas. Physical classroom space is arranged for supported and/or independent movement including easy access to toilet and eating areas. Respectful privacy is arranged for children with special needs at times of specific medical care at parent or child's request.

**Partnership with Parents.** Parents are encouraged to work closely with all staff to support their child's individual needs including discussions of child's progress and continued need. Parents are included and engaged in all communications regarding graduated procedures of intervention with local agencies and care providers. Parents are also consulted regarding information that should be shared with other agencies or individuals. Parent's perspectives on the care of their child with special needs are respected.

**Multi-Agency Collaboration.** The Site Director will serve as a liaison between the parents and other agencies. In each local school district, as well as the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District (OAISD), there is a person who is designated as the Project Find Coordinator. In most cases this person is the director of special education services. This individual can assist with identifying special needs and guiding families to the appropriate educational services within the school district.

**For children/students ages 3-26 years.** Contact the special education office in your local school district to find out who the Project Find Coordinator is for your district. This information can also be found on the OAISD website at [www.oaisd.org/oaisd/aboutus/localschools/](http://www.oaisd.org/oaisd/aboutus/localschools/).

**For children/ages 0 up to 3 years.** Contact the OAISD which has a program called Early On that assists children 0 up to 3 years of age that may be experiencing any type of developmental delay. Early On in Ottawa County may be reached by calling (877) 702-8600 ext 4663. Or for more information you may view the OAISD Early On website at [www.oaisd.org/oaisd/departments/earlychildhood/earlyon/](http://www.oaisd.org/oaisd/departments/earlychildhood/earlyon/).

**Special Needs and Allergy Emergency Plan.** Parents who report their child has a recognized/diagnosed special need and/or environmental or food allergy will be asked to complete a [Special Needs and Allergy Emergency Plan](#). This plan will give detailed instructions on how to specifically care for the child's unique needs as well as how these needs will be addressed in emergency situations.

**Cultural Competence Policy.** Lakeshore Little People's Place strives to create an environment in which all cultures and ethnic backgrounds are embraced and valued. Employees are trained in topics related to cultural competence and inclusive practices on an annual basis. Cultural competence comprises four components: (a) Awareness of one's own cultural worldview, (b) Attitude towards cultural differences, (c) Knowledge of different cultural practices and world-views, and (d) Cross-cultural skills. Developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_competence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_competence)). LLPP aspires to meet the above components through embracing cultural differences, expanding cultural knowledge, and striving to meet the culturally unique needs of all families.

## Child Health and Safety

**Child Health Policy.** A green Health Appraisal form containing an immunization record and documentation of a physical exam signed by a physician must be on file with LLPP. The green Health Appraisal form must be on file at the time of enrollment and updated annually for all children until they enter Kindergarten. Parents of School-Age children can sign a Physical Exam Waiver form stating that their child is in good health and that their immunizations are up to date.

It is the policy of LLPP to notify the parents as soon as possible when changes in the child's health are observed. This will allow parents to give additional input on a child's condition and be involved in decision making regarding the child's care. Indicators of changes in a child's health are:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Diarrhea - loose/watery stools without known cause  
**Exception:** Medication or new food reaction (call parents to confirm)
- Vomiting - any vomiting  
**Exception:** Babies that "burp up" following a feeding (consult parents for history)
- Unknown skin rash as these are often symptoms of communicable disease  
**Exception:** Parent does not need to be notified of mild diaper rash that is already known to the parent. Rashes due to allergies or known medical conditions should be treated as instructed by parent and a notification call must be made with each episode.
- Irritability, lethargy, persistent crying that is not typical for the child
- Difficulty breathing

If a child becomes too ill to participate comfortably in activities or they need more care than the staff can provide, the child will be temporarily separated from other children and sent home as soon as possible. Other criteria for exclusion include a fever above 101° (100.4° for under 2 months), or severe episodes of diarrhea or vomiting. LLPP also reserves the right to send children home with lesser criteria if there are a significant amount of children with similar symptoms. Parents are expected to pick up ill children within an hour of notification. Parents should notify the Site Director if a child in care has been diagnosed with a communicable and infectious disease. The Site Director will then post a Health Alert visible to all parents and report to the County Health Department if necessary. Please see the Health Care Service Plan for a list of communicable and infectious diseases.

**Return of Children to Childcare after Illness.** If a child is too ill to participate in the regular activities of the classroom they should not return to care. Children must be fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours prior to the child returning to the center. An exception to this is if a doctor's note is provided stating they can return to care. If a child has a communicable illness, the child may return once the exclusion criteria for that illness are resolved and/or the child receives clearance from a medical care provider. Exclusionary criteria will be determined by following medical care provider instructions and following guidelines set in place by the Ottawa or Allegan County Health Department regarding communicable diseases. LLPP reserves the right to request a doctor's note before allowing a child to return.

**Child Incident/Accident.** In case of injuries, the incident is documented and a Child Incident/Accident Report is completed. In case of serious injuries, staff will follow the guidelines for Accident or Injury (emergent) as listed in the Health Care Service Plan. All staff is trained in First aid and Pediatric, Child and Adult CPR and Infectious Disease Control Until the arrival of the parent, a physician, an ambulance or paramedics, the child's teacher or Site Director will make decisions regarding care of the child. LLPP is not responsible for medical bills incurred because of accident or injury while a child is in attendance. All serious injuries requiring medical attention are required to be reported to the Office of Children and Adult Licensing. **Please report any phone number changes on your Child Information Record so that you can be reached in an emergency.**

**Emergency Procedures.** LLPP has written procedures for emergency situations including fire, tornado, serious accident/injury and man-made disasters, as well as a crisis management plan. Emergency procedures and evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. For detailed instructions on specific emergency procedures, please see the Crisis/Disaster Response Plan.

**Child Abuse/Neglect.** LLPP staff members are required by law to report suspected incidents of child abuse/ neglect. Detailed information regarding this is available in the Crisis/Disaster Response Plan. Community services are available to families seeking help or intervention. Please see the Site Director or consult the Health Care Service Plan for a list of resources.



**Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports.** Staff will utilize a PBIS system (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) when working with children. This system is a set of tools and ideas used to approach discipline and interactions in a positive manner, to prevent problem behaviors, and to encourage child success. A PBIS system sets clear expectations for children, outlines simple rules, and allows children to be thoughtful about the choices they make. Our rules are: *Be safe, Be kind, and Be helpful*. Staff will encourage children to learn these rules, help them understand what they mean in each classroom, and direct them to think about them when a problem arises. When persistent challenging behaviors occur, staff will refer to the [Behavior Flow Chart](#) for specific steps to follow. For more information about our PBIS system and the Behavior Flow Chart, see the Site Director or Education Director.

**Child Discipline Policy.** Staff will use age-appropriate, positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation. Discipline is most effective when it is consistent, reinforces desired behavior and offers natural and logical consequences. Discipline helps children gain control over their behavior. Children act best when they know the rules and know they are expected to follow them. Positive methods of discipline create a constructive and supportive social group and reduce incidents of aggression. Positive discipline methods will help guide a child toward self-discipline and independence.

**This is encouraged by the following methods:**

- Planning ahead to prevent problems
- Setting consistent/clear rules
- Encouraging appropriate behavior
- Relating the discipline method to the behavior
- Talking to the child about the feelings he/she is having
- Redirecting or distracting a child
- Removing the child from the source of conflict
- Tailoring the method of discipline to the individual child
- Suggesting appropriate solutions
- Involving the child in problem solving

**All of the following means of punishment shall be prohibited:**

- Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.
- Placing any substances in a child's mouth, including but not limited to: soap, hot sauce, or vinegar.
- Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her including harness, leash or other restraint device. Strapping devices on confining equipment, such as high chairs used to stabilize the child in that type of chair, cannot be used for punishment or discipline.  
[Note: If a child needs to be restrained in an extreme situation to prevent harm to him/her or others, place the child's arms across the chest in a criss-cross position, position yourself behind the child with your arms on top of theirs until they are calm and the situation is safe.]
- Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child.
- Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Secluding or confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.
- Excluding a child from outdoor play or other gross motor activities. Examples of this include:
  - Not allowing a child to go outside because of misbehavior during small group time
  - Excluding the child from the entire outdoor period for throwing sand
  - Excluding the child from gym activities for not eating their lunch
- Excluding a child from daily learning experiences. This does **not** include age appropriate discipline techniques, such as:
  - Redirecting a child from the block area after throwing blocks
  - Having a child participate in small group time in a way that benefits the child and doesn't disrupt the group, such as having the child sit a few feet away
  - Using Time-out when appropriate (not appropriate for children under 3 years of age)

**Conscious Discipline.** Utilized in classrooms, this classroom management system emphasizes connections through empathy and encouragement so that children are better able to see from another's point of view and understand the impact of their behavior on others.

**Use of Time-out.** Removing a child from classroom activities is used as a last resort technique for children who are harming themselves or in danger of harming others. It is an opportunity for children to clear their minds and rejoin the group or activity in a more productive state. Time-outs are used only as a last resort to help the child gain a better sense of self-control. When using time-out, care giving staff must assure:

- Their expectations of the child's behavior are realistic
- Consequences immediately follow the child's behavior
- Children are not humiliated or made to feel threatened or afraid
- The time-out does not last longer than it takes for the child to calm down
- Children remain supervised at all times

**Note: Time-out is not an appropriate discipline technique for children under three years of age.**

**Behavior Concern Management.** If a child has a reoccurring behavior issue that continues after teachers have implemented the positive discipline guidelines above, the following steps will be taken:

- The child's teacher will fill out a Behavior Concern Report and give it to the Site Director.
- The Site Director will evaluate the steps taken by staff to correct the behavior and review all incident reports involving the child to look for patterns or other information that might be useful.
- The Site Director may aid the staff with intervention techniques and will set up a meeting with the child's parent ensuring that they are aware of the problem.
- At the parent conference an intervention plan will be developed. The age of the child, the child's background, the classroom setting, and other extenuating circumstances will be considered.
- In some cases, consultation with health care professionals and/or family services may be required.
- If the above intervention is not successful and the behavior does not improve, the director may remove the child from the program for a period of time, or permanently depending on the circumstance.
- The Site Director may, at any time during this process, decide not to continue care for the child if the safety of the child or other children is compromised or if behavior severely disrupts the daily classroom routine.

**Child Biting Intervention.** Biting another child should never occur but sometimes children get frustrated and bite other children. We want to be supportive of parents as they teach their children not to bite but at the same time we need to protect other children in our care. A bite that leaves red marks, bruising or broken skin must be reported to both children's parents and an Incident Report must be written. LLPP suggests that a parent seek medical attention for a child if the bite they receive breaks the skin.

**If a child bites twice in 2 weeks (14 calendar days), staff members will follow the steps for Behavior Concern Management.** Staff also will attempt to identify the reason for biting and apply the following preventions for biting:

- If it is being used for means of communication: help the child find a simple word or hand gesture to substitute for biting.
- If it is being used for attention: spend more one-on-one time with the child to alleviate their need for additional attention-seeking behavior.
- If it is being used for an oral fixation: provide a teething ring loosely attached to their wrist.

**Non-Smoking/Vaping Policy.** According to law, smoking of any kind, including marijuana, or vaping are prohibited in the buildings or on the adjoining grounds at Lakeshore Little People's Place.

## Classroom Information

**Classroom Ratios.** LLPP maintains lower teacher to child ratios than state guidelines whenever possible. The children to teacher state ratios are as follows:

- 3 to 4 years of age is at least 1 caregiver for every 10 children, or each fraction of 10
- 4 to 5 years of age is at least 1 caregiver for every 12 children, or each fraction of 12

**Daily Schedule.** A typical day may be as follows: arrival/center free choice play, teacher-directed small group and large group circle time (literacy, math and science activities, art and music, sensory, fine motor), Bible time, rotation time, snack time, center free choice play, and recall/clean-up. For specific times, please refer to your child's classroom schedule.

**Curriculum.** The High Scope approach uses ACTIVE LEARNING where children are involved in direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, ideas and events. Taken into consideration are adult-child interactions, the learning environment, and the daily routine. Beginning in the fall of 2022, our Hamilton Reformed program will begin transitioning to Creative Curriculum. CC features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, **creativity**, and critical thinking skills. The curriculum also offers daily opportunities to individualize instruction by helping teachers meet the needs of every learner.

**Bible Curriculum.** LLPP offers daily experiences that help children understand God's love for us. Experiences include reading Bible stories, taking part in devotionals, hands-on learning for story re-tellings, creative experiences, music, and conversations throughout each day. Our Preschool classroom will utilize Heart Shaper's Preschool curriculum.

**EBLI.** EBLI stands for Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. This is a program that teaches initial phonemic awareness and phonics, and then transitions to the teaching of letter recognition, letter formation, and writing.

**Monthly Newsletter.** A monthly newsletter is written by the classroom teachers. The newsletter reviews events and reminds families of upcoming activities and items they may need to bring from home.

**Lesson Plans.** Lead teachers, with the help of the assistants, will develop a written lesson plan developed around High Scope Key Developmental Indicators. Teachers will familiarize themselves with High Scope Preschool Curriculum Content including the following 8 areas: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language Literacy and Communication, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology, and Social Studies.

**Daily Reports/*tadpoles*®.** In order to provide the best school to home communication and keep parents involved in the day to day activities of children in care, an online program called *tadpoles*® is used. This program makes it easy for LLPP teachers to share lesson plans, daily experiences, accomplishments, reminders, and pictures on a daily basis. Daily reports will be securely communicated to parents through the *tadpoles*® app that parents will download. These reports are sent daily once a child is signed out for the day.

**Observation Records.** Teaching teams will use note-taking and checklists to accurately record behaviors and developmental milestones reached by each child as they occur within the classroom setting. These records will be used to guide behavior plans and recall skills when completing an individual child's progress report. Teachers will also use these observations to guide curriculum and lesson planning to increase skill levels in the classroom as a whole.

**Progress Reports.** LLPP specifically designs its assessments to document a preschool child's progress towards Kindergarten readiness skills. Teachers will document a child's competency in several core areas. Progress reports are completed twice per year for preschool children and are used to individualize each child's specific needs, monitor a child's progress, and evaluate teaching effectiveness. Teachers will share results with parents during parent/teacher conferences.

**Screening Tool.** LLPP uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) for its developmental and social-emotional screening tool for children from one month until they enter Kindergarten. Highly reliable and valid, ASQ-3 indicates differing levels of development, educates parents about developmental milestones and incorporates parents' expert knowledge about their child. Parents will complete the ASQ two times per year and teachers will evaluate results and use the information to guide lesson plans. If a delay is indicated by the assessment, teachers will work together with parents to develop a plan to address the delay including referrals for available resources. If the parent has already completed this with a health care provider or other professional, a copy of the form can be submitted to their child's teacher. Parents can also complete their own assessment of their child by visiting [www.helpmegrowottawa.org/your-childs-development](http://www.helpmegrowottawa.org/your-childs-development). If the child meets criteria for a delay, the parent will be contacted with available services.

**Conferences.** Parents are given the opportunity to discuss the child's progress at any time by requesting a meeting with their child's teacher. Teachers will also keep parents updated on a regular basis of their child's progress. For preschool age children, conferences will be held twice a year to discuss their child's developmental progress.

**Great Start to Quality.** LLPP participates in GSQ by committing to quality early care and education practices and improvements. LLPP is part of the STAR rating and improvement system, wherein measures of quality are assessed not only internally, but also by a team of state validators and assessors. LLPP may be observed by GSQ team members, to evaluate the quality of our programs using the CLASS tool. CLASS is a tool for observing and assessing the effectiveness of interactions among teachers and children in classrooms. It measures the emotional, organizational, and instructional support provided by the teacher that contribute to the children's social, developmental, and academic achievement.

**Food.** LLPP will provide a snack schedule and parents can sign up to bring a snack that meets the USDA guidelines. If your child has special dietary needs, please inform your child's teacher so that special accommodations can be made. LLPP is a peanut and tree nut free environment. Meal-time is a social learning time where children are encouraged to try new foods. Good table manners and eating habits are encouraged.

**Special Occasions and Food Service.** In the instance of special occasion days, such as birthdays and holidays, we ask that "treats" are limited to non-food items. If a classroom wishes to incorporate special snacks into the celebrations, a parent sign-up for food items, approved by the director, will be provided. If a food item is brought as a treat, it should be individually wrapped and it will be sent home with the children so that the parent can choose whether to give it to the child and determine any potential allergic reactions.

**Use of Media in the Classroom.** Teachers are asked to use movies and media to support academic instruction and should not use media for entertainment purposes, unless used as a focused reward for the students with the approval of the director. Movies, books and computer games need to be age appropriate with a "G" rating. A maximum of 2 hours of media per week is acceptable but must be part of a written lesson plan. The classroom lights must remain on and an alternative activity must be provided for children who do not wish to participate in watching the video. All media is prohibited for children under two years of age. Media means the use of electronic devices with a screen, including but not limited to, televisions, computers, tablets, iPads, cameras and electric game consoles.

**Use of Photos.** LLPP uses photos of children for many purposes. They may be used for a special project/craft, identification of personal belongings, classroom/hallway decoration, LLPP publicity, and/or within our *tadpoles*® system. *tadpoles*® electronically sends photos of a child participating in LLPP classroom activities to his/her parents. There are times that group photos may be sent to parents within the program through *tadpoles*® that include children other than their own. Parents may request in writing to their Site Director that their child not be photographed for one or all of the mentioned purposes.

**Clothing.** Children should wear clothes which are comfortable and easy to fasten. Rubber-soled shoes are recommended. An extra set of clothing should be placed in the child's cubby for spills or accidents which may occur. Please label all clothing, including coats, with your child's name. Warm outerwear including boots, caps, snow-pants, and mittens are needed on cold days. All belongings should be kept in a labeled bag.

**Toys from Home.** LLPP discourages children from bringing any toys from home, unless requested for a classroom activity. If an item from home is needed to assist a child with a transition throughout the day, it should be discussed with the classroom teacher. LLPP cannot be responsible for lost or broken items. Guns, war toys, and other toy weapons are prohibited.

**Outdoor Time.** As part of their preschool experience, children may be provided with outdoor time unless prevented by inclement weather. Children will not be permitted to go outside when the "feels like" temperature is under 10 °F or above 100 °F. The "feels like" temperature takes into consideration the wind chill or heat index and is a better measure of the weather conditions for outdoor play.

## Employee and Volunteer Requirements

**Employee Screening Policy.** The following steps will be taken by the Site Director to ensure that all staff members are of responsible character and suitable to meet the needs of children as stated in the Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers:

- Site Directors will have written record of three or more references and complete a public sex offender registry (PSOR) clearance for any/all staff before having any contact with a child in care. Any individual registered on the public sex offender registry (PSOR) is prohibited from having contact with any child in care.
- Staff must sign a written acknowledgment of the following:
  - That they will act in a manner that is conducive to the welfare of children, have not been convicted of a crime, and will report upon being investigated or convicted of a crime
  - That they have received a copy of the Michigan Child Protection laws excerpted by the Department of Health and Human Services and understand its contents including mandating requirements, definitions and indicators of abuse/neglect
  - That they will report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child by parent, staff, or other to the proper authorities
  - Sign a statement that they have never been named in a central registry case, are the perpetrator of a child abuse or child neglect, nor have been investigated for abuse or neglect
- A Comprehensive Background Check is required for all employees working in a licensed childcare center including:
  - Applicants/licensees, Licensee Designees and Program Directors
  - All childcare staff, including self-employed and contractual, and minor caregivers
  - Unsupervised volunteers
- Background checks will include:
  - A check of the licensing database for previous disciplinary action
  - An FBI Fingerprint check (checks all state and federal crimes)
  - Michigan child abuse and neglect registry
  - National Sex Offender Registry
  - Criminal history registry and child abuse/neglect registry for any states of residence in the past 5 years
- If an applicant has lived out of the country in the past five years, an equivalent check must be provided, if available. If it cannot be provided, the person must sign a self-certifying statement that he/she is eligible to be the licensee, and/or work in the childcare.
- LLPP reserves the right to require drug/alcohol screening of any employee at any time during employment.

**Employee Training Policy.** All employees must comply with training requirements mandated by federal, state, or local agencies. All employees will complete an orientation process before unsupervised contact with children. All employees will also familiarize themselves with the State Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers.

All employees must read and sign the [Employee Acknowledgement](#) stating that they have read and understood all the policies of the center as stated in the Employee and Parent Handbooks, Classroom Handbook, Crisis/Disaster Response Plan and Health Care Service Plan.

All employees must complete 24 hours of annual training in child development, curriculum, child discipline, health/safety, emergency preparedness, nutrition, working with parents and licensing rules for childcare centers. All staff must also complete training in the areas of child abuse/neglect, cultural competency/inclusions, safe sleep and shaken baby syndrome.

All employees are required to have current First Aid and Pediatric, Child and Adult CPR and Infectious Disease Control training.

All lead teachers and assistant teachers will meet requirements set by Michigan's Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). Each classroom is also required to have a lead teacher that meets educational requirements in child development or a related field. Infant/Toddler leads must also have additional semester hours/CEUs in Infant/Toddler development.

**Teacher Evaluations.** Parents are given the opportunity to evaluate classroom functioning and teacher performance in the fall and spring. The Site Director will use these evaluations to set improvement goals for the classrooms and provide feedback to individual teachers on their performance. The Site Director will also see written feedback from co-workers regarding an employee's performance. These feedback forms are designed for the use of the Site Director only and are destroyed after the information is used to assist in the Site Director's written evaluation of the employee. The Site Director will meet with the employee annually to give feedback and assist employees in creating goals for the upcoming year.

**Outside Employment.** LLPP is not liable for any employee aside from the time in which they are actually working for LLPP. An employee who is hired for private duty by a parent of a child enrolled in the program is not a representative of LLPP during that time. This includes but is not limited to: babysitting, serving as a nanny, house sitting/cleaning, transporting children, or any other services for which they are paid by any source other than LLPP.

**Volunteer Policy.** Volunteers provide a wonderful service in the classroom as they lend their time, energy and compassion toward the children. It is important to keep in mind that ultimately the children are the responsibility of the employees. Staff members will ALWAYS have a "line-of-sight" observation of the volunteer.

All volunteers must be approved by the Site Director. If the volunteer will be in contact with the children at least 4 hours per week for more than 2 consecutive weeks, they must provide documentation confirming a negative TB test.

Volunteers under eighteen years of age must provide references from an educator or other unrelated adult qualified to give a reference. All volunteers will complete a Volunteer Agreement and agree to:

- A public sex offender registry (PSOR) clearance before having any contact with a child in care. Any individual registered on the public sex offender registry (PSOR) is prohibited from having contact with any child in care.
- Sign a statement that they will act in a manner that is conducive to the welfare of children, have not been convicted of a crime, and will report upon being investigated or convicted of a crime
- Sign a statement that they have received a copy of the Michigan Child Protection laws excerpted by the Department of Human Services and understand its contents including mandating requirements, definitions and indicators of abuse/neglect
- Sign a statement that they understand child abuse/neglect is against the law and will report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child by parent, staff or other to the proper authorities
- Sign a statement that they have never been named in a central registry case, are the perpetrator of a child abuse or child neglect, nor have been investigated for abuse or neglect
- Review Policies and Procedures of LLPP
- Maintain parent/worker confidentiality, including not disclosing full names of any children in reports or other class work
- Follow direction given by the classroom teacher and Site Director

Furthermore, it is agreed that a volunteer at Lakeshore Little People's Place **WILL NOT:**

- Have any unsupervised contact with children such as being left alone in a classroom with children or accompany children to the bathroom
- Have access to receipt books or payment boxes
- Have access to staff personnel or child records
- Be counted in determining staffing to child ratios

Note: A supervised volunteer does not include the rare occasions when a parent/guardian accompanies their child on a special activity such as a classroom party or field trip, when the parent is only with their child and has no responsibility for classroom activities or children other than their own.

**Classroom Visitors.** Any classroom visitor, volunteer, or guest speaker must be pre-approved by the Site Director and check in with the office when they arrive.

## Parent Involvement and Resources

**Parent Involvement.** Lakeshore Little People's Place welcomes your family into our community and invites you to become active partners with us as we teach and care for your child. When parents and teachers join in partnership an optimum learning environment can be created. LLPP has an open door policy with all parents and we invite you to drop in anytime. Here are some ways you can get involved:

- Have informal day-to-day conversations with teachers
- Communicate with your child's teacher through email, phone and notes
- Attend formal parent teacher conferences
- Participate in developmental discussions regarding your child by request or invitation
- Volunteer within the classroom
- Read your child's lesson plans, monthly newsletters and parent board information
- Participate in special events for parents and families
- Reinforce lesson plan activities at home
- Participate in program evaluations and giving input on policy and procedure
- Share ideas or items related to your culture that can be shared in the classroom

**Procedures Related to Concerns.** Lakeshore Little People's Place strives to provide a positive environment for all, however at times concerns may arise. If you have any concerns, please bring them to the attention of the Site Director who will complete a Concern Resolution form. If you are unable to resolve your concerns through the Site Director, the Executive Director may be contacted. If you have concerns regarding a policy or procedure you can contact the Executive Director who will bring your concern to the board of directors. If you feel that LLPP is in violation of a licensing regulation, reports may be made to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services: Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). A copy of the regulations is available on the parent table.

**Parent Resources.** A list of family health related resources is available in the Health Care Services Plan. Health related information regarding specific communicable illnesses/diseases is also available in the Site Director's office. A book of more detailed and widespread resources is also available on the parent table. If you wish to speak with someone about your needs, dial 2-1-1 which is an access point for persons needing health and human service programs.

**Help Me Grow Ottawa.** Help Me Grow connects families with children birth through age five to free local resources helping children grow up healthy and ready to succeed in school. Some ways Help Me Grow supports families include:

- Up-to-date information on childcare, kindergarten tips and free or low-cost quality preschool
- Free and convenient access to the nationally recognized [Ages and Stages Questionnaire\(ASQ\)](#) in English and Spanish to check-in on your child's development
- Answers to prenatal and pregnancy questions
- Links to local playgroups, library happenings and other parenting resources including home visiting services

If your child's teachers, caregivers, or doctors have concerns about your child's behavior, development, learning or wellbeing, call 844-233-2244 or visit [www.hmgottawa.org](http://www.hmgottawa.org) to be connected to helpful services in the community.

**Parenting Education Opportunities.** Opportunities for parenting education will be highlighted in the director's monthly newsletters, displayed on the parent boards or distributed through your child's mailbox. Education opportunities may include: speakers, playgroups, parenting articles, seminars and special community events.

**Donation Opportunities.** Lakeshore Little People's Place is a non-profit organization and relies on fundraising to provide extra income for the center. If you would like to share fundraising ideas or would like to help coordinate a center fundraising event, please see your Site Director. Here are ways you can get involved:

- LLPP has the option to accept donations on our website in the form of credit/debit cards. Visit [llpp.org](http://llpp.org), click on *Donate*, fill out a simple form, and make a contribution safely and securely with a card. A one-time gift option is available, or a recurring gift may be set up (weekly, monthly, or annually).
- As another opportunity to give, each LLPP site location offers fundraisers throughout the year, for families who would like to support LLPP in another way.