



Parent Handbook

Educational Philosophy

Welcome to Liberty Learning Academy! We are excited to share our center with you and your child. At Liberty Learning Academy, we understand that children thrive when they engage in a variety of developmentally appropriate activities that address their cognitive, physical, emotional, and social needs. Our approach focuses on nurturing the whole child, allowing them to construct knowledge through experiences that foster success and encourage growth in all areas of development.

Our program is designed to provide a happy, nurturing, and stimulating learning environment tailored to meet each child's individual needs. Each classroom is thoughtfully organized with centers dedicated to creative art, literature, science, pre-math, dramatic play, cognitive and small motor development. Through collaboration with parents and teachers, we strive to create a safe, positive, and engaging learning environment that makes learning both fun and meaningful.

We are proud to offer care for children from birth to 12 years old and look forward to being a part of your child's educational journey.

Discipline and Guidance Policy

At Liberty Learning Academy, we believe in fostering a positive, nurturing environment where children can learn and grow. Our approach to discipline focuses on guidance and teaching rather than punishment. We aim to help children develop self-control, empathy, and respect for others.

1. **Positive Reinforcement:** We encourage positive behavior by recognizing and rewarding children's efforts and achievements. Praise, encouragement, and acknowledgment of good choices help reinforce desirable behavior.
2. **Clear Expectations:** We set clear, age-appropriate expectations for behavior. Rules are communicated in simple language and reinforced through consistent reminders.
3. **Redirection:** When a child displays inappropriate behavior, we guide them to a more acceptable activity or behavior. This helps them understand better ways to handle their emotions and interact with others.
4. **Modeling Behavior:** Staff members model respectful, kind, and positive behavior. We believe children learn by example, so we strive to demonstrate the behavior we expect from them.
5. **Problem-Solving Approach:** Children are encouraged to express their feelings and resolve conflicts with guidance from teachers. We help children understand the impact of their actions and find constructive ways to solve problems.
6. **Cool-Down Periods:** If a child needs time to calm down, a short, supervised break may be provided. This is not a punishment but a chance for the child to regroup in a quiet space before rejoining activities.
7. **No Harsh or Physical Discipline:** Physical punishment, shouting, or any form of harsh discipline is not permitted. We strictly adhere to state regulations and best practices in early childhood education to ensure a safe and respectful environment for every child.

Parent Involvement: We believe that a partnership with parents is crucial for effective guidance. If ongoing behavioral issues arise, we will work with parents to create a plan that supports the child's positive behavior both at daycare and at home.

Our Teaching Team

Our staff has been selected based upon their commitment to the highest quality of care and development of every child. Each member of our staff must meet the qualifications as established by state regulation, completes an orientation program, and exceeds annual training requirements set forth by the state. We encourage our staff to obtain professional certification, such as a college degree or Child Development Associate (CDA) and offer tuition assistance through a state funded program to those who are interested in pursuing higher education degrees in Early Childhood Education.

Addressing Concerns

While we strive to ensure a positive experience for every child, we understand that concerns may occasionally arise. If you have any questions or issues regarding your child, please feel free to bring them to the lead teacher's attention. At Liberty Learning Academy, we believe that most concerns can be effectively addressed at the classroom level.

Rest assured, all matters will be handled confidentially, and the lead teacher will involve the Assistant Director or Director if necessary. In some cases, a conference with a child's parents or guardians may be required, and we will work with you to schedule these meetings at a convenient time.

We value a strong partnership between parents, teachers, and administrators, and open communication is key to ensuring the best outcomes for your child. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out. Our goal is to address your concerns promptly so your child can enjoy the best possible educational experience.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse, by definition, is an act or omission that endangers or impairs a child's physical, mental, or emotional health and development. Child abuse may take the form of physical or emotional injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical neglect, medical neglect, or inadequate supervision.

Texas law requires that any person suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected **MUST** immediately make a report. Therefore, if child abuse is suspected, the teacher and teacher assistant must report it to the Director.

Liberty Learning Academy employees are required to obey that law and report any suspected abuse or neglect. LLA employees will also inform the Director of suspected abuse or neglect. The Director will call the Child Abuse Hot Line at 1-800-252-5400 to report.

All Liberty Learning Academy employees receive annual training regarding child abuse recognition, prevention, and reporting. To contact the Department of Family and Protective Services, call (214) 951-7902 for a local area office.

Gang Free Zone

Liberty Learning Academy is a gang-free zone. Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

Hours/Days of Operations

Monday through Friday (Year round) 6:00 am-6:30 pm. We request that children arrive by 9:00am so that they may take full advantage of the learning experience. If your child will be arriving after 9:00 am, please inform the front office and submit the supporting documentation upon arrival.

Holidays

Our school will be closed during the following 12 holidays each year: ***New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and December 26th***

*If a holiday should fall on Saturday or Sunday, we observe the federal holiday guidelines. **Holiday closure dates are subject to change depending on when the holiday falls.

Enrollment Acceptance

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religious beliefs, national origin or sex, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefit, or be subject to discrimination under any programs or activities. It is our goal to accommodate our families by providing support resources for families that may need accommodations due to differing abilities, home languages and/or cultural background. Please contact the front office if you feel your family would benefit from specific accommodations and our office would be happy to assist you.

Tuition Payment

Tuition is due on MONDAYS of each week. If tuition is not paid by the close of business day on Tuesday, there will be a \$20.00 late fee charge applied to your account. Liberty Learning Academy reserves the right to require a security deposit of \$100.00 from any family than accrues more than one late charge per quarter. The \$20.00 late fee will not be carried over. It must be paid by Friday of the week that it was accrued. Full tuition must be paid each week in order for your child to remain enrolled at Liberty Learning Academy. There are no deductions in the tuition due to absences, illness, vacation or holidays. Part-time schedules are available based on availability. If your child only attends one day of the week, a full week of tuition is still due. If your child will be out for the whole week (vacation, extended illness, etc.), we ask that you inform us in advance-if possible. The week that your child is out, half of the tuition will be due to hold your child's space. If your child is out two weeks or longer without any communication, it is considered a withdrawal, and all registration fees will apply upon return. The tuition fees are reviewed annually, and are subject to increase upon prior written notice. Tuition is collected with cash, Zelle or swiped credit card on site. For payment by credit card, there is a charge per transaction. No checks will be accepted. Brightwheel is a program through our computer system which allows your payments to be automatically withdrawn from your account each week. See the front desk

for more details. For families that are receiving child care assistance with the government, the co-pay must be made by the 4th of each month. A late payment fee of \$20.00 will be charged to accounts for whom we do not receive a payment by the 5th of the month. The co-pay must be paid in full by the 15th of the month or your child/ren will not be able to attend the following month until your account is current. Also, if there is a break in coverage for care, the parent/guardian will be responsible for paying the daily rate per child until coverage continues.

Withdrawal

We require two weeks' notice prior to your child's withdrawal from the center. Whether your child/ren attend the last week or not, a full week's tuition will be owed. For various reasons some children and/or families have difficulty adjusting to the childcare environment. In such cases, Liberty Learning Academy management may ask that you withdrawal your child. If that occurs, we will give notice in order for you to make alternate childcare arrangements. A family that does not fully complete their enrollment forms will be asked to make other childcare arrangements. In addition, at the director's discretion, a child may be removed and/or dis-enrolled from the center at any time for any reason without any notice.

Curriculum Information

Liberty Learning Academy has chosen "Experience" Curriculum to be used as a foundation for teaching our preschool program. Children explore whole language, math concepts, science, creative art, dramatic play and outdoor play. This is a high quality curriculum follows a scope and sequence for determining activities that are listed on the lesson plan and is used by all of our preschool classrooms. This curriculum fosters creativity in both the children and the teachers. This curriculum provides activities in Language, Literacy, Math, Gross/Fine Motor, Art/Music, Character Education, Technology, Science and Physical development. A copy of the lesson plans are posted on the information board in each class. All teachers attend professional development annually to help with use of the curriculum and the writing of lesson plans.

Operational Policies

Attendance/Absences

All students are expected to attend Liberty Learning Academy Monday through Friday. Regular attendance is essential for maintaining structure and ensuring that lessons build sequentially to support each child's learning progress. If your child/ren will be absent, please inform the director and/or the teacher through the Brightwheel app.

Drop Off & Pick Up Procedures

When children arrive at the center, they must be escorted from your vehicle to their classroom. Please make sure a staff member is aware of your child's arrival. Per Childcare Licensing Guidelines, you must sign your child in and out daily. At the time of pick up, children must be signed out using the Brightwheel app and remain with the parent at all times.

Authorized to pick-up

If someone different is picking up your child other than yourself, they will need to show identification (Driver's license, etc.) at the front office, and be listed on your child's enrollment packet as an authorized pick-up person. A dated note with your signature may also be accepted for the release of your child. Custody Certified custody orders must be provided upon enrollment. Any changes in custody after enrollment should be provided immediately. The enrollment record must be consistent with custody orders. Children will be released only to the parents specified on the enrollment record or as specified in custody orders. **Liberty Learning Academy cannot deny parent pick up rights unless there is a certified custody order on file which will prohibit pick up for a particular day or if a restraining order had been provided for the child's file.**

Health Requirements

We must have a current copy of immunizations and updates as needed. It is the parent's responsibility to keep up with your child's immunizations. Please submit updated immunization records to the front office. A signed doctor's statement is also required. In addition, pursuant to Texas Department of State Health Service requirements, upon your child turning 4 years old, we require a vision and hearing screening. The vision and hearing test results must be submitted to the front office within 30 days of your child's 4th birthday.

Illness

Sick children will not be admitted into the center. If a child becomes ill during the day, the parent will be notified to pick the child up immediately. If we do not hear from the parent within 30 minutes, we will start to contact other contacts on file. Once contact has been made, your child must be picked up within 3 hours. Illnesses include: armpit temperature of above 100 degrees (accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness), vomiting, diarrhea, visible green mucus, pinkeye, or any other medical concerns of contagiousness (unexplained rashes, etc.). Before returning to school, *Have been fever free for at least 24 hours (without the aid of fever reducing medicine such as Tylenol or Motrin) and being symptom free of the illness that they were sent home with for at least 24 hours. (diarrhea, vomiting, etc.) *Have been on an antibiotic for a minimum of 24 hours *Have a doctor's note stating diagnosis, that the child is non-contagious and the date of when the child is able to return. We do not have a Get Well Program/Room 746.3101. If there are any questions or concerns, each instance will be dealt with on an individual basis. Upon returning to school, children must be able to participate in all daily activities, including outdoor play.

Administering Medications

Licensing requires that medication be administered only upon written authorization by the parent. Forms are provided for this purpose at the center. Medication will be administered at 11:30am and 3:30pm. Medication that is given only once or twice a day should be given at home. In keeping with state regulations the following must be upheld; medication must be provided in the original container with the child's name clearly labeled, all medication must be dated, all dosages will be given according to the dosages on the label. Medication that does not specify a dosage for your child's age must be accompanied by a doctor's note that is signed by a physician stating the amount to be given. Do not

send medication in your child's backpack, lunch kit, etc. All medication must be logged in and kept in the kitchen. We are not allowed to keep medications in the classrooms.

Medical Emergencies/Accidents/Incidents

If your child needs immediate medical attention, the center will call 911 and the paramedics will decide whether to transport, and to what hospital. A staff member will accompany the child in the ambulance to the hospital. The parent will be notified immediately and must meet us at the hospital.

Disabilities

It is our policy to accept children in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities ACT. Liberty Learning Academy reviews each child's situation on a case by case basis to determine if a child's needs can be met in the classroom setting. Please discuss your child's needs with the Center Director prior to enrollment.

Policies

Liberty Learning Academy reserves the right to change existing policies or introduce new policies with written notification. You will receive a written notification and an acknowledgment to be signed and returned to the office.

Inclement Weather

Liberty Learning Academy will follow the ISD's guidelines for inclement weather (due to flooding hurricane's, etc.). If Dallas ISD is closed, Liberty Learning Academy will be closed.

CLASSROOMS

Parental Involvement

We encourage all parents to participate in our programs as often as possible. This includes field trips, classroom activities, open house, health fairs, conferences, and special programs. You are welcome to visit the center any time during working operational hours. To keep you up to date on center happenings, notices and events of parental interest are posted in the Brightwheel app. and on the website.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parents may request conferences with faculty throughout the year. Since teachers must dedicate their school-day hours to working with students, we ask that extended discussions be scheduled in advance with the director or assistant director. During your conference, should you choose to have one, you will receive a copy of your child's developmental checklist. This checklist outlines your child's current developmental milestones and is also used by the teaching staff to tailor lessons to support each child's growth at their own pace.

Clothes

All children must have a change of clothing daily. During the day, many things can occur that will require fresh or dry clothes for your child. Liberty Learning Academy has a small amount of extra clothes. If we are not able to locate extra clothes for your child, you will be called to bring extra clothes. Open toe sandals and/or flip flops are not allowed. If your child comes in with such shoes, you will be asked to leave and come back with appropriate shoes.

Rest Time

State regulations require a designate rest period. Liberty Learning Academy rest periods is scheduled after lunch. All children present during nap time will be encouraged to rest quietly. Sleeping cots are provided by Liberty Learning Academy. The cots will be labeled with child's name and will be disinfected on a regular basis. Children will need a small blanket to use during rest time. . During rest time children are required to keep shoes on in case of emergency.

Outdoor Play

We are required to provide daily outdoor play as weather permits. Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten students will participate in outdoor play for a minimum of 90 minutes. Toddler age students (2 year) will participate in outdoor play for a minimum of 60 minutes. The outdoor play for the infants will be at the discretion of the teacher based on tolerance, weather, etc. During times of extreme temperatures, outdoor play will be limited. Parents are responsible for providing proper clothing for outdoor play. This includes jackets, sweaters, and appropriate shoes, etc. Open toe sandals and/or flip flops are not allowed. If your child comes in with such shoes, you will be asked to leave and come back with appropriate shoes. A doctor's note is required for a child to be excused from outdoor play.

Meals/Snacks

We participate in the USDA Food Program. There are certain guidelines in which we must adhere to. We do offer parents a weekly menu which is available at the front desk at the beginning of the week. The menu is also posted in Brightwheel. We provide some accommodations for children with food allergies, provided there is a doctor's note on file.

Breakfast is served 6:45 am-8:30 am

Lunch is served 10:45 am-12:00 pm

Snack is served 2:00 pm-3:30 pm

Dinner is served 4:30 pm-5:30 pm

All meals are approved by the CACFP program for their nutritional appropriateness. Meals include milk/juice, fresh fruit and fresh vegetables. Water is available at all meals. If your child is on a special diet or has a food allergy, the office must have a copy of the doctor's report. An emergency food allergy plan must be completed by an authorized medical official. This is a requirement of the food program. Any alternative meals that are supplied by the parent must provide an adequate nutritional value and may NOT contain tree nuts or peanuts. Any food brought from home needs to be labeled with your

child's name. Additionally, staff will not offer children younger than two years old that may be a choking hazard such as whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, hard pretzels, and chunks of raw carrots or meat cut into larger than bite sized pieces. We partner with Committed to Healthy Meals Food Program. Committed to Healthy Meals is a national program established by USDA to make sure children receive a sound nutrition. It is our goal to provide a variety of healthful and acceptable meals and snacks

Notification to Parents

We inform parents a variety of ways. We must have all current phone numbers here on file. If you relocate or change jobs, please notify the front office. Having correct phone numbers at the center is vital in case of an emergency. We also have e-mail. If you wish to be contacted or to contact our office by e-mail, our e-mail is LibertyLAcademy@gmail.com. If your contact information needs to be updated you may do so by emailing the Director or updating the information in the Brightwheel app.

Minimum Standards

We are governed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. There are minimum standards that we must adhere to. We strive to maintain and exceed those standards in order to provide the best possible care for your child. A copy of the minimum standards is available for viewing at the front desk. The phone number to your local child care licensing representative is posted at the front bulletin board for your viewing. A copy of our most current inspection is also posted on the office bulletin board.

Breastfeeding

All moms are welcome to breastfeed at our center. There is a designated area in the parent room. Any one of the teachers can assist moms at feeling comfortable to breastfeed. Breast milk is encouraged as the milk has many vitamins and nutrients that are essential for growth and development.

Emergency Preparedness

The staff and children practice monthly fire drills and quarterly severe weather drills. We also try and prepare children and staff for any type of emergency situations. These situations include fire drills, severe weather drills, explosions, volatile persons, etc. An Emergency Preparedness handbook that outlines each emergency situation and response is available at your request. If you would like to see a copy of this handbook, please see the front office.

PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I hereby represent that I am the legal guardian of _____ enrolled in Liberty Learning Academy and acknowledge that it is my responsibility to keep all information and authorizations pertaining to my child up to date. I have read and understand the policies and conditions as outlined in the handbook, and in agreement with such policies and conditions, and will abide by the same. In addition, at the director's discretion, my child may be removed and/or dis-enrolled from the center at any time for any reason without any notice. In signing this agreement, I accept Liberty Learning Academy's policies as written.

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____