Little Blossoms

Childcare and Pre-School

Parent Handbook



1221 Deerfield Blvd

Blair, NE 68008

Phone: 402-533-8488

Fax: 402-426-1322

Owner: Jane Bouwman

Director: Beth Burton

[www.littleblossomsblair.com](http://www.littleblossomsblair.com)

Revised 06/2019

**Fee Schedule and Payment Information**

**Infant Room (6 weeks-18 months)**

$47.00/day or $235.00/week

**Toddler Room (18 months-2 years)**

$42.00/day or $210.00/week

**Pre-K Room (3-5 years)**

$40.00/day or $200.00/week

**School-Age Room (Kindergarten-12 years)**

Before School- $8.00/day

After School- $9.00/day

School Holidays and Summer- $38.00/day

**Part-Time Rates**

Children who are scheduled to attend Little Blossoms 3 days or less per week will be considered part-time. The part-time rate is additional $5 in tuition per day. (This does not apply to the School-Age room.)

**Drop-In Rates**

Reservations need to be made with the director 24 hours in advance. The fee is $11.00/hour and is limited to 4 hours/day. No discounts will be given for more than one child.

**Sibling Discount**

A 10% discount will be offered for families with two or more children. The discount is taken off the lowest tuitions.

**Other Fees**

* **$10.00 late fee for payments received after Thursday at 6:00 p.m.**

Tuition payments are due the Thursday before attendance. A tuition drop box for payments is located at the front desk. Attendance forms need to be filled out and placed with a check or money order into the drop box. The weekly fee holds your child’s place at the center. We consider fees not received by Thursday at 6:00 p.m. delinquent, and will assess a late fee of $10.00. Failure to keep payments current is grounds for termination from the program. We appreciate your conscientiousness in keeping your account up to date.

* **$25.00/child one-time registration fee (non-refundable)**

A $25 per child registration fee will be required when returning your paperwork. This is a one-time fee that helps subsidize the cost of supplies. This also holds your child’s space in the program. This fee is non-refundable.

* **$30.00 service fee for returned checks**

A $30 service fee will be assessed for any returned check. Families are only allowed two returned checks, after which payments will be on a cash-only basis.

* **$1.00/minute late fee for pick-up after 6:00 p.m.**

A $1 per minute fee will be assessed to your account for each minute after 6:00 p.m. you arrive to collect your child. If you are late more than twice, the fee will need to be paid in cash before the child can return to the center for care.

* **$5.00/field trip fee (School-Age– Summer)**

Each field trip requires a $5 payment to attend.

**Payment Types Accepted**

Acceptable forms of payment are: check, money order, cashier’s check, cash, or Tuition Express (a form of direct deposit from your bank). Tuition payments should be placed into the tuition drop box located at the front desk. Payments should be made payable to Little Blossoms. To help ensure proper crediting, always write your child/children’s name on the check or money order.

**Credits**

Sick-day credits will only be given upon the director’s discretion.

**Other Payment Information**

* Title 20 is accepted
* Year-end statements will be provided upon request

**Ages Served**

Our center services children who are 6 weeks through 12 years of age.

**Hours of Operation**

The center is in operation from 6:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Monday-Friday.

**Building Closings and Holidays**

Little Blossoms will be closed on the following days (subject to change):

* Labor Day
* Thanksgiving & the following Friday
* Christmas Eve & Christmas Day
* New Year’s Eve (possibly) & New Year’s Day
* Memorial Day
* Independence Day

Little Blossoms provides care for School-Age children on days when school is cancelled due to inclement weather. Please notify the center as soon as possible if you will need care on these days.

**Enrollment Criteria**

* Ages of admission for our program are 6 weeks through 12 years of age
* Priority is given to full-time children due to scheduling conflicts with part-time schedules
* Full-time and part-time registrations are accepted subject to availability
* Completed paperwork is needed the time of enrollment (includes registration and immunization records)

**History of Little Blossoms**

Little Blossoms is a locally owned business. The first Little Blossoms building opened in July of 2007 under the administration of its founder, Jane Bouwman. The rapid growth of its programs quickly outgrew the 321 North 16th St location’s capacity of 60 children. In 2011, a second building was added to accommodate an additional 90 children. With the continued growth of the program, a dream became a reality. In June of 2014, Jane opened a brand-new facility to house 200 children, built from the ground up. Currently, the staff of 46 individuals is made up of teachers who are educated and experienced in early childhood education and child development.

**Equal Opportunity**

Little Blossoms is committed to providing an equal opportunity to all families. Children with special needs will be accepted if it is determined that the Little Blossoms staff-to-child ratios are adequate for appropriate care of the child. We must be able to meet the individual needs of the child, the child must not a hazard to him/herself, and the child must not endanger the well-being of the staff or other children enrolled in the program. Little Blossoms is committed to providing an environment free of harassment and discrimination.

**Program Philosophy**

At Little Blossoms, we strongly believe that children are unique individuals whose ideas, interests, and skills flourish in an environment where play is the primary context for learning, and where daily activities are appropriate for each child’s individual development.

We believe that meaningful learning involves active, hands-on experience and participation. Through our curriculum, we provide each child a personalized educational experience to support and develop his or her maximum potential regarding social, emotional, language, intellectual, and physical growth. We are committed to enhancing children’s self-esteem through daily interactions, developmentally appropriate experiences, and relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

Little Blossoms aims to help children develop the life skills that will enable them to experience fulfilling and rewarding participation within their communities by providing opportunities to work cooperatively, to explore human relationships, and to practice non-violent conflict resolution. We work and learn together to better understand the perspectives of others.

**Curriculum Philosophy**

At Little Blossoms, we adhere to Creative Curriculum, which focuses on developing the social, emotional, and academic skills in children.  We use weekly, center-wide themes, and each classroom creates developmentally appropriate lesson plans that meet the needs of the children.  We incorporate the learning styles, strengths, and interests of each classroom while balancing teacher-directed and child-initiated learning.

**Licensing and Evaluation**

Our center is licensed by the state of Nebraska. Information about regulations, how licensing staff can be contacted, and how complaints can be made is located on the web at http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl\_childcare\_childcareindex.aspx or by mail to:

Department of Health and Human Services-Division of Public Health

Licensure Unit

Children's Services Licensing

PO Box 94986

Lincoln, Ne 68509-4986

Telephone: 1-800-600-1289 or (402) 471-1802

Fax: (402) 471-7763

**Title 20**

The center accepts Title 20. Authorization needs to be received and required paperwork must be filled out prior to the child attending Little Blossoms. If the family has a co-pay, payment needs to be made by the first of each month. Our Provider ID# is 17415343

**Before Enrolling**

We strongly encourage all parents who are new to our program to make a pre-enrollment visit and/or tour. The pre-enrollment visit typically lasts about 20 minutes, and is scheduled during business hours. We encourage you to ask questions! Written information about our program, tuition rate sheets, and other documentation will be available to parents at the time of the visit.

Parents of infants and toddlers are expected to meet their child’s primary caregiver before the first day of enrollment to share information about how to care for their child’s specific needs. During this time, you and your child’s teacher will complete the Family and Child Information Forms.

**What You Need to Bring with Your Child (as appropriate)**

* disposable diapers or training pants
* bottles
* powder and/or ointment (if desired)
* change of clothes
* comfort items
* backpack (Pre-K - 6th grade)
* blanket (for nap time)
* wipes
* infant formula
* pureed baby food

**Notification of Changes**

Please notify the staff and/or director of any changes in the child at home. In addition, any concerns can be addressed with the director at any time.

**Discontinuing Service and Termination of Care**

Families who wish to discontinue services with Little Blossoms must give a one month (30 days) written notice of withdrawal. Non-attendance of more than two weeks without notice or communication will be considered a termination of services.

At any time, services can be terminated for outstanding balances. All past due balances for more than two consecutive weeks with no communication could result in termination of care. If terminated due to billing issues, re-enrollment may be considered with bank account information on file.

Services may also be terminated for a child’s behavior issues if parents do not collaborate with the center to resolve the behaviors. If a child is causing physical or verbal harm, or if the child is threatening physical harm to others, that child will be suspended from care. If the situation persists, with or without parent involvement, care could be terminated.

**Child to Staff Ratios**

State regulations have strict ratio laws that Little Blossoms abides by at all times. The ratios are as follows (children: teacher):

* Infants- 4:1
* 18 months to 3 years- 6:1
* 3 years- 10:1
* 4 to 5 years- 12:1
* School-Age- 15:1

**Discipline and Behavior Philosophy**

The goals of the Little Blossoms guidance and discipline policy are to supervise, guide, encourage, and support each child to develop self-control, management of feelings, and problem-solving abilities to help discover the intrinsic rewards for appropriate and cooperative behavior. We encourage every child within the center to respect his or herself, to respect the other children, to respect the property, and to respect the adults in the environment. Love and Logic = Loving Relationships & Responsible Kids.

* Each child is encouraged to understand fundamental concepts of self-respect, self-discipline, and respect for other people.
* Each child is encouraged to understand how his/her behavior influences the functioning of the entire group.
* We will follow the Love and Logic philosophy to guide in making appropriate choices and decisions.

**The Four Principles of Love and Logic**

1. **Help Children Build a Healthy Sense of Self.** Everything kids learn and do affects how they see themselves. This, in turn, determines what they choose to do with their lives.
2. **Share Control Within Limits.** Control is like love. The more we give away, the more we get in return. When we love people, we will also set healthy limits.
3. **Offer Empathy, Then Consequences.** Empathy allows children to learn from their mistakes instead of learning to resent adults.
4. **Share the Thinking.** Give your kids a lifelong gift. Every time they cause a problem or make a mistake, allow them to think more about the solution than you do.

Using the principles of Love and Logic, we take several steps to address behavior issues.

These steps are all teacher-guided and are done in a supportive and loving manner.

Given that children are at different developmental levels, the following expectations are developmentally appropriate for each individual child.

* Infants and young toddlers have very little control over the things that they want or do.
* Older toddlers are beginning to explore their independence. They are learning how to control their behavior, how to share, and how to get along with others.
* Preschoolers often test limits and are learning the consequences of their behavior.
* School-age children often test limits and will learn the consequences of their actions and behaviors.

**3-Strike Policy (School-Age)**

With school-age children, we have a 3-strike policy in place for physical or verbal violence. If a school-age child shows aggression or makes a verbal threat to another child or a teacher, a discipline form will be filled out. Administration and the child’s parents will be notified immediately. If this occurs three times, a suspension will take place. The length of the suspension will be decided on an individual basis. After the initial suspension, any repeat offense will result in the removal from our program.

Field trips, fun days, and library trips are all considered a privilege. We reserve the right to remove these privileges for any misbehavior. If suspended from all day field trip(s), attendance at Little Blossoms is also suspended.

**Building Evacuation and Safe Place**  
Fire drill-

Evacuation plans are posted in all rooms of the center. Fire drills are exercised monthly at varying times, as required by the Fire Marshal, and are recorded on a record sheet. In the event of a fire or fire alarm, the children are evacuated through the nearest exit and moved to the safest point away from the building. Infants are taken out of the infant room in approved emergency evacuation rolling cribs. Teachers will check all restrooms and play areas. When evacuating the building, teachers bring the sign in/out sheets and Emergency Binders with them and do name-to-face counts to ensure that all children are present.

We have a professional fire and security inspector annually inspect our fire alarm system, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and exits. The Fire Marshal’s office inspects our facility every two years. We are given a written report, which allows us to keep our licensure updated.

Tornado Drills-

Practice tornado drills will be conducted four times randomly during tornado season (March to September). Staff is informed whenever a storm/ tornado watch is in effect and kept posted on how to proceed if the tornado watch evolves into a tornado warning.

Emergency Contacts-

In the event of an emergency, we will attempt to contact each child’s parent/guardian or an emergency contact at the telephone numbers provided on your registration information. It is important to keep this information up-to-date and to notify the director immediately of any changes. Children who have special needs will be accommodated in any emergency.

Emergency Evacuation-

If Little Blossoms should become unsafe in any way (such as gas leak, bomb or weapon threat, or an actual attack at the center or near the center) we will evacuate. If safety and/or weather do not permit us to wait outside, we will retreat to an alternative location: Deerfield Primary School, 1100 Deerfield Blvd., Blair, NE.

Emergency Lock-Down-

In the case of a civil disturbance, we will secure the premises or go into “Lock Down” mode. We will then call the local authorities and follow their instructions.

Power Outage & Loss of Water-

In the event of a power outage lasting longer than 2 hours, you or your emergency contact will be contacted via phone and asked to pick up your child until the heat, air, and /or power can be restored. Loss of water disrupts appropriate diapering, hand washing, and toileting. If the center loses water, the parents will be called immediately to pick up their children.

Security-

The center is equipped with security cameras in each classroom. These cameras are closed-circuit. The day’s events are recorded to ensure the safety of the children and the staff. The center is equipped with zero-access doors. Each parent will need to scan his or her finger to allow door access into the center.

If children need to be picked up while off-location, a member of management will make contact via a phone call to a parent, approved pick-up person, or emergency contact. The identity of an approved pickup person must be verified before releasing the child. An ID will need to be presented when children are released from the care of Little Blossoms.

Medicine and Emergency Information-

In the event of an evacuation, a member of management will take all medicines and medical information with them. They will keep all medicines on their person. The medicines will be secured, yet accessible.

**Drop-off and Pick-up**

Children must be signed in and out of the center by an authorized person listed on the Children’s Record. The safety of our children and families is our primary concern; therefore, parents are responsible for seeing the child into the center and making contact with a staff person. If someone other than the parent is going to be picking up, please notify us ahead of time. A verbal notice is fine the day of, but that person needs to be listed on the Children’s Record. If that person is not on the list, we must have written permission from you to release your child. Please inform any person that is picking up your child that an ID will need to be presented if their identity is not known. Children will not be release to any person under 16 years of age. In case of an emergency, authorized individuals may assume responsibility for taking a child from the center if no parent can be contacted.

Little Blossoms closes at 6:00 p.m., after this time we are no longer licensed to have children in our care. If your child is still present at 6:05 p.m., we will attempt to call parents and/or authorized people. If no contact is made by 6:15 p.m., we will call the police. We understand that unforeseen circumstances arise. We will make every attempt to accommodate you if communication is made, but we cannot be responsible for your child after 6:00 p.m.

**Transportation**

During the school year, Little Blossoms transports children to local elementary schools at no cost. Students may also travel to school and activities at Deerfield Primary School by foot. Please check with the director to make sure that transportation is available for your child.

Transportation will be provided for field trips and other activities. While transporting children, an 88-passenger bus that does not have seat belts will be used for children ages 6 and above, and a 26-passenger bus with 5-point harnesses will be used for children ages 5 and under. Special arrangements will be made for children who do not meet the weight and height requirements for the 88-passenger bus by providing properly restrained car seats. All staff who transport children have taken the “Safe Kids Buckle Up” training and are also CPR and First Aid certified.

When the heat index is above 95℉, no out-of-town field trips will be attended. For in-town field trips, water will be provided on the bus.

In the event of an emergency, the driver will secure the surroundings and stay with the children at all times. The driver and/or another teacher will contact the police, 911, or other emergency personnel, as well as Little Blossoms management. If a child becomes sick on the bus, the driver and/or a teacher will separate the sick child from others, clean up, and contact Little Blossoms management for further instructions.

**Hand Washing**

Frequent and thorough hand washing is considered the most effective way to prevent the spread of most common diseases.

Staff will wash their hands:

* upon entering the classroom
* before handling foods, cooking, preparing bottles, serving food, or feeding children
* after toileting self or children, and after diaper changing
* after handling or coming into contact with body fluids such as mucus (after wiping or blowing nose), blood, saliva, or urine
* after being outdoors
* before and after administering medication or ointment (done by staff who has taken and completed medication training)
* after cleaning
* after handling garbage
* after handling pets, pet cages, or other pet objects
* after handling an ill child
* immediately after removing gloves used for any purpose, even if hands are not visibly dirty

• before going home

• before and after eating, drinking, smoking, or taking a break

• when moving from one group to another (e.g., visiting) that involves contact with infants or toddlers

• or when otherwise necessary

Children will be directed or assisted on hand washing:

• upon arrival at the center

• before and after meals or cooking activities

• after toileting or having diaper changed

• after outdoor play

• after contact with body fluids (including wiping or blowing nose)

• before and after using water-play items, water tables, or moist items (such as clay)

• after handling pets or pet objects

• when moving from one group to another (e.g., visiting) that involves contact with infants or toddlers

• or when otherwise necessary

We recommend that your and your child’s hands be washed before going home in the evening. Our water temperatures are controlled to prevent accidental scolding.

**Injuries at Little Blossoms**

We take precautions to prevent accidents, but as children begin testing their limitations, accidents may happen. First Aid will be administered to a child, if needed. Each accident will be recorded on an Accident Report. Accident Reports are completed for all types of injuries, including falls, scratches, and other interactions that result in injury. Depending on the severity of the accident, parents may be contacted by phone at the discretion of your child’s teacher and/or administration. We will maintain a copy of the report for your child’s file. Parents may request a copy, if desired.

For any head injury, parents will immediately be informed. Parents can choose to pick up their children to supervise the injury for the remainder of the day. If an injury causes a great amount of bleeding, or upsets the child to the point of inconsolability, you will be asked to pick up your child immediately.

**Health Policies**

The center is licensed and equipped to care for children in good health. Parents and staff need to work together to promote the child’s total well-being.

**Health Requirements**

* Each child must have a complete **health form** on file and all **immunizations** must be recorded and up to date.
* **Preventing health problems**. The center will take every precaution to make sure your children remain safe and healthy in the program. We do this by overseeing a child’s nutrition and activity needs, following a strict sanitation procedure, getting enough fresh air, and excluding children from attending who have communicable disease.
* **Responding to sick children**. For the well-being of the sick child and the health and safety of all children, we must temporarily exclude children who exhibit the following symptoms: a fever of more than 100℉, vomiting, diarrhea (2 or more uncontained in one hour), severe nasal or eye discharge, unidentified rashes, and other contagious diseases such as chicken pox, measles, lice, etc. If any of these symptoms become evident while a child is in care, we will contact parents to make necessary arrangements to pick up the child. Children can return to the program 24 hours after the symptoms cease, or when their pediatrician determines them no longer contagious.
* **Child abuse and neglect**. Please be aware that the center is mandated by the Child Protection Law to report to the Department of Protective Services any suspected case of child physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or neglect.
* **Emergencies.** In a medical emergency, we will make every effort to contact the child’s parents. Failing to do so, we will contact the doctor listed on the Children’s Record and follow the doctor’s instructions until parents are contacted.
* **Administering medication.** If your child requires medication while at the center, you must fill out our parental permission form. The form, provided in your registration packet, allows staff to administer prescribed medication. We require a separate form for each new medication. If privacy is a concern, please see the director about a confidential medication statement for signing-in medication. Please notify the staff and/or director of any medication that is given at home or changes to a medication.
* Children are required to **wash hands** upon entering and leaving the center as well as after toileting and eating.
* **Lice**. Our center has a “No Nit-No Bug” policy. If a child is sent home with lice, the child will not be able to return to care for 24 hours after being treated. The child will not be allowed in attendance until they are free of any nits or live bugs.
* **Exclusion of Staff**. All staff members are required to be up-to-date on vaccinations or be signed-off for religious reasons. Exclusions of staff include a temperature of 100℉ or more, vomiting, diarrhea, contagious rash, or viruses. Staff members will be allowed to return to work 24 hours after symptoms cease.

**Qualifications for Teachers**

The quality of any child development center is a direct reflection of its staff. Little Blossoms recognizes its employees as the center’s most valuable component. Working with children can be a tremendously rewarding career, and it takes a very special person to do it well. The staff at Little Blossoms exceeds all recommended requirements for the early childhood education field. The teachers at Little Blossoms meet the needs of both the center and of the families. For this reason, we are committed to providing a working environment that exemplifies cooperation and support.

Full-time teachers are required by the state of Nebraska to take 12 credit hours of training each year. The state also requires that part-time staff members take 6 credit hours of training per year. All staff members are required to obtain certification in CPR and First Aid. The cost of training is paid for by Little Blossoms.

Our teachers go through a rigorous screening and interview process before they are hired. Applicants are required to be at least 16 years of age with a clean criminal background. Each applicant must have a background check through the child abuse registry and the sex offender registry. We do not hire individuals convicted of child abuse and/or neglect. Each applicant must be able to be physically active with children and must be in good health. We only accept teachers with a commitment to parents and children. To optimize your child’s growth and development, we hire teachers who are interested in providing quality care and stimulating environments. Only the best-qualified applicants are selected to become Little Blossoms teachers.

If you are interested in finding out more about your child’s teacher (i.e. - qualifications, experience, and personal interests/ hobbies), please take some time to view the staff “Get to Know You” cards and photos in the facility entryway.

**Food Allergies**

If your child has a food allergy or other special dietary need, please discuss this with the director prior to your child’s first day. Please notify the director and your child’s teacher of any food allergies, including the severity of the allergy and what to do if such items are accidentally ingested. Parents will need to fill out an Allergy Action Plan and have it signed by their physician. Children with food allergies may not begin at the center until this form is complete. We will make every reasonable effort to accommodate children with food allergies, but there are limits to what can be done in a group-setting. Parents may be asked to furnish substitute food items.

Little Blossoms has children enrolled who have life-threatening allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, and other foods. Little Blossoms is a “Peanut-Free” facility. Peanuts, peanut butter, nuts, nut oil, nut-based items, and snacks with peanuts in them are prohibited. Various rooms have signage on the doors to notify you of any other allergies in these rooms. Please be respectful of these children and keep foods out of the classroom.

**Allergy and Special Diet Policy and Procedure:**

If a child has an allergy or special diet, a meeting with the family, owner, director, and classroom teacher will take place to create a suitable action plan that all parties can agree upon. The action plan will include food that is allowed, who will provide the food, risks involved in each classroom, and any other pertinent information.

• Little Blossoms will use information from the meeting to create an action plan.

• The child’s classroom will have signage on the outside, indicating what allergy is present.

• Signage will be displayed in the classroom, stating what the child can and cannot have.

• All teachers who are in the room are responsible for understanding the allergy and allergy triggers, and will report any questions to another teacher or management.

**Meals Served**

Because food and nutrition are important components of a child’s development, Little Blossoms emphasizes the importance of well-balanced meal. We promote a healthy attitude towards food. We teach children about good eating habits, healthy reasons to eat, why variety is important, and why foods prepared in certain ways are not healthy. We balance the menu from the different food groups, trying to serve foods are low in sodium, refined sugars, fat, and preservatives and contain no artificial coloring or flavoring. We encourage children to explore new tastes. Sweetened beverages are avoided and only 100% fruit juice is served. Little Blossoms provides skim milk with designated meals and snacks to children over 18 months.

At Little Blossoms, we practice family-style meals, during which our teachers sit down with the children and help them to serve themselves. Meals are served in a leisurely manner with time allowed for conversation. This is a wonderful time for the teachers and children to talk about their days, to teach manners, and to learn self-help skills. Through spontaneous conversation at the lunch table children are encouraged to taste all the food on their plates. Nutritionists tell us that while a child may initially reject a new food item, offering it several times (and in a peer group setting where others are enjoying the food enthusiastically!) often helps broaden a child’s range of taste. We do not force the children to clean their plates or count how many bites children eat; rather, through a positive approach, we encourage children to taste foods that are unfamiliar to them. Teachers also use snack and meal times to talk about good nutrition and why we need to eat certain foods. Staff assists children as they develop skills needed to pour and scoop their own servings of food and beverages. Spills may happen, and children are encouraged to help wipe them up. Our goal is to make meal times pleasant, social times to help children learn to regulate their own portion size. Monthly menus are posted in the lobby.

**Parent Involvement**

Parents are always welcome to participate and volunteer in Little Blossoms’ activities. Getting involved in your child’s school life helps boost self-esteem, establishes a positive attitude toward education, and opens the lines of communication between home and the center. Parents may volunteer in the classroom by reading stories, assisting with an activity, sharing a special talent, sharing information regarding their job or culture, demonstrating musical instruments, or talking about their hobbies with the children. If you have special interest you would like to share with us, please let the director or your child’s teacher know.

Parents may also volunteer as chaperones on field trips or assist with organizing activities. The Little Blossoms is open to learning new ways parents can be involved! If a parent would like additional education or training, Little Blossoms has resources and information available.

**Parent Visits/Open Door Policy**

Any custodial parent or guardian of a child enrolled at Little Blossoms may visit our center at any time during regular hours of operation without having to secure prior approval from the director or a staff member.

We welcome nursing mothers to use the center!

Parents are welcome to participate in any activities, whether special holidays, birthdays, or ordinary days! Children love sharing their families with their friends. Families are always welcome.

**Family Functions**

Coming together as a community is very important to the social climate of the center. We promote opportunities to gather with families and staff. There are several times throughout the year during which the center holds events for families to mix and mingle. Family events have included activities such as the Thanksgiving picnic, Trunk or Treat, Preschool Graduation, and the parade for Gateway to the West

**Divorce and/or Custody Issues**

Little Blossoms is obligated to honor the legal arrangements that the court of law has made for each family. As a center, we are not qualified to make any decisions concerning custody issues. If your family has a special court order, please share it with the director at the time of enrollment, or whenever it becomes effective, and we will attempt to follow its intentions. If custody issues arise, we encourage parents to settle their differences away from the center. We want Little Blossoms to be a safe haven for all children. The center can provide an emotional safety net for your child during challenging times.

We will do our best to follow any parenting plan/custody set in place. However, if the plan is not childcare specific or vague in any way, we will take a hands-off approach and ask that you resolve it away from the center. If there is discrepancy at pick up time, law enforcement may be utilized.

**Daily Verbal Communication**

Arrival and departure times present valuable opportunities for parents to communicate with the staff. If possible, please allow a few minutes to connect with your child’s teacher at arrival and departure times to discuss your child’s day and to promote smooth transitions between home and school. It is important for you to share information about your child. We would like to know any of the following information to help us best meet the needs of your child:

• how your child slept last night

• when your child last ate

• if your child is taking or needs medicine

• your child’s mood

• if you have any concerns about your child

• if anything unusual happened prior to your child’s arrival

• if your child is teething

• if a parent will be absent for an extended amount of time (a week seems like a long time to a child)

In the infant and toddler rooms, teachers will send home a daily report about your child’s day. This report will communicate to the parents the child’s diaper changes, toilet use, nap times, and feeding times/ food eaten, etc. For bottle-fed infants, it will also indicate how many ounces were eaten at that time. Parents are responsible for keeping copies of these sheets.

In our Preschool, Pre-K, and School-Age rooms, the teachers will post the “Daily News” on their classroom bulletin boards, chalkboard, or dry erase board. This will let you know some specifics about your child’s experience each day. We hope you use this information as a conversational tool during your time with your child.

**Accident Reports**

Communication is vital part of our program and will be maintained in a professional manner. Parents will be notified at pickup if their child was injured while at the center or was involved in a discipline matter. Any other pertinent information will also be passed on. Parents must sign the incident and accident reports and leave the copy for your child’s file. If you would like a copy, please instruct the staff to provide one.

**Toilet Training**

Toilet training is done on an individual basis when the child is physically and emotionally ready. Consistency and communication between home and the center is essential as we work together to help your child achieve this milestone in development, so toilet training also needs to be done at home. The signs of readiness in your child may include ability to verbalize that they are ready and willing to use the toilet, ability to pull pants up and down, waking up dry at nap, and showing discomfort when diapers are soiled.

Children are supervised during toilet training. Adequate changes of clothing need to be supplied by the parents (at least 3 complete changes of clothes, including socks, is recommended). We suggest that children who are learning to use the toilet wear pants with elastic tops, so they will be able to pull them down themselves, which promotes independence.

Clothing that is soiled by feces, urine, vomit, or blood is double bagged and sent home. Children wash their hands with soap and running water after using the toilet. Staff members wash their hands with soap and running water after assisting children with toileting.

**All children need a change of clothing in their cubbies at all times.** Please check these items regularly.

**Biting**

Children biting other children is an unavoidable occurrence, especially with toddlers. When it happens, it can be scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, and staff. Every child in the infant and toddler classrooms is a potential biter or will potentially be bitten. It is important to understand that the teachers and director will work closely with both families involved to appropriately problem solve each situation on an individual basis. If you are interested in more information regarding why children bite, solutions, or suggestions, please see the director.

**Diapering**

Your child will be changed every 2 hours throughout the day, and as needed if wet or soiled. It is the parent's responsibility to supply individual wipes or washcloths, disposable or cloth diapers, and any diapering ointment. Individual storage for these items will be available. You will be notified when these items are running low.

The hands of the staff and children, including infants, are washed thoroughly with soap and running water after each diaper change.

Staff members change children's diapers or soiled underwear only in the designated changing areas. The changing table or diapering surface is cushioned and used for no other purpose. When a child is being changed on an elevated surface, the teacher must have a hand on the child at all times. After each use, the diapering surface is cleaned and disinfected. Soiled disposable diapers are placed in a waterproof container with a foot pedal, tight-fitting cover, and plastic liner or in a designated under-the-counter trash area. The containers are kept closed and are not accessible to children. The container is emptied and sanitized twice daily.

Staff members whose primary function is preparing food do not change diapers until their food preparation duties are completed for the day

**Helping Children Adjust to the Program**

We recommend that parents visit the classroom with their child prior to the child beginning in the classroom. This should be arranged with the director prior to your child’s first day. Entering a new program may be stressful for some children. If this is the first time your child has been separated from you, it is natural for him/her to be hesitant. Start early so the day does not feel rushed. A cheerful good-bye kiss, a smile, and a reassuring word that you will be back after work is all you need to do. Our caring staff will take it from there. Please do not sneak out when your child is not looking. Your child will settle down shortly after you leave.

New situations affect every child differently. Sometimes a child does wonderfully on the first day because everything is new and exciting, but gets anxious on the second day when he or she recognizes this is going to be a new routine. Most children need two or three weeks to adjust fully to a new environment. The best support you can give is to be enthusiastic and encouraging- and to be patient. If you need reassurance or suggestions for helping your child feel more at ease, talk with your child’s teacher or the center director.

Please feel free to contact Little Blossoms throughout the day to see how your child is doing. Chances are that your child will be busy playing, and you can relax and concentrate on work.

**Transitioning to Another Classroom**

When a child is transitioning to another classroom as he or she ages out, parents will be notified by the director and a date will be set. The transition will be at the rate of how well the child adjusts. This will be determined by the director, parents, and the classroom teacher. The teacher will pass on all the documentation concerning the child. Any signage will be posted in the next classroom, and the child will be added to informational lists in the classroom. If room modifications need to be made, management will do so.

**Outdoor Policies**

All children who are well enough to attend the center will play outdoors daily. The only exceptions are rainy days, hot summer days, and cold winter days.

Pre-K through School-Age children may play outside if the “Real Feel” is 20-100℉. Infants may play outside if the “Real Feel” is 50-85℉, and toddlers may play outside if the “Real Feel” is 32-90℉. Studies have consistently shown that children do not have lowered resistance to colds or other infections because of outdoor play, but are healthier and have stronger resistance to illness with exercise outdoors. Keeping a child inside, separate from their class, is not an option. Weather is monitored by the director daily.

During winter, appropriate outdoor clothing (e.g., jacket, hats, and mittens) should be available to your child. Please be sure that your child is dressed appropriately on snow days, including hats, waterproof boots and gloves, snow pants, and coats.

During summer, to wear Little Blossoms provided sun block, a sun block permission form needs to be signed by the parent. Sunscreen will not be applied to children younger than 6 months of age. Bug repellant is optional, and is provided by the parent. Written parental consent is required prior to Little Blossoms applying insect repellent. Insect repellent will not be applied to children younger than 2 months of age.

During summer months, we will have water play. A towel, swimsuit, and water shoes will be needed on these days. Please label all supplies and clothing with your child’s name. All items must be taken home to be laundered.

Teachers and children will take occasional walks around the neighborhood. This is done in an organized manner and safety rules are enforced.

**INFORMATION AND SCHEDULES BY AGE GROUP**

**Infants (6 weeks to 18 months)**

During the early years, infants are learning to trust their world, to actively explore their environment, and to do things for themselves. Staff members will show respect for children and interact with them in caring ways. They plan individual activities and interactions with every infant each day, centered on daily routines such as morning and evening transitions, diapering, feeding, and napping. They also introduce infants to a variety of activities including art, outdoor time, playing, stories, singing, exploring, and more. The teachers are trained in sign language and will be signing with your infant to help the communication process develop.

The infant schedule is an extension of home care. Parents set the nap schedule and feeding routine. Diapers are changed every two hours unless needed prior.

6:00-9:00 Free Play and Breakfast

9:00-10:00 Let’s Play Time

10:00-11:00 Story Time

11:00-12:00 Lunch Time

12:00-1:00 Music and Finger Play

1:00-2:00 Large Motor

2:00-3:00 Snack and Sign Language

3:00-4:00 Activity Time

4:00-5:00 Fine Motor

5:00-6:00 Free Play

Please inform staff daily of the time of your child’s last feeding and amount taken, of any changes in physical or emotional behavior (e.g., not eating well, fussiness, teething), and of any changes in diet (e.g., from formula to milk, adding finger foods). Breast milk may be brought from home either fresh or frozen. It must be labeled with date pumped and/or date frozen or thawed. Parents must provide a sleep sack or a swaddle blanket if they wish to have the child covered during naptime.

**Toddlers (18 months to 3 years)**

For toddlers, we plan a variety of engaging learning activities to help them solve, predict, plan, share, cooperate, empathize, and understand how to get along with the world in a concept-based format. The focus is on maximizing play and learning experiences in daily routines along with art, outdoor time, stories, songs, sand and water play, food projects, movement, pretend play, sign language and more.

6:00 - 8:30 Free Play

8:30 - 9:00 Breakfast

9:00 - 9:30 Physical Activity

9:30 - 10:00 Learning Time and Music

10:00 - 10:30 Center Time/Art

10:30 - 11:00 Large Motor

11:00– 11:30 Blocks

11:30 - 12:00 Lunch

12:00 - 2:00 Nap/Quiet Time

2:00 - 2:30 Snack/Story/Bathroom

2:30-3:00 Large Motor

3:00-3:30 Fine Motor

3:30-4:00 Group Activity

4:00-4:30 Activity Center

4:30–5:00 Whole-Group Play

5:00 - 6:00 Free Play

**Pre-K (3 years to Kindergarten)**

For preschoolers, we plan a variety of activities through learning centers. The children will have the opportunity to choose the experiences in which they would like to participate. The children will be provided with time each day for writing, art, music, movement, stories, outdoor time, learning centers, fine motor skills, kindergarten readiness, and large motor skills.

6:00-8:30 Free Play

8:30-9:00 Breakfast

9:00-9:30 Large Motor

9:30-10:00 Circle Time

10:00-11:30 Learning Centers

11:30-12:00 Lunch Time

12:00-2:00 Nap/Quiet Time

2:00-2:30 Restrooms/Snacks/Stories

2:30-3:00 PE

3:00-3:45 Large Motor

3:45-5:00 Learning Centers

5:00-6:00 Free Play

**School-Age (Kindergarten to 6th Grade)**

For children K-6, the curriculum revolves around structured and age-appropriate activities. Each day will include homework, games, crafts, and more. Transportation is provided to all local elementary schools.

**School-Age Schedule (all day)**

6:00-8:30 Free Time

8:30 –9:00 Breakfast

9:00-10:00 Room Activities

10:00-11:15 Large Motor/Outside

11:15-11:45 Lunch

11:45-1:45 Park/Quiet Time

1:45-2:15 Snack

2:15-3:15 Group Activity

3:15-4:00 Free Time

4:00-5:00 Large Motor

5:00-6:00 Free Time

**Before and After School Schedule**

6:00-7:30 Free Time

7:30 - 8:00 Breakfast

8:00 Transport to School

3:00 - 3:30 Pick-Up from School

3:30 - 4:00 Snack

4:00 - 4:30 Homework/Table Activities

4:30 - 5:30 Large Motor

5:30 - 6:00 Free Time

**Summer Care**

The children who are entering Kindergarten - 6th grade will be participate in a field trip and swimming each week. The children will also have the opportunity to take part in the summer reading program through the Blair Public Library.

**PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAM**

At Little Blossoms, we offer a well-balanced curriculum that caters to preschool-aged children. We focus on kindergarten readiness, helping each child develop pre-reading skills with the alphabet, numbers, shapes, and handwriting. Our monthly themes allow your child to tap into their creative side with art, songs, cooking projects, finger plays, and movement. Each day your child will participate in daily activities that revolve around language arts, art, math, and science. At Little Blossoms Pre-School, each child is treated as an individual with unique needs, and it is recognized that not all children work at the same pace.

**Facts to Know**

• No parent helper days are required by parents.

• When paying in August for an entire month, you are paying in advance for May.

• The pre-school will not meet when Blair School System has scheduled days off or when they do not meet due to inclement weather.

• Little Blossoms has an hourly rate if you need care for your child before or after pre-school

• Tuition payments are due by the 1st of each month.

**Daily Schedule**

9:00-9:20 Circle Time

9:20-9:30 Story Time

9:30-10:30 Learning Time

10:30-10:45 Music Time

10:45-11:15 Activity Time

11:15-11:30 Goodbyes and Dismissal

**Monday/Wednesday/Friday Class (4-5-year-olds, attending kindergarten the next year)**

**When:** August-May, Monday/Wednesday/Friday

**Time:** 9:00-11:30 a.m. Mon/Wed., 9:30-12:00 a.m. on Fri

**Cost:** $100/month (take $10 off per month if you attend Little Blossoms Child Care)

**Registration:** $25/child (waived if you are already registered at Little Blossoms Child Care)

**Focus:**

* name recognition and writing
* alphabet recognition, sounds, and writing
* shapes and number recognition and writing
* self-awareness skills, such as tying own shoes and zipping own coat
* fine motor skills, such as coloring, handwriting, and cutting

**Tuesday/Thursday Class (3-year-olds, not attending kindergarten the next year)**

**When:** August-May, Tuesday/Thursday

**Time**: 9:00-11:30 a.m.

**Cost:** $80/month (take $10 off per month if you attend Little Blossoms Child Care)

**Registration:** $25/child (waived if you are already registered at Little Blossoms Child Care)

**Focus:**

* name recognition
* alphabet recognition, sounds, and writing
* shapes, numbers, and colors
* self-awareness by playing with others in a controlled environment
* fine motor skills, such as coloring, handwriting, and cutting

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