

## Parent's Handbook Table of Contents

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## Enrollment Policy

There are several forms that make up the Large Family Child Care Home (“LFCCH”) enrollment packet. This enrollment packet must be completed and in our possession before we can assume the responsibility of caring for your child. This is to ensure that your child will get the very best care possible and satisfies the record keeping requirement of State Licensing guidelines.

All forms will be reviewed annually. If there are changes to any of the forms in the enrollment packet, please notify your LFCCH to update your records.

If you have any questions regarding the completion of these forms, please feel free to ask your Directress.

The enrollment package includes:

- Department of Children and Families enrollment form.
- Emergency contact form provided by LFCCH.
- Immunization and medical check form (yellow and blue forms with expiration date clearly stated)
- Release Authorization Form
- Completed and Signed Enrollment Contract

## Tuition and Payment Procedures

Your contract with LFCCH offers several payment options and establishes the financial duties and responsibilities of both parties (LFCCH and Parents).

There is a Non-Refundable deposit per child at time of enrollment.

Payment options may include single and quarterly payments. No monthly payment option is offered.

LFCCH also offer discounts for single payments, sibling enrollment and use of multiple services.

The success of our center (LFCCH) depends upon the prompt payment of tuition/fees in order to take care of day-to-day expenses. Tuition and fees are computed with the following factors in mind:

- Snacks, craft/activity/curriculum supplies, toys, computers for administrative purpose equipment, books provided for the children etc...
- Outside play equipment
- Employees' Social Security, Medicare, Workers Compensation, Unemployment Compensation and employee benefits
- Employees' continuing education
- Employee wages and benefits
- Building rent, heat, electricity, telephone, maintenance, and liability insurance
- Additional time spent, each day, on record keeping, parent-Directress communication; clean up from day care, and shopping trips for snacks and supplies, etc...

## Hours of Operation

Full Day Program:	8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Arrival:	8:30 to 9:00 a.m.
Dismissal:	2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Afternoon Program:	3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. prompt



Visiting siblings during the day will be accepted only if there is a position open for that day, and they will be accepted on a first come, first served basis as a courtesy of LFCCH. Please remember that guests do create some disruption to our normal schedule.

We maintain an open door policy for parents during hours of operation. This means that once the child has adapted to our environment, parents are always welcome to call or drop in. We would appreciate your taking into consideration our schedule when dropping in or calling, and remember that visitors usually cause children to react in an excited manner. If you call during the day, please be aware that we may be busy with the children and may not be able to answer the phone. If you would leave a message, we will call you back as soon as possible.

## Late Pickup Fees

A \$13.00 late fee will be charged for children that are picked up within 15 minutes after the program hours. After 15 minutes has elapsed, you will be charged \$13.00 per hour and \$ 20.00 after 6:00 p.m. Payment should be made at the time of pick up. This will be strictly enforced, and habitual tardiness may result in termination of services. Emergencies are dealt with as such.

## Arrival and Departure

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when being dropped off. Please make sure your drop off time is brief, the longer you prolong your departure, the harder it gets. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is all that is needed. In my experience, children are nearly always quick to get involved in activities as soon as parents are gone.

Please be brief at pick-up time, as well. This is a time of testing, when two different authority figures are present (the parent and the teacher). All children will test to see if the rules still apply. During arrival and departure, we expect parents to back up our rules.

At pick up or drop off time, please try to give your undivided attention to your child and your teachers.

Our normal procedure is to release the child only to his/her parents, or someone the parents designate on the Authorized Pick up and Emergency Contact Form. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, please notify us ahead of time. A verbal notice is fine on that day, if this person is on the list of people who are authorized to pick up your child. If the person is NOT on that list, we **MUST** have written permission to release your child. Please inform emergency contacts, or people designated to pick up your child, that if we do not know them, then we will need to ask for identification. This is not meant to offend anyone, it is simply a measure taken for the child's protection. Drop off and pick up are not good times to discuss serious problems. Little ears and minds hear and understand everything. LFCCH owner/directress is available by email, phone or can set up a time when the issues can be discussed in private.

## Drop off and Pick up

Enter the school, use the entrance on Le Jeune Road and exit through Reynolds Ave.



Do not block the flow of cars by parking on the driveway. If you need to stay a few minutes with your child, park your car on either sides of the driveway or on the street.

Be aware of other children and adults when maneuvering at all time. Be patient and polite to other parents as it is a short time and everyone is on their way to somewhere.

## Sign In and Sign Out

It is required by state law that all parents sign their child in and out each day. For your convenience, a Sign In/Out sheet and pen are located by the door and there are clocks on the walls to check exact time of the day. This gives us a written record of the child's attendance, hours, and the person who picked up the child each day.

## Absences

Regular attendance is important for your child's success and progress. Please avoid unnecessary absences. Leaving school early or arriving late is a part-day absence. When students are out of school, they miss important group lessons, some of which cannot be duplicated.

Tuition fees are based on enrollment for the entire school year, not on attendance, so fees must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, holidays, vacation, or for any other reason.

## Holidays and Vacations

Our LFCCH follows Miami Dade County Public School calendar, including emergency closures during hurricanes or storms as indicated by local authorities.

## Clothing and Attire

LFCCH has a uniform that can be purchased at AA Uniforms store, ask the Directress for directions. The uniform consists of comfortable LFCCH polo and bottom that allow children to play at ease and have fun even if it is sometimes messy.

## Personal Belongings

We prefer that children do not bring toys from home unless it is something that can be shared with the entire group (i.e. books, etc.). Little ones have a difficult time sharing with others, and it is even harder with their own special toys. If toys are brought, please note that they may be put away, if they are the cause of disagreements among the children. Exceptions to this policy will be that a child may bring favorite toys for show and tell activities. We are not responsible for any loss or breakage of personal items. All personal items must be clearly marked with the child's name.

## Supplies

Parents must supply diapers, wipes, pull-ups, powders/ointments if needed, and a complete change of clothes (replace when soiled), sunscreen & bug spray if you want your child to use them. These items will be kept in school for their child's use.

All personal belongings should be marked with your child's name. Eating utensils, cups and dishes will be supplied. If any of these items are brought, they must be marked with your child's name, to avoid mix-ups with other children.

Donations help us keep costs down, so if you have any of the following items on hand and are willing to donate them, it would be greatly appreciated. This is not mandatory.

- Paper towel, hand soap, etc.
- Paper of any kind, brown, white, colored, waxed, foil, etc.
- Plain play dough, water color paints and paper, or any misc. art supplies, such as fabric scraps, glitter, paper plates, etc.
- Volunteer to create an art project with the children.
- Come read a story to them early in the morning.

IDEAS! We welcome any ideas that you may have for fun activities or crafts!!!

## LFCCH Schedule

Preschoolers enjoy structure but at the same time, they need a schedule that allows for flexibility. A schedule helps the day to flow more smoothly and allows the children to anticipate upcoming events. We will adhere to our written schedule to the best of our ability. There will be times when we have to make adjustments to the schedule depending on the children level of energy and interests. We appreciate families considering our schedule when picking up or dropping off children. It is better if arrivals and departures do not occur during work time, but when they do, please take note of the fact that children need not be disturbed by an overly excited parent. Come and go as quietly and quickly as possible.

Our daily schedule, while very flexible, is as follows:

8:30a.m.	LFCCH opens - free choice of activities
9:00 a.m.	Structured activities (Individualized lessons)
10:30 a.m.	Snack
10:45 a.m.	Circle time
11:00 a.m.	Playtime on the playground: gross motor skills. On rainy days, this will be replaced by indoor play with building toys such as legos, blocks etc.
12:00 p.m.	Lunchtime including washing hands, eating, learning table manners, picking up, relaxing with books, coloring or playing with peers while others finish their lunch, etc.
1:00 p.m.	Regroup for story time, French, art or music
2:30 p.m.	Dismissal of full day children starts.
3:00 p.m.	Afternoon activities start (individual lessons)
4:00 p.m.	Snack and outdoor play
5:00 p.m.	Music or fine motor skills indoors
6:00 p.m.	Dismissal, LFCCH closes

## Meals

LFCCH does not provide meals. Parents must send a lunchbox with the child's food. Every item must be labeled with the child's name. If not, we will do it to the best of our ability. Keep in mind

that sometimes children don't always remember what is theirs, especially if a parent put their food in the refrigerator.

**NO JUNK FOOD IS ALLOWED.** We do want parents to send food that is as natural as possible (example: fruit is a fruit, not a roll up labeled natural or organic. So called "Fun Food" is usually suspicious) Please send fresh and wholesome food. We will use the microwave to warm up child's food. We will peel fresh fruits and help with yogurt containers.

If your child has allergies, we must be notified of this in writing.

We always encourage a child to eat what was provided by parents, but will not force a child to finish everything.

## Cleanliness and Hygiene

We do our best to maintain strict cleanliness and hygiene standards. Children's hands are washed before and after meals and after toileting. We use paper towels for drying hands, so children do not have to use the same towel. All employees are required to wash their hands frequently and also use antibacterial gel.

When we need to provide the child with plates, bowls or eating utensils, these have always been washed and sanitized. Tables and chairs are disinfected throughout the day.

We disinfect toilet seats between uses.

Bathroom and floor are swept and moped every day, during or at the end of the school day.

Shelves are dusted progressively every day.

## Fire Drills

State law requires one (1) fire drill per month.

We vary the time of day to help the children prepare to evacuate the building quickly and safely.

## Toilet Training

We accept children in our program who are not toilet trained but we do not provide the training. Parents are responsible to toilet train their child at home. We will always keep the child clean to limit the possibility of diaper rash.

Please keep in mind that the activity level in our environment can distract your child from responding to an urge to use the bathroom, more so than at your home. Therefore, we may continue to use diapers or pull-ups until your child can and will announce that he/she must use the bathroom (not just at home, but here, as well) and can control his/her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement. Parents need to supply training pants or pull-ups, plus a couple of extra changes of clothing each day (don't forget the socks!)

During toilet training, we ask that the child be dressed in "user friendly" clothing, as much as possible. The best items are shorts and pants with elastic waists. Try to avoid really tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers, overalls and belts (no matter how cute your child looks in them). These are difficult for children to remove "in a hurry" by themselves. Remember, we encourage your child to be independent.

## Quiet Time

Children will never be forced to systematically nap but will be invited to take a "quiet time". Some days, a break is needed and children will be invited to lie down or sit quietly and listen to soft music.

## Special Needs

The LFCCH does not perform automatic developmental screening tests. Should there be a concern either observed at the LFCCH or by the parents, it is advised to seek information from your doctor or the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System/South (FDLRS).

The LFCCH does support the screening process by completing any forms provided by the screening professional and by opening the class for observation, if needed.

The FCCH may also allow reasonable accommodations for special needs children provided that no changes to the program are required and that the child does not pose a risk to himself or others.

## Parental Involvement

There will be times and ways you can get involved in your child's Montessori experience. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in any or all of these. Some examples of ways to be involved include:

- Lending objects interesting for study.
- Coming and talking about your job or culture.
- Helping your child prepare for "Show and Tell"..
- Helping with our holiday parties.
- Chaperoning our field trips.
- Doing arts and crafts with the children for the holidays or just because you feel like it.

## Curriculum

We follow the philosophy and curriculum of the Montessori Method. All materials on the shelves are for the children to use when they are ready for them as determined by the Montessori Directress of LFCCH. Music helps to develop young brains and will play a strong role in day-to-day activities. We listen to music almost continually; no matter what activity we are involved with (lesson time, lunch, art and craft, playtime, etc.). As background music, we may listen to classical, jazz, new age and children's songs, (by a variety of artists, local and foreign). We are very careful in our choices and stay in the realm of what is acceptable, educational and appreciated by children.

We encourage children to have fun (always remembering, as Maria Montessori discovered, that their work is their play), to practice social skills, and we strongly promote creative expression. To this purpose we will use a variety of tools: Montessori materials, free play, reading, arts and crafts, music/singing, dancing, dramatic play, puzzles. The list is far from being exhaustive.

The goal of the Montessori preschool program is to provide a place where fun and freedom within limits foster the love of independent learning, and to help prepare your child for happy school years to come.

## Conferences and Progress Reports

Comprehensive evaluations of your child's progress in school are conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the year, and your child's teacher is prepared to sit down with you and discuss current concerns.

Parent-Teacher conferences can be requested and scheduled on demand or initiated by the teacher when deemed necessary.

Written Progress and Attendance Reports are provided for Fall in December and Spring in June. These Progress and Attendance Reports become a part of your child's permanent academic record.

## Homework

When a child (especially in kindergarten) is ready to take some reading and writing material to share with parents, we will send homework for the child to complete with parents.

If the child is not interested in the activity, parents should let the teacher know. She will provide a different strategy.

## Basic Rules of the Large Family Child Care Home

There are certain LFCCH rules that all children will be taught and expected to follow. This is for the safety and well being of everyone. We realize that a certain amount of wear and tear where children are concerned is to be expected but we do not want to see destruction as a purpose.

Children cannot hit, push, bite, grab, kick, spit, and pinch other children or adults. No standing or climbing on chairs or tables or running indoors. There will be no use of obscene, derogatory or disrespectful language or gesture.

Children may not walk around with food, cups or bottles. Respectful treatment of other people and all property, toys, and furniture is expected. Willful destruction of property will be charged to the parents at the cost to replace the item. Please support us in the enforcement of these rules, in order to create a better environment for all.

**As per state law, no smoking is permitted on or close to the premises; this includes parents and staff.**

## Reporting Requirements

Per law, LFCCH is mandated to report to the Department of Children and Families any suspicion of abuse or neglect. Always make sure to let your LFCCH know when you drop your child off if he/she has any unexplained cuts or bruises. Injuries will be logged into the child's file.

If you ever feel that LFCCH is not operating in a safe manner, please bring the matter to our attention. We are proud to doing our best to follow State Licensing guidelines to the letter. We are trained in knowing and complying with all applicable State and Local laws.

## Indoor and Outdoor Play

Indoor activities: Based on the Montessori approach, children work independently on their own lessons. They work with one material at a time and put it away in its exact place for the next person to use. With the guidance of the Montessori Directress, they advance in the curriculum at their own pace.

When the weather does not allow for outdoor play, the children are invited to use toys such as Legos, blocks or to dance with music to ensure appropriate gross motor activity. They are expected to pick up the toys at the end of playtime.

Outdoor play: We will be playing outdoors every day that weather permits. Please make sure that your child is appropriately dressed for outdoor play at all times. We do not go outside in stormy weather (for example if we are under warning from local authorities).

We are mandated by state law to take the children outside. Parents who feel that their child is not well enough to participate in outdoor activities must keep them out of school until they are able to participate in all activities.



## Discipline

We maintain a positive discipline policy, which focuses on prevention, redirection, love, consistency and firmness. We stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for other people and respect for property. We frequently review the rules with the children, so they are all familiar with the guidelines. Please keep in mind that there **WILL** be disagreements between children. Young children have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit, throw toys, bite, etc. We will try to prevent problems, redirect when appropriate, discuss inappropriate behavior, encourage making amends when offense involves another person, and sometimes withdraw privileges based on the principle of "natural consequences". An example might be where a child is misusing a material then he/she will not be allowed to work with the material for a period of time. Time outs will be used when a brief cooling off period is needed. Sometimes when children are fighting over a toy (indoors and outdoors), we will put the toy in time out, and then bring it back into circulation later. This seems to work better than giving the child a time out. Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** will there be any physical punishment, verbal abuse, name calling or isolation used.

If a discipline problem arises that does not respond to the above mentioned techniques, we will hold a conference with the parents. Together, we will try to find a solution. You may be called to remove your child if his/her behavior prevents us from being able to properly care for the other children. If the problem continues, other arrangements for the care of the child will have to be made, for the safety and well being of all.

## Illness

We do not provide sick childcare. The following illness policies will be strictly enforced, for the health, well being and safety of all concerned.

**Sick Child Policy:** Under no circumstances may a parent bring a sick child to LFCCH, if the child shows any signs of illness or is unable to participate in the normal routine and regular LFCCH program. Sick children will expose all children and staff members who they come in contact with. These people can in turn expose the other children. Sick children want care from their parents in the comfort of their own homes. If other children become ill due to exposure to your sick child, either because he/she was returned to day care before full recovery or because he/she was not picked up promptly upon notice of becoming ill, other parents will be unnecessarily inconvenienced. Because this is disruptive to other children and their families, your cooperation on this issue is extremely important.

Every effort is taken to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and other sanitary practices

**If your child is unable to participate in the normal school activities (including being able to play outside), then your child MUST stay home.**

Children will be visually screened when they arrive in the morning. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and are expected to come pick the child up within one hour (60 minutes). If the parent(s) cannot be reached, or have not arrived within an hour, the emergency contact person will be called and asked to come pick the child up.

For the benefit of our staff and other children in our care, a child may return 24 - 48 hours (depending upon the illness) after they have received the first dose of antibiotic. A child that receives antibiotic for an ear

infection may return immediately if free of other symptoms for at least 24 hours. If you are not sure about whether or not to bring your child, please check with your doctor because sending the child back to LFCCH might put the rest of the children at risk. Allergy related symptoms, and non-communicable illnesses do not require exclusion if you have a note from your doctor.

## Symptoms Requiring Removal of Child from Our Care

- Fever: Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100°F or higher taken under the arm, 101°F taken orally (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning, that means the child is fever free without the aid of Tylenol®, or any other fever reducing substance.)
- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion.
- Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last 4 hours.
- Vomiting: 2 or more times in a 24 hour period. Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night.
- Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
- Runny nose (other than clear), draining eyes or ears.
- Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm.
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without affecting the health, safety or well-being of the other children in our care.

Just a note: Many times our facility may get blamed for the illness of a child, meaning that we have "allowed" sick children to come here. Parents may not stop to think that when sick children are brought to our center, our entire staff is also at risk of exposure. How would you feel if another parent brought their sick child and exposed your child? We **STRESS** this again -- if you are not sure whether or not it is okay to bring your child, please call ahead to ask us. We may require a doctor's decision as to whether or not the child is contagious. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

## Medication

Parents must provide any medications needed by the child, including over-the-counter and prescription medicine. Written authorization is needed for us to administer ANY medication, prescription or over-the-counter. **NOTE: All medicines must be in their original container with pharmacist's or manufacturer's label, child's name, dosage instructions, current date, name of medication, and times to be administered clearly written.**

## Medical Emergencies

Minor bumps and scratches are inevitable, but we make every effort to keep the children safe through supervision and childproofing. Minor injuries receive appropriate first aid, and if an emergency injury or illness occurs, you will be contacted as soon as possible. If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital where you will be asked to meet us. If you are not going to be at your usual place of employment, or at home, please make sure that we have a number where you can be reached.

Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency

transportation, if required. The owner/operator of LFCCH will not be held liable for any sickness/injury of either parent/guardian or child while on the facility premises.

## Field Trips

LFCCH schedule field trips throughout the year designed to complement the curriculum goals. Parents will be notified of each trip in advance. Individual permission slips must be signed and returned before the child can participate.

LFCCH welcomes parent involvement for chaperoning on field trips and other off-site events. We appreciate your taking the time to support your child's school and its activities. The following are guidelines that we ask our chaperones to follow:

- Parents must fill and sign the school's field trip permission form.
- Please bring a cell phone with you on the trip for safety reasons. In case of illness or emergency, please notify the Directress immediately.
- Volunteer chaperones are acting as role models for our students. Please lead by example by demonstrating maturity in actions, attitudes, and dress. Avoid socializing and remain vigilant for the children's behavior. The Directress will be in charge of each field trip and will direct the volunteers as to what is expected of them.
- Only those parents who have signed up in advance as chaperones may attend.
- Under no circumstances may guests or siblings attend a field trip unless approved by the Directress.
- Smoking is prohibited.
- The use of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- As representatives of LFCCH, all chaperones and volunteers are expected to follow LFCCH policies.

## Student Records

All Student Records, including Progress Reports, Student Releases, Teacher Recommendations, Health Records, and all information pertaining to student records are official/confidential LFCCH records and copies and/or originals are kept in the student's Folder. All requests for school records must be referred to the Admissions Directress who approves the release of any student records.

## Termination Policies

We reserve the right to terminate a child for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay
- Routinely late picking up your child
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of child to adjust to the center after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Our inability to meet the child's needs
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- Serious illness of child

We will give two week notice of termination for which full tuition is due, whether or not the child is in attendance. The Directress reserves the right to give written notice of immediate termination where there are



extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the Directress, the staff or other children in attendance.

## **Revision to Handbook and Contract**

This handbook and accompanying contract will be revised annually. All families will sign a new contract each year. We reserve the right to make changes in rates and policies as we deem necessary.

Revised on January 09, 2013