

Leap N Learn Child Care Centers

PARENT HANDBOOK

2019



Leap N Learn Child Care Centers is committed to partnering with families to provide care in a learning environment that is developmentally appropriate, nurturing and safe.

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WELCOME TO LEAP N' LEARN CHILD CARE CENTER

Our staff welcomes you to our program and hope you will be happy you selected us to care for your child. This handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the program and policies of our center. Both home and school have important functions to serve in educating and caring for your child. Guiding the development of a child is a cooperative endeavor. In order to provide the most supportive and responsive environment for your child it is important to have open communication between the parent and our staff.

After your child's transition to the center, it continues to be important to take time regularly to let us know how you feel he/she is doing and what we can do to make your child's experience meet their needs. You are always welcome to visit in your child's room. Please contact the Director with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you have regarding our program.

Mission Statement

Leap N Learn Child Care Centers are committed to partnering with families to provide care in a learning environment that is: developmentally appropriate, nurturing and safe. We strive to foster the development of socialization skills, independence, a positive self-image, and promote the joy of life-long learning, through our relationships with children, parents, colleagues and the community.

Leap N Learn Child Care Centers were developed around the belief that the family is the cornerstone of a child's life. Our center is dedicated to supporting the child and the family in a variety of ways that include:

- The provisions of child care to enable parents to work, attend school, and/or participate in job training.
- The provision of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that meet the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional needs of children.
- Providing a warm and welcoming environment that makes children feel secure and encourages parental involvement.

Program & Hours of Operation:

Leap N Learn is licensed by the State of Maine to provide child care from 6 weeks up to 12 years of age. We serve children ages 6 weeks to 6 years (or once a child enters elementary school in Scarborough and Saco we provide before/after care until grade 3). Our hours are 7am until 5:30pm Monday through Friday. Please see the Yearly calendar for Holidays/Closings*

Classroom	Years	Staff:	Child Ratio
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Infant	6wks-1 year	1:	4
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Toddler 1	1 yr -2 yrs	1:	5
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Toddler 2	2 yrs-3yrs	1:	7
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Preschool	36mo-72mo	1:	10
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Attendance

In order for your child to receive the maximum benefit from the program and participate in the daily routine, we request that all children arrive by 9:00 am. If your child will be late or absent for the day please call the center at 883-4123 Scarborough or 283-2345 Saco and leave a message. Attendance is tracked daily and the reason for the absence is also noted.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Parents are responsible for their child/children at drop-off and pick-up. Upon entry and exit of the building children must be accompanied by an adult. When entering the building parents are responsible for placing the child's belongings in their cubby, escorting the child to their classroom or playground, and checking in with a staff member.

Parents must always check in with a staff member when dropping off or picking up a child. The time of arrival/departure is documented on the classroom sign-in/sign-out sheet daily. These sheets are turned into the office at the end of the week. Checking in with a staff member also ensures that any information regarding your child's day or other correspondence for the family reaches you promptly.

The center does not provide transportation. It is the responsibility of the parent to arrange for transportation to and from the program. Please park in the designated area for pick-up and drop-off. Please never leave a child unattended in your vehicle when picking up or dropping off your child. If your child receives transportation services from a provider, it is your responsibility to contact the transportation provider to cancel transportation if your child will be absent.

Children may leave the program at any point in the day. Children may only leave with a parent, or an individual the parent has listed on the Contact Information Sheet. Any individual not known to staff must produce identification before being allowed to leave with the child. An individual not listed on the registration forms will not be able to obtain any information relating to any child. All children are signed out by a staff member on the room attendance sheets when they leave. Parents' must also sign in/out electronically.

LATE FEE POLICY: Leap N' Learn Child Care Center has the following late fee policy: \$2.00 per minute starting at 5:31 PM.

Staff members are only scheduled until 5:30 pm and have other commitments at the end of the day. You are expected to pick-up your child no later than the time that was agreed upon and documented on your fee schedule at the time of enrollment. If this time needs to be modified, please see the Director. Please contact the center if you will be late in picking up your child. This will not waive the late fee, but will inform us of the expected pick-up time and relieve stress for your child. Repeated late pick-ups will result in a written notice and/or meeting with the Director and if not remedies could result in termination from the program.

Payments for late fees are due in full PRIOR to returning to care.

TUITIONS & PAYMENTS:

Space is reserved for your child and therefore payment for your scheduled attendance will be charged if the child is absent or not. Enrollment at the center is limited based on teacher to child ratio and according to Health & Human Services Guidelines for the State of Maine. As a reminder we close for Federal Reserve Holidays. Our scheduled days off & unscheduled snow days are considered while calculating rates for full/part time space. The tuition remains the same each week consistently throughout the year. ***Tuition payments are due in full the Friday previous to the dates the child will be attending the following week. A late payment fee will of \$10 per day late fee beginning Friday at close will be added to tuition, if not paid on time. All fees and payments must be paid in full in order for a child to return to the center. Payments and fees will accrue until paid in full. We require a full two week written paid notice when terminating care. Tuition remains the same during the termination period regardless of attendance. Tuition and fees will accrue in compliance with our policies. We do collect outstanding balances with the local court system.***

Health Policy: Please ask director for policies on specific illnesses not listed

Sick children must be cared for at home. Your child cannot attend Leap N Learn if in the last 24 hours he/she has a fever, diarrhea, draining from the eyes and/or ears or an unidentified rash. If your child becomes ill while attending the program and is determined to be too ill to be in our care you will be contacted and requested to pick up your child within 2 hours. If your child has any of the previously mentioned conditions or is sent home ill he/she will not be able to attend the program for at minimum the following day. The decision to send a child home rests with classroom staff, in consultation with the Director/designee. **Specific Readmission Guidelines:**

Fevers	May readmit after 24 hrs from last normal temperature
Chicken Pox	May readmit 7 days after rash first appeared and all lesions have crusted over.
Conjunctivitis	May readmit after treatment with an antibiotic for 24 hrs and there is no longer any discharge from the eye. If medication is not prescribed a child still must be free from any discharge from the eye before being readmitted.
Rashes	May readmit only with physician's written assurances that symptoms are not contagious.

Impetigo	May readmit after treatment with oral antibiotic for 24 hrs and/or treatment with topical antibiotic has been started - lesions should be covered if possible.
Head Lice	May readmit 24 hrs after anti-parasitic treatment is completed and all nits are removed.
Ringworm	May readmit 24 hrs after anti-fungal treatment is started - lesions should be covered if possible.
Scabies	May readmit 24 hrs after anti-parasitic treatment has been started.
Strep Throat	May readmit 24 hrs after antibiotic treatment has been started and when temperature has been normal for 24 hours minimum.
Hand Foot Mouth	May remit after 5 full days after symptoms appear.
Croup	May remit after 5 full days after symptoms appear.

****There are many diseases that children must remain home for, for specific contagious viruses please ask manager or director the required at home treatment time. We reserve the right to keep siblings home if we feel it is in the best interest of the other children attending the center.**

Immunizations:

All children are required to have a current Certificate of Immunization that illustrates a child's immunization status within 14 days of enrollment as required by the State of Maine's Rules for Licensing of Child Care Facilities. This information will be kept in the child's file. If parents object to immunizations due to philosophical or religious beliefs, a written statement to that effect must be included in the child's record. Provider may exclude unvaccinated children if safety for other students is a concern at any time.

Child Screening:

With parent permission, all children are screened using the Ages and Stages screening tool in September or upon enrollment to the program. This provides the classroom teachers and parents with information regarding important developmental milestones for young children and assist with developing appropriate goals for the child. The screening may also identify children that could benefit from a referral for additional early intervention services. Referrals for early intervention may include speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, or educational services (development therapy). Screening children helps children receive services earlier and prepare them for school.

Child Assessment:

Children attending the LNL shall be involved in an ongoing assessment process which is based on the Maine Early Learning Guidelines. Assessment information will be kept confidential and not released without signed parental permission. The assessment shall include, but is not limited to: anecdotal

records, rating scales, checklists, work samples, informal notes, and observations. The assessment will be conducted in order to compile a portfolio for each child and to assist in planning activities in the classroom. Teachers will compile assessment data 2 times per year and offer parent conferences 2 times per year. Families will be asked to contribute to the assessment and portfolio contents. The contents shall always be made available to the children and their families and may be reviewed during conferences.

Curriculum:

LNL Child Care Center uses the Maine Early Childhood Learning Guidelines for children as a blueprint for planning and implementing a developmentally appropriate program. Each classroom emphasizes creative expression and problem solving, while maintain a balance of teacher-planned activities and those that emerge from the child's individual interest, abilities, goals and objectives. The Early Childhood Learning Guidelines focus on 4 major areas of development including Social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. The curriculum emerges from the classroom environment. For example, dramatic play area affords opportunity for socialization and language development. Blocks are wonderful for exploration of relative size and shape (geometric relationship) as well as fine motor manipulation. Music and movement offer opportunities for socialization, body kinesthetic, pitch and rhythm awareness and appreciation of cultures. Activities like painting and working with play dough or clay develops interest, fine motor skills, socialization, and sensitivity to color, shape, and form. The Early Childhood Learning Guidelines are integrated, overlapping, and are supported by research about how children grow and learn.

We believe that children learn best:

- By supporting children in context of their family and community.
- By having educated teachers who understand child development and how children grow and learn at the preschool stage.
- By having sensitive teachers who are knowledgeable about individual learning styles of children.
- By having an organized learning environment with a variety of age appropriate materials.
- By having a planned daily schedule that includes blocks of purposeful play that is facilitated by highly intentional teaching practices.
- By having planned experiences that promote active thinking and experimenting.

Transitioning: Children will be placed in the class that is developmentally appropriate and based on their age. We transition children slowly by introducing them to their new class in many short sessions over a period of time.

Holiday/Celebrations, Culture and Language

Holidays and celebrations are viewed as an important part of family life. We also acknowledge and respect diversity. We welcome families from different cultures and all faiths. We strive to find a balanced approach to holidays without exaggerating the experience or ignoring it. Curriculum will not be holiday driven but will recognize individual similarities and celebrate individual differences. Please share with your child's teacher if your family has other traditions or cultural experiences that could be shared

with the class. The program welcomes diversity and the opportunity to learn and build on the understanding of other cultures, family structure, ability, language, age, and gender in non-stereotypical ways. The more teachers know about what is unique and special about you and your child, the better they will be able to help your child grown and learn.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Food from Home: Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers. **Due to potential allergies to food, please check with the center Director prior to bringing in Home Baked Goods for sharing or celebrations.**

Child Supervision: The children enrolled at LNL are supervised by sight and sound at all times. Children will not be sent indoors or outdoors without a staff person present. Staff will avoid situations where they are alone with a child or group of children. The use of wading pools, trips to the beach/pool is strictly prohibited unless an extra staff person/water attendance is present and a lifeguard is on duty for the beach or local pool. Sprinkler play does not require additional staff.

Field Trips:

If the center plans a field trip, a Field Trip Permission form must be signed by the parent/guardian for any trip off center grounds. A field trip is determined to be any time a child or group of children leaves the grounds for a specific destination. Teachers take emergency contact information for children with them, and carry a first-aid and cell phone in case of an emergency. All trips will be planned well in advance and notice will be given to the parents.

Pet Policy: Pets of any kind are not allowed in the facility or on facility grounds at any time.

Personal Hygiene: LNL supports personal hygiene by helping children learn proper hand-washing and how to brush their teeth. All children, staff, and visitors helping with the children will be required to wash their hands before and after activities, such as meal preparation, attending to wounds, before assisting with tooth brushing, toileting, before and after administering medication, handling garbage, or cleaning.

Napping:

All children will have a scheduled nap/rest time. Rest mats will be provided by the Center and assigned specifically to one child. Parents are requested to provide a crib sheet & blanket for their child. All bedding needs to be brought home weekly for laundering.

Toileting & Diapering:

Teachers work closely with the families to coordinate the toileting plan for each child. It is the in the child's best interest if the toileting plan is followed consistently both at home and school. Diapers and pull-ups will be checked at least every 2 hours when children are awake and when they awaken. Soiled

and wet diapers will be changed as soon as detected. Please make sure your child has enough in their cubby for accidents. Parents are required to supply diapers/pull-ups. All children must use disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a documented medical reason that does not permit the use of disposable diapers. Licensing regulations and the NAEYC criteria require that staff **do not** clean or rinse soiled clothing or diapers. Soiled clothing (and medically necessary cloth diapers) will be immediately placed in a plastic bag to be sent home that day. If cloth diapers **must** be used, the diaper will have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of urine and feces.

Clothing: Children need to be dressed for play when they come to the Center. The children spend time outdoors every day weather permitting. All children need to have appropriate clothing for outside including snow pants, boots, hats, mittens, and warm winter jackets from the months of October to mid April. This clothing is required for cold and windy weather not just snow that can occur during these months.

Every child must have at least one extra complete change of clothing including underwear, socks, pants, and a shirt in their back-pack or cubby. Extra clothing is needed due to accidents, water play, or wetness from rain, mud or snow.

The center keeps a limited supply of clothing available for an emergency. At the end of the day if your child is wearing Center clothing, please launder and return it the following day. This will ensure that we will have clean extra clothing for the children who need it.

Children are not permitted to wear boots in the classroom. Please bring in a pair of sneakers or other shoes to wear in the classroom. Any clothing that could be a safety hazard is discouraged.

Please label all clothing and belongings. This will assure your child's lost or mixed up belongings will be returned when located.

Conferences/Parent Communication

Classroom teachers conduct parent/teacher conferences concerning each child's progress. This gives the teacher and the family a chance to discuss any needs, difficulties, or concerns. These conferences are held at times to meet both parent and teacher convenience; a sign-up list will be posted and sent out a head of time. The conferences notice will include a space for families to list issues they would like to discuss. This allows the families to input into the conferences; as well as, teachers the opportunity to prepare ahead of time.

It is important that communication remains open between home and school. We communicate with parents on a regular basis by:

- Posting curriculum planning weekly on the classroom bulletin board.
- Posting a description of class events, with a description of the process, or projects going on that week, or month in the classroom.

- Displaying or documenting the children's work and photographs of them working in the classroom with descriptions and the process of learning involved.
- Informal communication in the morning or at the end of the day about the child's work, activities, play or interactions.
- Written communication such as letters describing upcoming classroom events, field trips, or daily activities - or letters related to behavior observations and/or behavior plans related to the behavior policy.
- Because we are unable to verify identity verbally; Leap N Learn does not give information relating to child(ren) in our care over the phone due to confidentiality and security purposes. Please see a teacher for any questions you may have.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged and welcome to get involved with the program. There is an open door policy and there will be various opportunities for parents to participate in classroom activities over the course of the year. Prior to participating background check will need to be performed. We encourage parents to visit their child's classroom and share areas of expertise with the children after thorough background check. Please let your child's teacher know about your special talents, interests and hobbies. Parents are strongly encouraged to ask questions about their child's educational activities. Teachers welcome your input regarding how your child learns, and your comments and concerns. Teachers need as much information as possible from parents. After all, you are the expert about your child.

Camera Policy: Camera are for security and safety purposes only for Licensing officials and management- because of confidentiality issues parents are not permitted to view footage.

Alcohol, Illegal Substances, Fire arms: The Center prohibits the use of alcohol, possession of illegal substances, or unauthorized potentially toxic substances, firearms, pellet or BB guns in the center, parking lot, or facility grounds. This policy extends to any center-sponsored event.

If a parent/guardian arrives to pick up her/his child and appears to be intoxicated or under the influence and exhibits behavior such as slurred or incoherent speech, difficulty walking or other unusual behaviors, staff may request the parent or guardian to seek an alternative form of transportation. The local police will be contacted to intervene if necessary. Safety of the children is our utmost concern.

Smoking Policy: The LNL facility, buildings, and grounds is considered to be "Smoke Free". Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the grounds.

Emergency and Evacuation Procedures and Plans: LNL will be evacuated in the event that there is a bomb threat, flooding, potential flooding, or other emergency situation which renders the center harmful or potentially unsafe. All children and staff and other adults will evacuate to the Dunstan Fire Station. At that time, all parents will be called to pick up their children immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the designated adults on the emergency form will be contacted. Fire drills will be held monthly, in order to ensure that the center can be evacuated in a timely manner. **Fire Drills:** Fire drills are conducted year-round on a monthly basis so the children will know what to expect in the event of a

fire. The facility complies with State and local fire regulations and is inspected annually by the State Fire Marshall's Office. Each exit has a fire extinguisher and staff will rehearse the procedures to follow in the event of a fire or building evacuation.

Closings: Leap N Learn Child Care Center strives to be open every day we are scheduled. The program may close if the Director decides there is the need to ensure staff or children's safety. If the Director closes the program, families will be notified of the closing by public announcement by 6:00am. Public announcements will be aired on Channel 8.

Health & Safety Training: All staff working directly with children is required to be pediatric C.P.R. and First Aid Certified. Staff also receives annual training regarding the safe handling of Blood Borne Pathogens. Water Safety training is also required for field trips to the beach or use of wading pools.

Allergies: Parents must inform the center of any and all allergies or special medical conditions affecting their children. The center will honor these needs upon receipt of proper documentation from a physician. Children with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, must have an individual care plan or instructions provided by the child's health care provider, to instruct teachers how to handle the child's specific needs. This plan will be placed in the child's file and all center staff notified.

Medication: Please see the Medication Authorization Form for instructions. All prescriptions must be in the original container with the prescription directions listed. We require a medication release form to be filled out for each medication. All expired medication will be sent home to be replaced.

Child-Related Emergencies:

If a child receives a serious injury, the staff on site will determine the level of need, and take or more of the following courses of action.

1. The parent will be notified and asked to pick the child up and make arrangements for the appropriate treatment. Staff can, if appropriate, require a note from the parent, documenting that the child was seen and treated before the child is re-admitted.
2. Staff will call 9-1-1, requesting an ambulance come to the center to treat and transport a child (if necessary) to the emergency room. The parent will be immediately contacted to inform them of what has happened (all parent numbers, along with emergency back-up numbers and "permission to treat" signatures are on file in the main office and in the classroom).

To have a lasting relationship the following practices must be followed:

- Emergency forms will be maintained and updated as needed. Parents must notify the Center Office immediately and complete a new Emergency Form noting any change of address, phone number or work information.
- All staff will know the location of the emergency forms. Copies of the emergency forms will be kept in the main office, and each classroom. First Aid kits will be kept in each class.

- Childcare staff will take emergency forms with them on all field trips.
- All staff working with children will be certified in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid.
- The first aid kit will be available at all times, including indoors, on the playground, and on field trips.
- An Incident Report will be completed by a staff member whenever a child is injured in the program. Parents may request copies at their convenience. The original is placed in the child's file, and a copy is made for the Director.

Child Guidance, Discipline, and Behavior Policy:

All children need a safe and comfortable place to learn. Guidance and discipline occur constantly and consistently throughout the day. Teachers will take opportunities to teach children the skills of cooperation, team work, using words to communicate needs, taking turns, respect, controlling physical impulses, expressing emotions in ways that do not hurt others, persistence and problem solving. These skills are best taught in context of the day's activities. Interaction with children is an opportunity for the staff to nurture and teach. It is the responsibility of the adults employed or associated with the program to model positive interactions for all children in our care. Teachers are a secure base of support for children, they respond promptly and appropriately (taking children's level of development into consideration) to children's; positive initiations, negative emotions, and feelings of hurt and fear by providing comfort, support, and assistance. Teachers never use physical punishment, threats, derogatory remarks, or withhold food as a form of discipline. Children are supported as they practice the skills of entering and sustaining play, resolving conflicts, as well as problem solving, and dealing with their own emotions and the emotions of others. Teachers do this by helping children identify feelings, describe problems, and by offering alternative solutions.

The behavior expected of all children attending the LNL Center will be consistent with conduct expected by the community. Behavior considered appropriate for public schools, in family settings and the community will provide the basis for requirements concerning the conduct of the children attending LNL. Specific attention will be paid to the child's developmental level in setting behavioral expectations. Expectations for each child will be based on the child's developmental age, needs, and abilities.

All behavioral management interventions will be based on effective practices to help a child develop self-esteem, empathy, self-control, friendliness, cooperation, and respect to assist them to get along with others and to resolve conflicts.

No specific intervention is prescribed for a particular incident. All interventions are to be formulated based on individual variables affecting the child. No corporal punishment is allowed. If behavior with the child continues to become an ongoing issue, a meeting will be scheduled between the staff, director, and the parent/guardian to discuss appropriate actions and ongoing goals and objectives.

If the behavior at any time becomes unsafe and a situation cannot be rectified, the child may be terminated from the program.

Website: www.LeanPLearnChildCare.com www.LNL.School