



Where All of the Pieces Fit!

Little Reasons
Learning Center

Parent Handbook
929-8080

Owner/Director: Kimberly Bone-Bickley

WELCOME!

On behalf of the Little Reasons Learning Center staff, we wish to welcome you to our school and thank you for selecting us as your child care provider. The purpose of this handbook is to introduce you to our policies and procedures. We practice continuous improvement so we reserve the right to update and enhance this booklet during our growth process. We hope that you will find the answers to your questions and concerns regarding your educational child care services. If you have further questions, or something is unclear, feel free to ask questions.

Little Reasons recognizes that the immediate family is the strongest influence on a child's growth and development. We believe parents are the most significant adults in a child's life. We welcome the opportunity of being an extension of your family and encourage your participation in our program. We are always interested in your ideas. Parents are always invited to share their feelings, concerns, and suggestions with us about the care your child is receiving. We encourage you to communicate with our staff often.

Our center is constructed with children's needs in mind. The physical environment is safe, clean, healthy, and oriented to children. We have eight classrooms, allowing us to separate the children according to age groups and supervise them while providing the teacher-child ratio required by the state of Georgia. The classrooms are equipped with age appropriate materials. Our classrooms are designed to be inviting and fun for your child while helping foster their growth and development. Our rooms are arranged to give children a variety of work experiences during the day. They will have opportunities for active play indoors and outdoors. Children will be served nutritional meals and snacks at scheduled times. We provide a scheduled rest time following lunch.

Again, thank you and please let us know how we may better serve your family.

PHILOSOPHY

Little Reasons Learning Center was created to provide quality childcare and education for the families we serve. We will create an appropriate environment for children to foster their growth and development to be creative and fun-filled. We will help build on the child's knowledge by encouraging the child to learn new skills and reinforce previously learned skills. Our goal is to meet the needs of the children.

Services We Offer

Little Reasons will be open 6:30 A.M. until 6:00 P.M., Monday through Friday, year round and will be closed on the following days: New Year's Eve and New Years Day, M.L.K. Day, President's Day, Labor Day, Memorial Day, Columbus Day, Independence Day, Thursday and Friday for Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. If the holiday falls on Sunday, the center will be closed on the following Monday. If the holiday falls on a Saturday the center will be closed on the proceeding Friday. Our tuition rates are computed on a weekly basis, therefore, a full week's tuition is charged during the holiday week.

We offer a variety of services to families. Our program is designed as a full time service to children at age six weeks old and continues through the age of *10 years old*. Transportation to and from Bonaire Elementary, Hill Top Elementary, and Matt Arthur Elementary are available. We will not provide pickup or delivery of children to homes.

All students are under contract and receive service for a specific number of days and hours. Students are enrolled on a first come first served basis. Parents who desire to enroll their child when no space is available are placed on a waiting list. As space becomes available students on the list are offered first choice of the available spots.

Our Door Is Always Open

Little Reasons invites parents to drop-in and visit our center at any time. We encourage parents to visit the center when their child is present. We welcome the voluntary participation of parents in activities of their choice. If possible, please let a teacher know if you will be staying or visiting in advance. While parents are always welcome, we ask for your cooperation in not disrupting our program. As always parent input is welcome and valued. New parents and children are welcome to schedule time to slowly familiarize their child to their new environment. You are always permitted to all parts of the center when your child is present. If you wish to meet with your child's teacher please set up a conference time.

State License and Regulations

Little Reasons is licensed and regulated by the State of Georgia, Department of Human Resources (DHR), and State and Local Fire Marshal's Office. Our standards meet and exceed those standards established by the state of Georgia. The building is built to be fire resistant, and equipped with a 24 hour monitored fire system including sirens and fire evacuation lights. Fire escape doors are located inside of each classroom.

Our licenses are displayed in the lobby. We are periodically inspected by the above regulating agencies to ensure the safety and well being of your child. Copies of all inspections are available upon the parent's request.

Our Staff

Little Reasons carefully selects their staff members. All staff members undergo a criminal background investigation by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to ensure they have no previous criminal history in the area of child abuse, drugs, or a felony conviction. All employees are drug tested, and Little Reasons will be maintained as a drug free work place through random drug testing. A ten-year employment history is required on all employees.

Little Reasons offers training in the field of Early Childhood Education, nutrition, first aid, CPR, child abuse, disease control, fire safety, and safe driving. They attend workshops and classes to keep current in their field. All staff members are periodically evaluated to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the young children in their care.

Primary Caregiver

One method that helps ensure consistency in teacher-child ratio at Little Reasons is the assignment of a primary care giver to each age group. A primary caregiver is that important person at the center who has the most knowledge about a certain group of children. They have the primary responsibility for monitoring routine care, and stimulation of their group. They communicate regularly with the parents. Caregivers are assigned to these groups of children by the director.

Enrollment Procedures

To comply with the state regulation all enrollment forms, parent's contract, medical forms, and feeding plans must be completed and on file with the center before your child's first day of attendance. Enrollment papers specify weekly schedule. Your tuition cost reflects payment for a 10 hour day.

We ask for your cooperation in carrying out all governmental laws, rules, and regulations. For your child's safety, let us know of any changes in your home or work phone numbers, work locations, emergency phone numbers, family physician, address, and other vital information as they occur.

You are required to submit your child's current medical and immunization forms prior to their attending the center. The date on the forms must be within twelve months to be eligible for enrollment. We request that you update these forms as changes in the child's immunization occur. Notice will be posted if your child's immunization is not current. This is for the health of your child and all others enrolled in the center.

In the case of divorced or separated parents, it is important that the parent registering the child indicate on the application who has legal custody and who may pick up the child. We must have on file a notarized court order in matters regarding parental custody. We will abide by all legally served court orders.

In case of withdrawal of your child from the center, you agree to give a one-week notice in writing. If this is not given, you agree to pay one week's tuition fee prior to withdrawal.

Physically or Mentally Disadvantaged

Our goal is to guarantee that your child has the best opportunity for success while enrolled in our center. Please let us know of any special conditions that might limit your child's participation in our program. We will accommodate each child's individual needs as much as possible.

We accept any child whose needs can be met in our educational setting. The child must be able to participate and substantially benefit from our program without risk to the child or to any other student enrolled in the center. We are committed to serving all children with limitations that we can without altering the services we provide to our other children.

If after a trial period, we have determined that we are unable to meet your child's needs without altering the service we provide, your child will be withdrawn from the center.

Arrival and Department

Parents are required to bring their child inside and place them in the care of a staff member before leaving the child at the center. Parents should re-enter the building when picking up their child. Please do not send older brothers or sisters inside to pick up children. A sign in and out sheet will be provided in the reception area of the center. Parents are required to sign their child in and out of the center each day. This procedure is practiced for the safety of your child.

Please do not park under the pavilion if you wish to visit when you enter the building. This can cause problems with the arrival and departure of other children. On rainy days use this area as quickly as possible and give others the chance to arrive and depart with out the inconvenience of the rain.

It is extremely important that the registering parent notify Little Reasons of persons authorized to pick up their child. Children will not be allowed to leave the center with anyone whose name is not on file with the center. The child will only be released to escorts who are 18 years or older and have shown positive identification. We will not accept telephone authorizations. Please keep the center advised of additions to your pick-up list.

Tuition and Vacation Policies

We charge a \$80.00 annual enrollment fee per child. This fee is used to purchase books and materials that your child will need during the course of the year.

In order to reserve a place for your child, regular tuition must be *paid each Friday the week prior* and no later than Monday by closing even if your child is absent. A late fee of \$25.00 will be added if late and their will be an additional late fee of \$25.00 charged for each week tuition is not paid in full.

In case of withdrawal of your child from the center, you agree to give a one-week notice in writing. If this is not given, you agree to pay one week's tuition fee prior to withdrawal.

Every family is entitled to one week vacation annually per child. To be eligible the child must have been in attendance for 6 months, may not be in attendance on the week of vacation and no charges will be incurred. A one week notice in writing must be given in writing and tuition must be current to be eligible.

Late Pick-Up

Children will be picked up at the completion of the contracted time of service. Your tuition cost covers care for a period of 10 hours. Parents who receive service beyond that which contracted will be charged an additional fee for the services they received. The fee for picking a child up after the contracted hours is \$1.00 per minute. A phone call would be appreciated but will not stop the additional charge. If this becomes a continuous problem, you will be asked to make additional arrangements for your child.

Meals and Snack

Little Reasons provides a breakfast, hot lunch, and p.m. snack daily. Children are served their meals in their classrooms. All of our menus are prepared to meet daily nutritional requirements of children. Our weekly menus are posted in the lobby area and in the kitchen. Food portions are given which are age appropriate for your child. Additional servings of food and milk are always available.

We ask that you assist us by not allowing your child to bring food to the center. Menu exceptions can not be made except for documented medical reasons. If a special diet is required then the parent must furnish food items. Parents must provide food and formula for infants. The items must be in labeled, dated, and unbreakable containers. Do not send sippy cups to the center, we provide cups.

Serving Times:

Breakfast.....7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Lunch.....11:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.
Snack..... 2:30 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Medication

Parents must fill out a medication authorization slip each week for any medication to be given by the staff. All medication must be taken out of the children’s bags and left in the care of a staff member. The medication must be picked up and taken home daily. Medication must be left in its original container, with the child’s first and last name labeled on the container. Only prescription medication will be administered. All over the counter medication must have a doctor’s note.

Except for emergency first aid, no medication may be administered by the staff of Little Reasons unless a parent has given written authorization on the approved medication authorization sheet.

Illness

Our goal is to ensure the health and well being of all children in our care. Therefore, children who are ill may not be brought to the center. Children who have a temperature of 101, vomiting, contagious skin or eye infections, or repeat diarrhea may not remain at the center. You will be notified to pick your children up immediately if he or she becomes ill while under our care. We realize this may cause some inconveniences for some of you and we apologize. A child must register a normal temperature without fever reducer for at least 12 hours before returning to the center.

Communicable Diseases

A list of communicable diseases is posted in the center for you to review. Please notify the center if your child has any symptom of a communicable disease, usually identified by sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, and abdominal pain, plus fever. Knowledge of this information will help prevent the spread of disease and illness. Unfortunately, illness and childhood diseases are part of growing up.

We are required by the state licensing to report all notifiably communicable diseases to the local health authorities. Children absent from the center because of a communicable disease may not return to the center without a signed statement from a physician indicating the child is no longer contagious. In the event a communicable disease is identified in the center, you will be notified in writing by a memo placed in the lobby.

Absenteeism

If your child is scheduled to be in the center, we ask that you notify us if your child will be absent. This will help us maintain the proper staffing and prepare for meals. If your child does not need transportation from school on a scheduled day, we ask that you give us notification at least 2 hours before the scheduled pick-up time.

Clothing

It is important that your child be dressed in comfortable play clothes that are suitable for a variety of activities. The children will be given opportunities to be active both indoors and outdoors. Therefore, they need comfortable shoes for outside play. Inside they will have many opportunities to explore with paint, play dough, and other wonderful gooey things. We do provide smocks to cover their cloths, but please be prepared for accidents and dress accordingly.

Each child should have a change of clothes that is left in the center to be used for emergencies. Infants should have two changes of clothes. Shoes must be worn at all times. We will not be responsible for damaged clothing. Please label your child's coat, jackets and hats.

Diapers and Baby Food

Prior to the child's first day of enrollment, the parent must complete a written feeding plan. The parent shall update the plan as the child's feeding schedule changes. Unused portions of food and formula will be discarded or returned to the parent. Disposable diapers are required unless otherwise directed by the child's pediatrician. A written authorization must be on file for exceptions.

Infants and toddlers who are bottle fed must be provided with non-breakable bottles. Infants will be held during feeding time. As your infant or toddlers show evidence of wanting to feed themselves they will be encouraged and permitted to do so. All bottles and sippy cups must be labeled with first and last name.

Potty Training

We begin potty training when a child turns two years old, and shows verbal skills to communicate with caregivers. The child is taken to the restroom every 20-30 minutes. We praise the child each time they use the potty and encourage but never intimidate a child if they have an accident. All toddlers must be off the bottle except at naptime. Children must be potty trained before they enter the three year old room.

Discipline

Little Reasons Learning Centers' educational philosophy is based on the premise that all children in the center experience success and the wonder and thrill of learning. We strive for an environment that gives children the opportunity to explore and experiment within consistent, age-appropriate limits. Teachers provide positive, clear expectations for behavior and act as role models to support appropriate behavior. Teachers encourage children to use words to express feeling during conflict. The children are given choices, allowing them to feel in control of their actions. After repeated attempts of positive modeling & discussions with a child about appropriate behaviors, the child may be removed from the group. If the child is removed, the teacher will give the child support & ensure that the child returns to the group. If the behavior becomes habitual then the child will be taken to the office area, the parents will be notified accordingly.

We will not resort to corporal punishment of any kind, even at the request of a parent. If a child is disrespectful, disruptive, displays behavior that is potentially harmful to others or consistently fails to comply with policy and procedures we will dismiss the child. Little Reasons will not tolerate behavior we deem inappropriate towards teachers or other employees. Little Reasons will communicate with the parent by verbal or written communication. However, if Little Reasons and a parent can not agree upon a course of discipline the child will be withdrawn from the center.

Rest Time

Little Reasons is required to provide children with an afternoon nap/rest period. We encourage your child to rest quietly during this scheduled time. We will provide required cots and sheets. Children are required to use the same resting materials daily; all items are laundered weekly. Each child needs to bring a blanket from home it must be labeled and laundered weekly. We set a goal to discontinue personal items before entering the 3 year old room.

Toys and Personal Belongings

The staff of Little Reasons has spent a great amount of time hand picking the materials in the center. Our toys and equipment are developmentally appropriate for the age group they are assigned.

We assure all items are safe, cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis to further ensure the health and safety of your child.

In order to prevent loss or damage, children are not permitted to bring toys, money, gum, snacks, or other personal belongings from home to the center. However, your child may bring books to share with the class. We will not be responsible for lost or damaged items.

Children's Cubbies

Little Reasons provides each child a cubby for their personal belongings. Our program provides opportunities for children to stretch their imagination and develop creativity through a variety of creative art experiences. Please take your child's artwork home, discuss it with your child, and display it in a special place.

Our staff will periodically put correspondence in your child's cubby; therefore it is important that the cubby be checked often to prevent failure in communication.

Outdoor Activities

Our center is equipped with four playground areas; therefore, we have provided age appropriate equipment on each play area. Little Reasons recognizes the important role fresh air and exercise play in the development and good health of your child. Children will be allowed to play outside on the playground daily, except in inclement weather. A written statement is required should you not want your child to participate in exercise activities. Make sure your child wears weather suitable clothing each day.

Birthdays and Holidays

We invite parents and grandparents to participate in holiday celebrations. We will have parties through out the year and will ask parents to contribute items to help make the day special for all of the children.

We would enjoy celebrating your child's birthday at the center. If parents wish to have a birthday celebration, please arrange a date with the classroom teacher a week in advance. Parents are welcome to buy cake, ice cream, and other special treats.

Parent Information Board

Parent information boards are provided to keep you informed about your child's classroom. Parent information boards are provided to keep you informed about your child's classroom. Parent information boards are updated with staff names and work schedules, monthly calendar, daily routine and special events.

Children in the infant rooms and in all potty training rooms will receive a daily report sheet to help keep daily communication between caregiver and parent.

Parent Events

Parent events are planned throughout the year. Events include open house, holiday programs, guest speakers, and workshops. For the convenience of parents we plan events at a variety of times, some are early morning or later in the day. Parent participation is encouraged and greatly appreciated.

Field Trips

We will notify you in advance of all field trips and required fees. State licensing requires written authorization in order for your child to participate on field trips. Children without a parent's written permission will not be allowed to participate. All children will be transported to and from the field trips in our Little Reasons van.

Parents are always welcome to participate. Space on the van is limited, therefore, we ask parents to drive separately and meet the van at the final destination. We will not transport infants or toddlers.

Injuries

Little Reasons makes every effort to ensure the safety of your child. Unfortunately accidents do occur. For minor scrapes, bruises, and bumps parents will be informed by an "ouch report." If your child is involved in an accident we will make every effort to contact you by telephone. If we are unable to reach you, we will call the person listed on the enrollment form that you have authorized to make medical decisions in your absence. Please keep telephone numbers updated!

In your enrollment package is an emergency release form. Your signed emergency release form will assist us in getting prompt medical attention for your child. If we are unable to contact a parent, we will have all injuries requiring medical attention treated at the Houston County Medical Center in Warner Robins. In the event of an accident or illness, all medical expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the parent. Little Reasons is released from liability as a result of any act they may perform on behalf of the child.

Severe Weather and Physical Plant Problems

In case of severe weather, please do not call the center. The staff will be busy caring for your children. Safety must be our prime concern. We will practice fire and tornado drills. Monthly fire evacuation of the building will be practiced. Emergency plans have been developed and are posted on parent bulletin boards.

In the case of any physical plant problems, such as power failure or structural damage, Little Reasons will take necessary action to provide for the comfort and safety of each child present. If the children must be evacuated from the building they will be housed at the Bonaire Baptist Church until all parents can be notified.

Requirement to Report Child Abuse

As a child care provider, Little Reasons is required by state law to report to the proper authorities any cases where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been neglected, exploited, deprived, sexually assaulted, sexually exploited, physically injured or suffered death by means other than accidental by a parent, guardian, or caretaker. We will cooperate fully with the authorities in the investigation of all such cases. To avoid any misunderstandings, parents are encouraged to keep the center informed of any unusual bruises, marks, or accidents occurring at home.

Visitors

Visitors entering the building must be identified and report to the reception area. The director must approve the reason for the visit and the length of expected stay. If the visitor is escorted on a tour of the building, a director or office personnel must accompany them.

No Smoking Facility

Little Reasons Learning Center is a "Smoke Free" facility and campus. No one is allowed to smoke inside or on the premises surrounding the building. Anyone doing so will be asked to vacate immediately. We ask that smokers not distinguish or disregard cigarettes in the parking lot.

