



# Parent's Handbook 2025

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## PART 1 General Overview of The Little Sprouts Organization

### Welcome

We are so happy your family has become a part of our center. It is our desire to provide a well-rounded program for your child, with a caring and trained staff who will provide challenges and opportunities for children in which to experiment, explore, create, and discover.

Any and all components of the guidelines may be changed, altered, deleted or discontinued at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors at any time. These guidelines are as complete as possible. However, they are not all inclusive. A circumstance may arise which will require decisions or action not currently stated in the guidelines. The Center reserves the right to deviate from the policies as required by the facts and circumstances in each case. –Board of Directors

### Objectives

The main objective of Little Sprouts is to provide loving care for the children. This care includes abundant nurturing in a flexible and calm atmosphere and educational stimulation appropriate to each child's development level. The following objectives are to be used as a guide for the Center's general operation:

- To provide an environment that is secure, warm, and responsive, and that offers opportunities for experiences with a variety of activities and materials within a routine where cooperative play is encouraged.
- To provide a program for the children that:
  - Encourages and demonstrates optimal health, safety, and nutritional practices
  - Meets each child's physical needs while encouraging independence in self-care
  - Helps Children grow stronger and healthier while having fun
  - Enhances a positive self-concept
  - Provides an atmosphere in which children have respect for others
  - Facilitates the development of social skills
- To be supportive of parents and to encourage their involvement and communication to strengthen family life
- To help children grow stronger and healthier while having fun
- Develop preschool readiness skills
- Facilitates physical development and skills
- Encourages language development
- Fosters an active curiosity about the world and an enthusiasm for learning which stimulates exploratory behavior and creative expression

### Parent Responsibilities

1. Please inform the center if someone other than the mother or father will be picking up the child and inform that person they will need proof of

identification in order to pick up the child.

2. Provide any special food or clothing (for inclement weather to play outdoors) the child will need.
3. Report any change in address or phone numbers to the center. .Submit weekly schedules by Wednesday at 8:00 AM.
4. Be prepared for your weekly ACH withdrawals.
5. Submit all state required paperwork for your child on a yearly basis. It is very important to the center to keep the children's file up to code in order for our annual inspection.
6. Provide all Infant items such as bottles, diapers, wipes, extra clothes, etc.

Most of all, we ask you to be a partner with us as we care for your child. You are the principal influence in your child's life. We look to you as our greatest resource in developing a program for your child. Choosing a quality childcare program is one of the most important decisions a parent can make. We take your decisions very seriously and are committed to living up to the important responsibility of caring for your child. We invite you to visit Little Sprouts any time and feel free to ask questions, or make suggestions. Should any problems arise concerning your child, please contact the Directors.

### Center Licensing/Ratio

Little Sprouts is licensed by the state for 96 children.

Sweet Peas (ages NB-6 months) 8 children maximum with a ratio of 1:4

Cotton Tails (ages NB-2 years) 8 children maximum with a ratio of 1:4

Caterpillars (ages 6-12 months) 8 children maximum with a ratio of 1:4

Buttercups (ages 12-18 months) 8 children maximum with a ratio of 1:4

Owlets (ages 18-24 months) 8 children maximum with a ratio of 1:4

Sunflowers (ages 24-36 months) 8 children maximum with a ratio of 1:7

TigerLilys (ages 2.5 -3.5 years 7 children maximum with a ratio of 1:7

Honey Bees (ages 3-5) 25 children maximum with a ratio of 1:10

Grass Stains (ages 4-6) 24 children maximum with a ratio of 1:12 Fireflies

(ages 5-3rd grade) 25 children maximum with at ratio of 1:15

### Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

All employees are Mandatory Reporters of child abuse and receive training in identifying abuse. This is a state requirement. Iowa code requires that every employee of a licensed daycare facility, who in the course of employment, reasonably believes a child has suffered physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, shall immediately report the suspected abuse directly to the Department of Human Services. Any Mandatory Reporter, who in good faith, makes a report of child abuse or participated in the investigation of a child abuse, has immunity from any liability.

## Enrollment Policies

Little Sprouts is a year round, full day program serving children ages 6 weeks to 9 years old. Registrations will be accepted on a first come first serve basis. In order to enroll you need to supply the following:

- All registration forms. State regulation requires you to fill out all forms in the enrollment packet and return them to the center by the first day of attendance.
- A registration fee of \$75.00 per child is due at the time of registration. This fee is non-refundable.
- A report of Physical examination including a signed and dated certificate of immunization within the last 6 months.
- Any religious exemptions for immunizations must be notarized.

We strongly encourage parents to bring their child in to visit and meet the teachers prior to their first day. If a visit is not possible, we ask that you schedule some extra time the first day your child attends to spend some extra time with him/her at the center to help familiarize them with the new surroundings. If you anticipate separation difficulties please let us know. If you are concerned please feel free to call the center at any time. Adjustment times vary with each child. Teachers are experienced to help in this process. It's our desire to keep in close contact with you during this process.

## Contracts

New contracts are issued twice a year in May and August. School Year contracts begin the first day of classes at NHCSD.. Summer contracts will begin the day after school gets out for the Summer. These dates will vary each year. The center reserves the right to increase prices as needed for each contract offering. Signing a School Year Contract does not automatically ensure you will be offered a Summer Contract and vice versa.

## Schedule

All parents must have a set schedule of hours on file with Little Sprouts. Please notify the Center of changes in your schedule as soon as possible. This includes letting us know if you are running late and are unable to pick up your child (ren) when scheduled. Parents must inform the Center of schedule changes. Failure to do so will be considered a blatant disregard for the schedule. Care will be provided only if available. If this becomes consistent, it will be addressed on a case by case situation and a penalty may be charged. (See Sign In and Sign Out Policy) If a child will be absent or late on a day that he/she has been scheduled for, it is the parent's

responsibility to let the daycare know within 30 minutes of the child's scheduled arrival time.

### Extended Leave of Absence

If you are planning a maternity leave, \$50 per child, per month non-refundable holding fee can be made. If child(ren) are not returning after the end of 3 months your spot may be forfeited.

### Planned and Unplanned Closings

Little Sprouts will be closed for the following holidays; New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. When a holiday falls on a Saturday the holiday may be observed on Friday. If it falls on a Sunday the holiday may be observed on Monday. Closings could include other days due to state of Iowa pandemic mitigations, inclement weather, or emergencies. The Director will notify parents in advance. Little Sprouts **does not automatically follow** the NHCSD inclement weather cancellations or late starts. If New Hampton schools **only have a late start due to weather, you may assume we are on time.**

We do reserve the right to close our center for the day, or close early. A condition where a closure may occur is when the National Weather Service issues a Severe Winter Storm Warning, Blizzard Warning, or Ice Storm Warning for Chickasaw County. Another reason a closure may occur is if the Iowa DOT and/or National Weather Service recommends no travel on area highways that would prevent staff from safely traveling to work. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis.

Our daycare families will be notified as soon as possible in the event of closure. Parent contact will be made via group email, ProCare App, Facebook posts, local radio FM 95.1 The Bull, and as a last resort a phone call. If the weather seems questionable, we recommend parents keep a close eye on Facebook and their emails and have a backup plan in place.

Holidays, early closures, late starts, or center closures due to weather or other emergencies will not result in a reduction of weekly tuition fees. Safety for our children and staff will always be our number one priority.

### Parent Communication App

We utilize a paperless reporting program called ProCare. For infants this keeps track of all of their diapers, bottles, meals, snacks, activities, naps, mood etc. For the older kids it records their daily activity and their meals. This information will be sent to you in real time via text message, email or both. Please check your note daily as teachers

will put special notes on it such as if a baby needs more diapers or breast milk. This program even allows the Caregivers to take photos and videos of the children throughout the day to share with the parents.

### Annual Parent Survey

This is a chance to let your opinions be heard by staff, leadership, and Board members. These will be sent via Google Forms. Please request a paper copy if you prefer.

### Breakfast, Snack, & Lunch

A weekly menu will be posted on the parent bulletin board by the clock on the computer.. Please inform the Director if your child is on a special diet for medical purposes. All Little Sprout sites offer breakfast that include grain, milk, and fruit. All lunches include bread, a protein, a vegetable, a fruit, and milk. We practice good table manners and encourage nutritional awareness. Children are encouraged to try new foods, yet are allowed to make their own choices.) Little Sprouts will not allow outside food with the exception of special occasions such as Birthdays. **Little Sprouts is NOT a Peanut Free Facility** however we honor any food related allergies that children may have such as berries or milk.

**Children's Center:** Breakfast is served from 7:00-8:30 am, Lunch 11:00 am, Afternoon snack 3:00-3:30. This site participates in the CACFP (Child Adult Care Food Program, and the price of meals and snacks are included in your weekly fees.

**Student Center:** Breakfast is served from 7:30-8:00, Morning Snack from 9:45-10:15, Lunch 12-12:30, Afternoon snack 3:30-4pm. The student site participates in the Federal School Breakfast and Lunch Program through the school district. Students will be required to purchase a lunch account through the school for their breakfast and lunches. Snacks are included in the childcare fees.

### Visitors

Little Sprouts has an open door policy for parents. No need to call before you come to pick up or even stop by for a visit. However, no other family members such as siblings or grandparents have that privilege without being in the company of the parent. When children get visitors at daycare, it is often disruptive to the child's routine and upsetting for them when they do not get to leave with the visitor. All visitors who come to the center must use our visitor sign in and out application located on the ipad by the check in computer. The visitor program requires the reason for the visit, visitor contact information, as well as a photo of the visitor's face. Visitors included but not limited to job candidates, vendors, family of staff members, board

members, church members, will be subject to check in.

### Resting Time

All children at the Children's center nap or rest from 12-2 pm. Three and four year olds at the Student center nap 12:45-2:45 Nap mats are provided and your child is welcome to bring a special blanket to keep here at daycare to sleep with. Please inform your child that he/she will need to nap or rest on their mat at naptime. The children will be more cooperative and accepting of our procedure if we have your support and they are prepared for it ahead of time. We launder all blankets and sheets weekly.

### Toys From Home

Little Sprouts provides plenty of toys for the children to play with. We request that NO toys be brought from home to daycare. So many times toys get broken or lost, or just cause problems. If your child has a toy in the car please make sure it is left in the vehicle before entering the center. Do not send the toy in with the child in their bag as that also causes distractions throughout the day. We appreciate your help and understanding in keeping toys at home.

### Safe Childcare Apparel

If your child is well enough to attend Little Sprouts he/she will participate in all aspects of our program including outside play. Our staffing requirements may not permit us to keep one or two children inside during our planned recess time. Our staff will make every effort to assure the children are dressed appropriately for outdoor play. Please help us with this responsibility by sending appropriate outerwear. Marking your child's clothing with their name is a great help to us.

Children must wear shoes at all times unless napping. Sturdy rubber soled shoes that allow children to run and climb without slipping are recommended. Children ages 3 and under are required to wear shoes with "backs" on them (flip flops are unacceptable for those under the age of 3)

### Field Trip Policy

Field trips are also planned as a valuable learning experience. Trips include walks to area businesses, parks, etc. Authorization is given in the registration packet to participate in such trips. The Chickasaw Chassis may also provide transportation for such trips. A separate, specific permission shall be completed by parents prior to all field trips. There may or may not be a cost incurred by the parent(s) to help offset the cost of the field trip. The parent(s) will be notified of such cost prior to the Field Trip. It is at the discretion of the parent(s) to allow the child to participate and incur any cost if applicable. There is always 1 extra staff member present on fieldtrips. Non-Center Activities are activities not sponsored by Little Sprouts. They include such activities

as preschool, swim lessons, and Park & Rec programs. Parents must fill out a non-center activity form for all such activities.

### Discipline of Children:

We use only positive discipline at daycare. This technique avoids unwanted behaviors, improves children's self-esteem and problem solving skills and encourages pro social behavior. This helps the center maintain an atmosphere of warmth and understanding and helps children develop as individuals and as part of a group. Preventative Discipline is covered in depth in our required staff training, before a caregiver is assigned to a classroom. Methods of this training include: online training modules, face-to-face discussion during our executive orientation classes, and is modeled by the leadership staff during the shadowing phase of training. Preventative discipline is implemented in our classrooms via the following actions:

- Redirecting children away from problems and into positive interactions
- Providing consistent positive communication to positive behavior
- Simple rules that are consistent and known to children

In extreme situations, separation from the group may be required for the benefit of the child or the remainder of the group. If separation is necessary. We remove the child from the group calmly, with as little disruption as possible. Place the child where visual supervision by staff can be maintained at all times.

If a child's behavior is destructive or disruptive beyond our resources, a parent may be required to pick up their child immediately. No reduction in fees will be applied.

Corporal punishment or physical abuse is absolutely forbidden. No child will be physically restrained in any way unless required to protect the immediate safety of the child or others. Punishment may not be associated with going to the toilet, food deprivation or outdoor play. Communication between parents and staff is essential to its success.

Communication between caregivers and parents concerning behavior and discipline is crucial. Caregivers will communicate with parents about daily discipline via the parent communication App Procare. Communication can also be made via the center telephone and/or the center email account. Urgent disciplinary issues can be discussed at pick up or drop off with the caregiver staff and or the directors. At any time parents have questions or concerns about discipline (or any reason) parents are encouraged to call the office.

## PART II PAYMENT AND FEES

## Tuition/Bills

Statements are issued via email every Monday, payments are made via ACH withdrawal on Friday of this same week. Statements are always for the previous week of care. If your account exceeds 2 weeks with no payment there will be a late fee of \$25.00 per child added to your bill each week until it is paid. After the second week your tuition is not paid your child care privileges may be suspended. Little Sprouts reserves the right to review their tuition rates and will provide a minimum of 3 weeks notification if an increase is in order. Returned payments will be assessed a fee of \$25 per return. You may also incur a late fee if alternate payment is not made immediately (within 2 days of being notified). If you have any questions about your bill please call 641-394-5840.

## Weekly Program Fees

The contract amount will be due even if a child does not attend. This includes illness, family vacation, inclement weather, national holiday or any temporary change in parent's schedule.

## Payment Policy

Little Sprouts is funded by tuition payments, donations and grants. It is important that you pay on time. We are providing a service that enables you to work or to pursue those activities that are important to you. Failure to remit tuition when it is due jeopardizes the continuity and stability of your child's care. For this reason we cannot extend credit to any family enrolled at Little Sprouts. We use an accounting program called Tuition Express. It auto drafts your fees each week. If a payment is declined it will be tried again, and Little Sprouts will apply a fee of \$25. If you require assistance with your billing, you must contact the Director so a payment agreement may be made.

## Weekly Processing Fee

There will be a \$2.25 per week processing charge per ACH account (not per child). Credit card payments are assessed a fee of 1%. These fees are to cover our weekly software billing fees.

## Reservation Fees/Registration Fees

Little Sprouts charges a non-refundable reservation fee to reserve your child's spots from the date we offer families a care slot, to the date a family wishes to start. This fee is currently \$150 per child. This fee prevents Little Sprouts from filling your desired care-slot to another family. On the first day of care, we also charge a \$75 registration fee to help cover the administrative costs associated with enrollment. Holding and Registration fees are extra and not applied to the account balance.

## Fundraisers

Little Sprouts sometimes does fundraisers throughout the year to help keep the business afloat and tuition costs low as possible. Each family is encouraged to participate in the fundraising events. If a family decides not to participate in the fundraisers there will be an option to make a donation instead of participating.

## PART III INFANT CARE \*Children's Center Only\*

### Infant Bottle and Breast Feeding Policies

If you are enrolling an infant it is your responsibility to provide diapers, wipes, extra clothes, and a minimum of 2 bottles. Little Sprouts offers Generic Enfamil with iron and Enfamil Gentlease. If your infant does not tolerate that formula or you wish to use another brand it is your responsibility to make sure your child has enough supply for each week. Breast milk is welcome at Little Sprouts as well. You may bring enough for just the day or bring a stockpile for us to keep in the freezer and we will let you know when it gets low. Please have all breast milk and Formula marked with your child's name! We also provide Rice Cereal and Oatmeal (store bought) and Gerber baby foods. Infants NEED to be able to sit up on their own in order for us to feed them solid foods such as rice cereal. No cereal will be added to bottles.

### No Outside Shoes

In order to maintain a clean floor for our little crawlers in the infant room, there will be no shoes worn into the room from the outside. Parents and staff must remove their shoes or place shoe covers on before entering the room. All other persons are not allowed into the infant room. Staff is required to wear shoes specifically for infant care or to wear their socks. According to state law, no child over the age of 2 shall be allowed in the infant room for safety reasons. If you have multiple children and will be dropping them off together, please either drop off the older child first or have the older child wait in the hallway while you drop off the infant.

### Diapers

It is the responsibility of the parents to provide diapers and wipes for any child in diapers. Staff will inventory each child's diapers on Monday and let parents know when their child only has 3-4 days' worth of diapers or wipes remaining. A note will be posted on the Parent App and staff MAY verbally tell parents as well. Parents are expected to replenish the child's supply before the child runs out. The daycare shall

keep on hand a backup supply of diapers and wipes. These diapers and wipes will be off-brand/store-brand. These brands may include Dollar General, Parents Choice, Up and Up and Members Mark. If the daycare needs to use backup diapers for a child after sending a note home, parents will be billed \$3.00 per diaper used. If staff for some reason neglected to inform parents that diapers were in short supply, parents will not be charged for the use of backup diapers but are expected to bring in more diapers within 2 days. Parents will NOT hold the daycare responsible for any allergic reaction or rashes that may occur due to the use of backup diapers and/or wipes.

### Safe Sleep Policy

All infants under age 12 months shall be placed on their backs in their own individual crib, on a firm mattress with a tight fitting sheet. Crib sheets are laundered weekly, and crib rails are wiped down with disinfectant solution nightly. Sleep sacks shall be used for infants under 12 months of age instead of blankets. The childcare center is kept between 68 -72 degrees fahrenheit to avoid overheating. On the occasion that infants arrive at the center asleep in their car seat, or if they fall asleep outside the safe sleep surface, infants will be transferred to their cribs. Cribs are located within sight and sound range of staff at all times. We never put a baby in a room to sleep alone. Cribs are labeled with the individual infant's name and important developmental information about them. This ensures a smooth transition of care between caregiver shifts. Soft products (pillows, blankets, toys, etc.) shall not be in the crib. Nothing shall hang or be attached to the crib. No child shall be laid down wearing any type of hood, bib, or hat. Babies may be laid down with a pacifier if the parents request this. Pacifiers may not be tethered or attached to anything. When an infant can easily turn over from the supine position to the prone (tummy) position, they shall be put down to sleep on their back but allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer to sleep. Sleeping infants will be checked on by staff members every 10 minutes. Unless the child's primary doctor specifies the need for a positioning device that restricts movement within the child's crib, such devices shall not be used. These include swaddles. A child's primary doctor can provide signed and dated orders for any exceptions to our safe sleep guidelines. The order must include an expiration date. All parents and staff will be given information detailing safe sleep policies upon hire or enrollment.

### Biting Policy

Biting is a normal part of growing in the early years of age 1 through 3. We will work with the child and parent in regards to frequent biting incidents, but we will need your help and feedback in this as well. A temporary separation from the group is given to the child who does the biting. Staff will fill out an incident report for the child that is doing the biting as well as an accident report for the child who was bitten. If further steps need to be taken the Director will contact the parent.

## PART IV HEALTH, SAFETY, and EMERGENCY POLICIES

### Health Policies

- A. *Head Lice Exclusion Policy:* We require children to be picked up within 1 hour if they have an infestation of head lice or nits. Children with head lice will be excluded from care for 24 hours from discovery. A medicated lice treatment must be applied and nits removed at home; before they return to care. Cleaning and sanitizing will be done at the center to avoid reinfestation and spreading to others.
- B. *General Childhood Illness Exclusion Policies:* We seek your help in the effort to keep all children healthy and free of contagious disease. It is our goal to maintain an environment that is healthy, clean and safe for the children attending Little Sprouts and the adults who work here. We can cut down on the spread of germs here at Little Sprouts by keeping ill children from attending daycare. For the protection of the children and staff, parents are asked not to bring a sick child to Little Sprouts. If your child develops any of the below listed symptoms during the day, you will be called to come and take your child home within 1 hour. If your child has been exposed to any contagious diseases below, please notify the center so we can be alert to similar symptoms in other children. The center will notify you of contagious illnesses that may be present as well as posting a notice. Please see the attached \*state regulations.

## Medical, Dental and Minor Injury Policy

It is our goal to prevent accidents and to be prepared to deal with emergencies should they occur and to educate children about safety practices. In the event of a medical or dental emergency or an accident that may require emergency care, we shall try to contact parents first, then persons authorized by parents to be contacted in an emergency, then the child's doctor or dentist. If it is impossible to reach any of these people, the child will be taken by ambulance to Mercy Medical Center-New Hampton. In the event of a minor injury that does not require professional medical care the following procedures will be followed. The staff member assigned to the injured child's room shall take care of the child by washing the wound if necessary, applying a band aid or ice pack as needed while offering comfort to the child. All incidents, large and small will be documented with an accident or incident report. It will include the date of injury, injured child's name, nature of injury, and staff person's name. When the parent arrives to pick up their child, they will need to sign the incident report and will be given a copy of it if they wish.

## Medication Policy

Only center administrators who have taken a state-approved Medication Administration class will be allowed to administer prescription medication. Medicines prescribed by a doctor will be given if they are in the original container with all pharmacy data printed on the label. A release form must be filled out, signed and dated by the parent before prescription drugs can be administered to your child. Please inform the center why the medication is to be administered and for what illness or condition in writing with your signature and date. All medications must be in the original container. No OTC medications such as Tylenol will be administered by daycare staff. Parents are encouraged to come to the center to administer any OTC medications they wish. This does not include sunscreen or diaper ointments

## Playground Policies:

1. All staff of Little Sprouts Children's and Student Centers receive on-line training as well as on the job training, including playground safety, before they are placed in the care ratio.
2. All playground equipment located at both Little Sprouts care sites have been professionally installed according to the manufacturer instructions and have the proper anchoring. The Children's Center playground has a play surface which is 2.75 thick rubber mats. They are rated for fall protection of up to 8 feet. The mats are inspected annually for wear and tear by the playground installer. They will be replaced as recommended by the manufacturer. The Student Center play surface consists of wood chips measuring a depth of 8 inches. The chips are under the play equipment and extend 8 feet around the equipment for fall safety. Wood chips are replaced at

least annually and more often if required. Both sites maintain the recommended fall surfacing for the height of our equipment and the ages of the children use it.

4. Center administration conducts monthly safety checklist sweeps of the playground and its equipment. Checklist items include but are not limited to:

- a. missing or broken parts
- b. protruding nuts or bolts
- c. rusty metal or chipped paint
- d. sharp edges, splinters, or rough surfaces.
- e. stability of hand holds
- f. cracks
- g. stability of non-anchored toys. (little tikes play structures)
- h. wear and deterioration
- i. safety hazards such as debris, wasp nests, or hard packed surfacing.
- j. fall surfacing depth is correct.

In the event that a problem is discovered, children's access will be restricted until the hazard is removed by the staff person. If necessary, a work request will be submitted to maintenance. If maintenance deems the equipment replacement is necessary, daycare admin will put in a request to the Board of Directors.

### **Strangulation Prevention Policy**

In order to protect our children from the threat of strangulation injuries, we have implemented the following exclusions in our dramatic play options: Strings, straps, rope, and cords of any kind that are long enough to encircle a child's neck, This includes belts, blinds cords, scarves, ties, boas, pacifier tethers, hoodie strings, etc. We also require our staff members who wear lanyards to only choose the breakaway style. Children are not permitted to wear lanyards at Little Sprouts.

### **Supervision of Children**

We believe the best way to deal with injuries is to avoid them from happening using active supervision. The children experience active supervision during each and every moment as they move through their busy day.

CLASSROOM SUPERVISION: When the children are on site in their classrooms, staff are actively engaged with the children at all times; providing those safe and nurturing activities, adult interactions and guiding peer interactions. The staff are trained to

have eyes on the children at all times. Additionally, we maintain strict compliance to staff and child ratios that keep staff close-at-hand to help the children explore their environments safely. Specifically, we use name to face recognition techniques. This means our staff does not just count heads; but make sure each child is accounted for by face and name. Some instances when we use this technique are:

1. When moving from one area of the building to another
2. Transitioning from one activity to another
3. Whenever a new parent or staff member enters or leaves the room

**PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION:** When the children are outdoors on our playground or playing in our large motor playroom, we utilize all the same supervision dos and don'ts as in the classroom. We also add the following:

1. Each group has a staff member who carries a comprehensive emergency backpack to have any supplies or child emergency info at the ready.
2. Staff are encouraged to be up and on their feet and actively engaged in the large motor play, to help them navigate the equipment and riding toys safely.

**WATER SUPERVISION:** At Little Sprouts we recognize the value of water play. We regularly engage children ages 12 months and up in water play by utilizing water tables, sprinkler, or even trips to the local splash pad. During all water play activities the caregivers maintain touch supervision with each child. Little Sprouts does not allow our children to access any bodies of water like a pool, lake, pond, etc.

**FIELDTRIP SUPERVISION:** We schedule field trips occasionally so that our Little Sprouts can experience environments other than just our classrooms. When we do so, extra steps are taken by the staff to ensure a safe and well supervised adventure. Per state regs, we always have 1 extra staff member above ratio to provide another set of hands and eyes on the kids. We conduct face to name recognition counts every 15 minutes. We also break the group down into small "teams" that are assigned to 1 Caregiver. This way, each Caregiver has just a few children they closely monitor and supervise throughout the experience. Small, orderly groups of kids allow staff to easily ensure the Caregiver does not lose track of anybody.

### **Emergency Plans**

Your child's safety is important to us. We have emergency plans implemented and posted in each room of the center. Staff and children participate in monthly fire and tornado drills. In the case of an emergency such as a bomb threat, chemical spill, earthquake, tornado or fire, we would need to evacuate to our safe haven (which is the courthouse located caddy corner to the center) where the children will await parent arrival. Should such an emergency occur, the director will notify parents and/or will post a phone number where we can be reached to notify you of our location

### Lost or Abducted Child Policy

Little Sprouts has many safety supports in place to prevent a child from going missing. These include but are not limited to:

1. Electronic child and stranger-proof door controls that do not allow admittance or departure.
2. Security cameras that cover 90% of the center floor space.
3. Electronic sign in and out of all visitors, staff and children.
4. Staff trained to make face-to-name roster counts every 15 minutes.
5. Staff trained to be aware of , and prohibit children being picked up by those other than parents.

In the unlikely event that a child would become unaccounted for, Little Sprouts has the following emergency steps in place:

1. The staff will contact the Director immediately and provide the Director with the last known location of the child.
2. The Director will notify the parents immediately, and contact the police (911) to assist in the search., and then call the child abuse reporting hotline.
3. The Director will search the interior of the building, and the Assistant Director will search the playground and the exterior of the building. The remaining children will be accounted for and if necessary, we will evacuate to our safe haven.
4. No matter the time-length of the missing child incident, an incident report will be written; signed by staff and parents and filed.
5. A report will be made to the HHS child care consultant.

### Access Policy

1. Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care shall not have \*unrestricted access to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio.
2. It is imperative that centers not allow people who have not had a record check assume child care responsibilities or be alone with children. This directly relates both to child safety and liability to the center.
3. Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct \*\*supervision and \*\*\*monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the teacher unless he/she delegates it to the teacher assistant due to a conflict of interest with the person.

\*Unrestricted access means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care.

\*\*Supervision means to be in charge of an individual engaged with children in an activity or task and ensure that they perform it correctly.

\*\*\*Monitoring means to be in charge of ensuring proper conduct of others.

4. Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If staff is unsure about the reason they will contact the Director, Assistant Director or On-site Supervisor to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation staff will follow the "intruder in the center" procedures. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc. will be monitored by paid staff and will not be allowed to interact with the children on premise.
5. A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry (Iowa Code 692A):
  - a. Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.
  - b. Shall not be on the property of the child care center without the written permission of the center director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own minor child or ward to and from the center.
    - i. The center director is not obligated to provide written permission and must consult with their DHS licensing consultant first.
    - ii. If written permission is granted it shall include the conditions under which the sex offender may be present, including:
      1. The precise location in the center where the sex offender may be present.
      2. The reason for the sex offender's presence at the facility.
      3. The duration of the sex offender's presence.
      4. Description of how the center staff will supervise the sex offender to ensure that the sex offender is not left alone with a child.
      5. The written permission shall be signed and dated by the director and sex offender and kept on file for review by the center licensing consultant.
      6. Both parents have unrestricted access to their children at any time they are clocked in and under the care of Little Sprouts, unless a current court order is in place.

## PART V TERMINATION, NON DISCRIMINATION, & GRIEVANCE POLICIES

### Dismissal Reasons and Procedures

Little Sprouts Children's and Student 's Centers reserve the right to nullify a family's contract at any time. Reasons a contract may be nullified include but are not limited to:

1. Disruptive, Destructive or Dangerous Behaviors: Should a child's behavior be consistently disruptive or dangerous, daycare administration reserves the right to send a child home. This discharge may be for the remainder of the day, multiple days, or permanently.
2. Breach of Policy: If a family repeatedly fails to adhere to center policies, daycare administration may nullify the care contract.
3. Failure to Pay: If a family fails to make weekly payments in a timely manner, we will exercise our right to discharge the child from our program.

All situations where a contract is voided by the center will only occur after daycare administrators have exhausted all efforts to problem solve with the family.

### Parental Grievance Policy

Little Sprouts believes in positive, open communication between parents, staff, and our leadership team. This is how we solve most problems. We encourage parents to use the following chain of command when seeking assistance with a concern or complaint.

Infant Center Director Monica Rittenberry [LSCC.ad.nh@gmail.com](mailto:LSCC.ad.nh@gmail.com)

Student Center Director Presley Kohlmeyer [lscs.scdpresleyk.nh@gmail.com](mailto:lscs.scdpresleyk.nh@gmail.com)

Executive Director Amy Ameling [LSCC.director.nh@gmail.com](mailto:LSCC.director.nh@gmail.com)

Board of Directors Brian Carolan [LSCC-Board-of-Directors@googlegroups.com](mailto:LSCC-Board-of-Directors@googlegroups.com)

Iowa HHS Child Care Consultant Becky Frost [rfrost@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:rfrost@dhs.state.ia.us)

### Parental Termination of Daycare

If a parent is terminating a contract a 2 week written notice is needed to be given to

the director. If your child does not come during those 2 weeks you will still be billed for the minimum hours contracted for.

### CACFP Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender

## PART VI ACCESS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND HANDBOOK

Copies of the handbook are available from the Director in either digital or hard copy form. If you need assistance reading or translating the handbook, you may contact any of the following references;

Las copias del manual están disponibles del Director en forma digital o impresa. Si necesita ayuda para leer o traducir el manual, puede comunicarse con cualquiera de las siguientes referencias;

Amy Ameling, Executive Director, Little Sprouts Children's Center: **641-394-5840**

New Hampton Public Schools: **641-394-2144**

New Horizons Chamber of Commerce: **641-394-2021**

### Board of Directors

Brian Carolan President  
 Jill Fibikar Vice President  
 Erin McGee- Secretary  
 Steve Samec – Treasurer  
 Tammy Robinson – Member

Rebekah Heit- Member  
 Lacey Mitchell- Member  
 Kayla Smith – Member  
 Carolyn Martin-Shaw- Member

## **PART VI RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I acknowledge that I have received and read my copy of the ParentHandbook. Please choose one or both

\_\_\_\_\_ I received an Electronic Copy on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I received a Hard Copy on \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to familiarize myself with the material in the Handbook and to follow the procedures set forth in the handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date