



# Learning Springs Elementary Parent Handbook 2023-2024

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to Learning Springs!

We are happy that you have selected our program for your child. Our aim is to provide a foundation for your child's education and to make each child's experience with school a successful and happy one. We hope you will also feel comfortable enough with us to share the concerns and celebrations that are a part of parenting.

As part of the Learning Springs family, we will do our best to keep you informed of your child's experiences, progress, and development. This handbook is intended to provide as much information as possible about specific procedures and policies to avoid misunderstandings or inadequate communication. Please read it carefully and ask questions about any information that you feel is not clear or not addressed. The handbook is a guideline so that you, as a parent or guardian, will know exactly what is expected and therefore make Learning Springs a happy, productive, safe place for children to learn.

In stating this, we ask that all parents/guardians read the Parent Handbook thoroughly and refer to it often throughout the school year. Once the handbook has been read, and the Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment Form has been signed, we will know that parents understand the information and will abide by all the policies set by Learning Springs.

We look forward to working with you and sharing in the growth and development of your child. We acknowledge and respect the trust you have put in us for the care of your child. We take our role in your child's life seriously and welcome your feedback to help us refine and strengthen our program.

Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have any questions or concerns.

Lucia D'Souza M.Ed., M.Sc.  
Executive Director

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## I. PROGRAM INFORMATION

### **Mission Statement**

Every moment, a learning moment.

We seek to inspire children to be the best they can be academically, emotionally, and physically. We seek to inspire children to believe in themselves, so that they may inspire others. We believe that the children we serve will inspire us in turn, and that the torch we pass on will shine brighter in their hands than in our own.

### **Philosophy**

One of the most challenging decisions that parents have to make is to select a school that is the best possible choice for their child. Learning Springs aims to provide a safe, therapeutic, nurturing and stimulating environment in which every child thrives while receiving individual attention from caring and experienced staff.

We pride ourselves in having classrooms that are rich in carefully chosen learning experiences while at the same time fostering social skills, literacy, and independence. We seek to create an inclusive environment that values all individuals regardless of ability, cultural, ethnic, racial, or socio-economic differences.

### **Policy of Inclusion:**

Our program welcomes and includes children with special needs and works closely with families to provide exemplary services to these students. We believe strongly that all children deserve the right to developmentally appropriate programming and to have access to interaction with peers and supportive professional staff. At Learning Springs, we do not discriminate according to race, ethnic background, or socio-economic differences.

Learning Springs aims to provide an environment in which all children are supported to reach their full potential. We provide practitioners' tools to help support parents and children with behavioral and emotional challenges. We identify the specific needs of children and meet those needs through a range of strategies. We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting the individual children's needs.

We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity and that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision, and review of their children's education.

A graduated response system is used for identifying, assessing, and responding to children's special educational needs:

- We provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children with emotional and behavioral challenges.
- We provide a differentiated curriculum to meet individual needs and abilities.
- We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing behavioral plans for children with emotional and behavioral challenges.
- We ensure that children with emotional and behavioral challenges are appropriately involved at all stages of the graduated response, taking into account their levels of ability.
- We use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision, and review for children with emotional and behavioral challenges.

### **Non-Discrimination/Anti-Bias Policy**

Learning Springs does not discriminate based on race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin, sexual preference or identity, nor mental or physical disability in determining which children and families are served. We understand and implement the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to make reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities.

The professionals at Learning Springs understand that at an early age children can absorb our society's biases of gender, age, color, language, and physical characteristics. We believe that the anti-bias curriculum that we embrace supports children as they explore, celebrate, and understand differences.

Our approach acknowledges that children and adults can be empowered to stand up for their rights and the rights of others and to recognize and question social injustice. We challenge the children and ourselves to:

- explore issues of fairness as seen from a child's perspective
- see conflict as a challenge in problem-solving
- be open to differing perspectives, ideas, attitudes, and behaviors
- monitor our words and actions for unconscious bias or prejudice
- recognize and demonstrate respect for diversity among people

### **Hours of Operations**

**Morning Extended Care:** 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

**Learning Springs Elementary:**

M/T/Th/F 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

W 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**After School Extended Care:** 2:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.

The school's hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### **School Holidays**

The following holidays are observed by the school: New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day After Thanksgiving, Christmas Day. **Please refer to the school calendar for additional times that school is closed and/or when the school closes early.**

## **II. ADMISSIONS**

### **Enrollment Procedures**

The following steps are typically followed as part of our admissions process to determine if a placement is appropriate:

- Families tour and receive an application form.
- Child visits the school and meets the staff.
- Assessments submitted (if applicable)
- Enrollment packet given to parents/guardians to complete if placement appears appropriate.
- Child admitted to the program as soon as a space is identified in the appropriate classroom and all enrollment paperwork and fees are submitted.

- The final decision for classroom placement is done by the school director with input from the staff and parents/guardians, in the best interest of the child and overall composition of the class.

### **Potty Training**

Children are expected to be fully potty trained before school starts. If a child has an accident, the parent will be called to come and change their child within a reasonable time.

### **Immunizations**

Children who have all the required vaccines may attend school. Children who are not up to date will not be able to attend school. Children will be allowed to attend school after they show proof they have received the necessary vaccines. This is required per the California School Immunization Law. Learning Springs also requires proof of vaccination against COVID-19 for those age eligible.

### **Required Forms:**

The following forms must be completed in full, signed by both parents/legal guardians, and be on file:

- Enrollment and Tuition Contract
- Parent Questionnaire
- Agreement to Handbook Terms and Conditions
- Medication and Supplement List
- Sunscreen Permission Form (if enrolled in the after-school program)
- Authorization to Release & Exchange Confidential Information (as needed)
- Proof of COVID – 19 vaccinations
- Earthquake Comfort Care Kit Form
- Identification and Emergency Information
- Consent for Medical Treatment
- Parent Consent for Administration of Medication (for prescription and OTC medications/items)
- CA Immunization Record
- Report of Health Examination for School Entry Report
- TB Risk Assessment for School Entry

### **Tuition Agreement**

- The **Registration fee** of one hundred and sixty-five dollars (\$165.00) is neither non-refundable nor pro-rated and must be received in full at the time of registration. If the bank returns the check for non-sufficient funds, the space reserved for the child will be forfeited and enrollment will be terminated. Re-registration may be possible, if space allows, with a cash payment of the non-refundable registration fee along with the returned check fee.
- **Tuition payments** are due on the **first calendar** day of each month. Since all students are enrolled for the entire school year, parents or legal guardians are responsible for the child's total program tuition. Learning Springs is unable to prorate tuition for illness/ vacation/holidays.
- **Tuition is considered late after the first calendar day of each month regardless of whether the first of the month falls on a weekend or holiday. For example, if the first of the month falls on Saturday or Sunday, the tuition is due the Friday prior.** A \$45.00 fee will automatically be assessed each month for late payments. Late tuition fees will increase by \$10.00 for every additional two days the tuition is late. Students may be excluded from class until tuition is received if tuition becomes more than two weeks late. In the event of consistent late tuition payments, a child's enrollment may be terminated.

- **Private Behavior Therapist** payments are due no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month and late fees apply.
- A \$50.00 penalty fee will be assessed for any **returned checks** and the account may be placed on a cash only status.
- The **Materials' fee** of two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for elementary students is neither non-refundable nor pro-rated and must be received in full at the time of registration.
- For a detailed list of other supplemental fees, please refer to the current fee schedule.
- We begin registering for the following year in March for parents currently enrolled in the school. We open registration to the public on April 1st. If re-enrollment paperwork and enrollment fee is not received by April 1st the space will be made available to incoming students.

### **Sibling Discount**

Immediate families with more than one child attending Learning Springs shall receive a sibling discount on tuition with the youngest child paying full price, the oldest receiving a 10% discount and any other children in between receiving a 5% discount.

### **Termination of Services**

**A child's enrollment may be terminated at any point if, in the opinion of the Director, the school does not have sufficient or appropriate resources to address the needs of the child and/or family.**

The circumstances under which a child's enrollment may be terminated are as follows:

1. The child exhibits ongoing extremely aggressive behavior, which endangers self/other children and/or staff.
2. The child's health and safety at the school cannot be assured due to circumstances such as repeated impulsive, risk-taking behavior.
3. Unwillingness of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to work with teachers in the management of their child's behavior, and/or refusal to follow the school's recommendations for outside support services.
4. Parent's display of inappropriate behavior towards staff or children. This includes but is not limited to: disrespectful language/behavior, disregarding program policies, verbal and/or physical harassment or any unlawful behavior.
5. Violations of any Education Code regarding firearms, alcohol, drugs, physical violence, theft, willful destruction of property, any conduct by parent/guardian, child, or relatives resulting in harm to person or property while on the school grounds.
6. The child's developmental needs cannot be met at the school.
7. Nonpayment/continual late payment of tuition.
8. Continued tardiness of parents picking up their child.
9. Falsifying/withholding required information on the child's contract/enrollment forms.

Termination is always a last resort action, which is carried out only when the director and staff feel that such action is in the best interest of the child, or the other children enrolled. If the school is unable to meet the needs of the child and/or family, every effort will be made to refer the parent to a more appropriate program for their child.

Learning Springs is an inclusive school that promotes and celebrates diversity among children. Every effort will be made to integrate children with diverse abilities into the day-to-day activities of the school.

Our child-school approach seeks to accommodate a wide range of individual differences; however, on occasion a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:



- A child cannot participate safely in our program or appears to be a danger to themselves or others, despite our best efforts to reasonably reduce the risk of harm or injury.
- Medical, psychological, school district, or social service personnel working with the school or child determine that continued care at the school could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of, the child.
- Any other situation in which the accommodations needed for the child's success in the program conflict with the fundamental nature of our group environment, or when a different environment is in the best interest of the child or the school.

### **Withdrawal from Program by Family**

A 30-day written withdrawal notice is required when exiting the school for a period of time from one month to a permanent exit. A family who withdraws a child for any period and then wishes to re-enroll is considered new to the school. If your child is absent for two consecutive weeks without notification to the Director, your child will be considered withdrawn from our school. If you choose to re-enroll your child, depending on space availability, you will be required to submit another registration fee as well as any fees associated with onboarding of ABA team members. **In addition to the withdrawal requirements listed, the following is understood for any early withdrawals as enrollment is contracted for the entire school year. Any exits occurring April 1<sup>st</sup> or later will require the balance of the remainder of the school year tuition paid in full.**

### **III. ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

#### **Transition into Learning Springs**

Learning Springs recognizes the transitioning period as a time of concern for families and children. To facilitate a positive experience during this process, families may work with classroom teachers to create a transition plan to ease children into the new environment.

We aim to make the school a welcoming place where children settle in quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

#### **First Day of School**

We aim to make your child's school experience a positive one. We ask that you anticipate the possibility of spending some of your morning with your child for the first day they attend. We also want you to be aware of our schedule so that you will be able to discuss this with your child. Your child will not be forced to participate in group activities but must stay with the group for safety and supervision reasons.

#### **Help with Separation/Saying Good-bye**

We understand some children have difficulty with separation and we want to assure you that we are always ready to talk with you and comfort your child. Always say good-bye with a kiss, hug and/or a wave! Be firm, but friendly about leaving. A staff member can assist you by comforting/re-directing your child.

Be consistent and follow the same routine – walk your child to class, greet the teacher, sign in and **always** say good-bye at the door. Your child will pick up on your confidence about having chosen a good place for them to be while you are away. Please let us know if we can be of further help in ensuring a smooth transition.

#### **Visitors/Parents on Campus**

Parents are always welcome at Learning Springs. Since the safety of our children is our primary concern, we ask that visitors/parents on campus adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Always check in at the office when visiting.** Sign in and out in the school office. Please obtain a VISITOR/PARENT badge when on the school grounds. The office staff will answer any questions and direct visitors/parents to their destination.
- Visitors/Parents interested in observing a specific classroom or learning more about a school program, are asked to contact the school office in advance.
- If you have a last-minute issue, (dropping off a forgotten lunch box, early pick- up, etc.) please go to the office and they will contact the classroom directly.

### **Arrival and Departure**

Mornings can be very hectic as families separate and teachers greet individual children and their families. It is very important that any information necessary for the teacher during the day be written down or emailed to the staff. Our school day starts promptly at 8:30 a.m. Children arriving after 8:30 a.m. are considered tardy. Families picking up their child later than their regular departure time are considered a late pick up.

### **Signing In and Out**

Children **MUST** be signed in and out daily. **Please use your legal signature and actual time you arrive and leave.** When children leave the school premises for any other purpose such as medical/dental appointments, lunch out, etc. you must sign your child out **in the office** and a staff member will either bring your child to the office, advise the classroom you are coming down to pick up your child, or send your child to the office. This will ensure as little disruption to the classroom as possible. Only custodial parents/guardians and authorized adults (those listed on the emergency card) are allowed to sign in and sign out or remove a child from a classroom. Staff members will require a picture identification if they are unfamiliar with the adult picking up the child. Individuals under eighteen (18) years are not allowed to sign children in or out unless the individual is the child's custodial parent. Use the EXACT time when signing in and out.

An adult must accompany all children to and from the classroom when dropping off in the morning or picking up in the afternoon. We appreciate your cooperation in assuring the safe departure/supervision of each child from the school. Children must be always under direct adult supervision while on the premises and parents or guardians are responsible for children before they are signed in and once they are signed out. The school must be informed if a child is unable to attend school for any reason by either a phone call or email to the office by 8:00 AM.

### **Late Pick up of Children**

Please ensure that your child is picked up on time. Our half-day TK class ends at noon daily. Our elementary program ends promptly at 2:00 p.m. (1:00 p.m. on Wednesdays) and our school age program ends at 5:00 PM. **A fee of one dollar (\$1.00) per minute per child will be charged for late pick up. If a parent is later than 15 minutes, the fee raises to \$5.00 per minute per child for minute sixteen (16) and forward.**

### **Policy on the Release of Children**

Each child will be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the school and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access, to a child by a court order, Learning Springs shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order.

Changes in designated adults to pick up your child must be made in writing on your child's emergency form in the office **in advance**. No parent may be denied access to their child unless a copy of the custody agreement that

relinquishes such parental rights is on file in the office.

### **Non-Collection of Children**

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child at the time of the school's daily closing, Learning Springs' staff shall ensure that:

- The child is always supervised.
- Staff members attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s).
- If after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to their parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the school, the staff member shall call the local police department to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick-up the child.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appears to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the staff shall ensure that:

- The child not be released to such an impaired individual.
- Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent, or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
- If the school is unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member shall call the local police department to seek assistance in caring for the child.

### **Divorced Parents**

In the case of divorce, either parent may pick up a child unless a court order indicates limited or no visitation. A current copy of the court order must be on file if there is no or limited visitation on the part of one parent. If parents are in the process of separation or divorce while the child is in care, every attempt should be made to keep our staff members updated on issues affecting a child's custody or emotional wellbeing.

### **Custody**

Admission documents must be signed by both parents/guardians. If a parent/guardian has full custody of a child, the most current court order must be submitted with your enrollment packet.

### **Guardianship**

If a legal guardian, rather than a parent enrolls a child, a copy of all current and appropriate legal paperwork must be on file at the school. This is especially critical if natural parent(s) have no custodial or visitation rights.

### **Supervised Visitation**

In the event that one parent has been restricted by the court to supervised visitation, it must be understood that such supervised visitation cannot occur at Learning Springs. State mandated staffing requirements would not permit assignment of any staff persons to a supervisory role in such a visitation.

### **Absences/Vacations**

If your child is going to be out of school for any reason, please advise the office by 8:00 a.m. that day. For illnesses, this is especially important so that we can inform families of any communicable disease symptoms while maintaining confidentiality. Please do not send your child to school if they have any COVID-19 symptoms including but not

limited to cough, stuffy or runny nose, fever, digestive problems. If your child has any of these symptoms, please contact their pediatrician to obtain their recommendation.

We ask that when possible families schedule their vacations around the same time that school is closed as we are unable to prorate/reimburse tuition or substitute days for vacations taken when school is in session. Vacations are considered an unexcused absence.

#### IV. PROGRAM POLICIES

**COVID-19 VACCINATION:** All students are required to be fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus unless they have a severe allergy, and their pediatrician provides a note stating why they do not recommend the vaccine. Parents/Guardians are asked to be fully vaccinated also. If they are not, they must be masked while on campus. Unvaccinated adults or student's siblings and/or other relatives are not allowed in the building masked or not.

##### **Attendance Policy**

The responsibility of school attendance is that of both parents and students. **Going to school every day is required and enforced by law.** Whenever your child is going to be absent from school, please call or email the school by 8:00 a.m. to report their absence and **indicate the reason for the absence.**

##### **Definitions:**

**Compulsory Attendance**— Attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program is required for children between their sixth and sixteenth birthdays.

**Early Checkout**— When a parent or guardian authorizes a student to leave the facility before the end of the school day.

**Excused Absences -The California Education Code §48205** (a) Notwithstanding Section 48200, a pupil shall be excused from school when the absence is:

- (1) Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others.
- (2) Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
- (3) For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services rendered.
- (4) For the purpose of attending the funeral services of a member of their immediate family, so long as the absence is not more than one day if the service is conducted in California and not more than three days if the service is conducted outside California.
- (5) For justifiable personal reasons, including, but not limited to:

- Appearance in court
- Attendance at a funeral service
- Observance of religious holiday or ceremony
- Attendance at a religious retreat (shall not exceed 4 hours per semester)
- Take Our Child to Work Day

Upon receiving appropriate verification that an absence occurred due to one of the reasons listed above, the school will consider the absence to be excused.

**Tardiness** - Tardiness is a disruption to the classroom and other students when class is in session. Furthermore, the late student misses critical instruction and directions at the beginning of class that may impact their success. Every effort will be made to assist students to acquire the very important habit of being punctual.

Students are considered tardy if the student arrives after the designated start time of 8:30 a.m. **The absence policy defines three unexcused tardies as equivalent to one absence.**

Medical appointments should be made, if possible, after school hours. An excused tardy may be granted for illness or a doctor's visit with a note.

The *California Education Code §48260* states that any child with **three unexcused absences** or three tardies of more than thirty minutes in one school year is classified as a **truant**. Schools are required to notify parents/guardians when a student becomes truant.

**Truant**— Any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than ten days of unexcused absences.

A phone call or a note excusing a tardy signed by the parent or legal guardian must be brought to the office. Notes may be submitted to the office no later than the following day to be considered excused. Only tardies at the beginning of the day may be excused.

**Unexcused Absences**- Any absence for reasons other than those listed, as 'EXCUSED ABSENCES' are unexcused.

**Part of School Day** -A child is counted as present if in school for any portion of the day. If your child is absent for part of the day, and is physically well, it is better to bring the child to school for part of the day than to let them miss the entire day.

## Curriculum

### Balanced Literacy

We use the balanced literacy style of teaching and learning in our classrooms because we believe that it is a highly effective framework for literacy instruction that allows children to take ownership of and interest in their learning. As members of a balanced literacy classroom, the children will participate in activities that will increase their skill level while fostering their interest and love of reading and writing every day.

Through activities such as shared reading of poems and messages, guided reading, and literacy schools, the children will have practice with decoding and basic reading skills. During interactive read-alouds, we will share our thinking about books in whole class and partner discussions. This will welcome the children into the world of being thoughtful readers and introduce them to comprehension skills they will continue to build on throughout their school careers. There will also be time every day for independent reading. During this time the students will read books that interest them, which they will select from our classroom library.

### Writing Workshops /Handwriting

Writing workshop is the time when we get to study what good writers do and then put it into practice in our own writing. The studying includes learning about conventions (ex: beginning sentences with capital letters) and craft (ex: using descriptive writing) and takes place during short mini lessons. The practice happens each day when the children have time to write their own books on subjects that they choose. We always end with a share time when a few

writers get to share their writing with the class. In our classrooms, every child is a writer. One of the benefits of writing workshop is that it allows all children to develop identities as writers, regardless of their skill levels. We will be working with the children to make sure that they are all being challenged and moving forward with their writing skills.

The Handwriting Without Tears® K3 program incorporates hands-on activities and multisensory teaching strategies that build good handwriting habits early. It engages students with music, movement, fine motor activities, and child friendly language. The program follows research that demonstrates children learn more effectively by actively doing, with materials that address all styles of learning.

### **Phonics**

We use a multi-sensory approach to phonics instruction. Once the children have learned the sounds associated with each letter, we continue to use the visual and kinesthetic aids as references while the children develop their reading and writing skills.

### **Everyday Math / Touch Math®**

Our focus will be helping children to develop strong number sense that will serve as a foundation for more complex math skills. In addition to learning how to manipulate numbers, we will also be working to develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for everyday life. Our math time will consist of various activities in both whole group and small group settings such as playing, problem solving, and most importantly, discussion of methods and solutions.

The children will also learn **Touch Math®**, which is counting dots and circles on numbers, demonstrating that each number has a value.

### **Science / Social Studies**

At Learning Springs we believe in inquiry-based education. The inquiry approach to learning allows us to support the natural curiosity of the children while developing and honing their questioning and research skills. Over the course of the year, we will dive into a variety of inquiry topics that relate to social studies and science. For each topic studied, our classroom will be flooded with a wide variety of non-fiction texts, images, and videos that the kids will get their hands on every day. In addition to learning the content, children will learn important literacy and research skills through these inquiry units. As we engage in the units, the children will be encouraged and supported to develop important comprehension skills such as making observations, asking questions, making connections and inferences, and more. They will be encouraged to share their thinking both verbally and on paper in a variety of ways.

### **Social Skills**

Our program focuses on helping children develop skills of self-regulation, positive relationships, and problem solving through class meetings and classroom problem-solving.

**Physical Education (PE)/Yoga** The twenty-minute structured PE program consists of brief warm-up exercises, a group game, and activities to target eye-hand and eye-foot coordination, posture and balance, and general body coordination. Yoga provides a time for students to stretch, calm their bodies and minds and center themselves before the academic day begins.

**STEM Education**, a term initiated by the National Science Foundation, refers to an educational approach which integrates Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. Science, technology, engineering, and math may seem like lofty subject matters for school children. In reality, students spontaneously engage in STEM activities indoors and

outdoors on a regular basis. With a little guidance from us, we can enhance children's opportunities to engage in STEM learning and develop their critical thinking skills.

### **Technology**

To protect all students and classroom technology, students need to follow some important rules and procedures. The choice of a student to violate these requirements will result in that student not being allowed to use any technology for a period of time to be determined by the Director. You will receive a contract outlining the policies and procedures for the use of technology at Learning Springs. We ask that you read this contract together with your child, sign and return this document to the school.

Technology devices such as smartphones, iPads, cell phones, smart watches, etc. should remain at home.

### **Assessments**

Assessments are done twice a year. The first one will be followed by a Parent-Teacher Conference to discuss student's progress from the beginning of the school year. Students will be assessed on Reading, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Lifelong Learning Skills. Behavioral updates are also presented at this time.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

A parent-teacher conference offers a special opportunity to share information about a student. The best conferences end with both the parents and teacher feeling they have learned something about the child and with a clear action plan of how to best support the child going forward. Two separate weeks are set aside annually for all parents to meet with their child's teacher. Modified days are scheduled during these weeks to allow time for these important meetings. Parents who wish to have meetings outside conference time with teachers are asked to set an appointment. Please refer to the school calendar for Parent/Teacher Conference weeks.

It is our school's practice to hold one parent conference per student during Parent Conference week. We cannot schedule separate conferences to accommodate special circumstances such as work schedules, divorce, etc. In addition to respecting the time and energy of our teachers, the most significant benefit of holding one conference is assuring that each parent gets the same information. By keeping the focus on the student's progress and growth, our teachers are able to manage the one conference practice well.

### **Homework**

The guidelines for a student's time spent on homework per grade level are reflected on the chart below. Also listed below is the percentage of overall support (on average) we believe is required of parents to ensure a successful homework experience. Of course, these amounts vary depending on an individual student's abilities:

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Amount of Time Per School Day*</b>	<b>Involvement</b>	<b>Average % of Parental support</b>
TK/K	10 - 20 minutes	Parent involvement is necessary to complete all activities.	100%

1 <sup>st</sup>	20 – 30 minutes	Parents are expected to help their child, as needed, complete the homework and to check it for accuracy and assist in correcting mistakes.	80%
2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup>	20 – 40 minutes	Parents help (clarifying directions, getting started, etc.) for students to complete homework as independently as possible. Parents should check the accuracy of the completed homework.	60%
5 <sup>th</sup>	30 – 50 minutes	Parents help (clarifying directions, getting started, etc.) for students to complete homework as independently as possible. Parents should check the accuracy of completed homework.	40%

The one activity that we do ask you to do every single day is provide your child with 20-30 minutes of reading time. Ideally, some of this time should be spent reading alone, and some should be spent reading with an adult.

As the year progresses, we will begin sending home written homework weekly. It will be important for us (parents and teachers) to work as a team to support the children, so please take the time to read our monthly newsletter, as this will have suggestions for how to help your child in a manner that is consistent with what we are doing in class.

### **Library Check Out**

Once we get settled into our routines, the children will begin checking out books from our classroom and school libraries. One of our goals in the classroom is to build a community of readers and this will be one of the many routines that will help accomplish that goal. When your child brings home a book from our library, please make a point of reading and discussing it together. Share your love and appreciation for books and it will begin to rub off on your child. We will be keeping track of the books that your child borrows from the class. Please help your child take good care of our books and make sure their library book is returned to school the following day. We are asking every family to make a commitment to replace the book if your child loses it. Making this commitment will establish responsibility within your child and will also ensure that our classroom library remains well stocked with rich literacy options for all.

### **Toys from Home**

The children should not bring toys from home into the classroom unless it is on their designated Sharing Day or for a Spirit Day.

### **Care of Materials and Facilities**

Students and their parents are responsible for the proper use and care of school textbooks, materials, equipment, furniture, and facilities. Parents will be notified in cases of lost or damaged items and will be billed for necessary repairs and/or replacement.



## **V. POSITIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY**

### **Behavior Management Policy**

Learning Springs believes that children flourish best when they know how they are expected to behave and should be free to play and learn without fear of being hurt or unfairly restricted by anyone else. We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behavior and where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their environment.

We require all staff, volunteers, and students to provide a positive model of behavior by treating everyone with friendliness, care, and courtesy. Our staff use positive strategies for handling any conflict by helping children find solutions in ways which are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development.

New staff and volunteers are trained in the school's behavior policy, and we expect all members of the school — parents, staff, volunteers, and students — to keep to the rules, requiring these to be applied consistently.

We recognize that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of, and respect, those used by members of the school. When children behave in unacceptable ways, we help them to cope more appropriately.

We never use physical punishment and children are never threatened with this. The staff at Learning Springs works in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their children's behavior by the teachers. We work with parents to address recurring unacceptable behavior, using objective observation records to help us to understand the cause, and to decide jointly how to respond appropriately.

If at any point during your child's enrollment, we determine that our environment is not appropriate for your child and your family, we will request a parent conference to explain our reasoning. The director will also inform parents of the availability of information and referral for other more appropriate services. Written notification shall also be given to the parents if a face-to-face meeting is not possible, and this will be kept as part of the child's record on file at the school.

When any child is terminated from the school, whether initiated by the school or the parents, the staff will prepare the child for termination from the school in a manner that is consistent with the child's ability to understand and attain age-appropriate closure.

### **Positive Discipline Policy**

Learning Springs is committed to providing a safe and positive learning environment for all children. The school's behavior policy encourages children to develop social skills that reflect many of Learning Springs' values, including self-control, respect for others, and a positive self-esteem.

Staff model appropriate behavior and guide positive interactions among children and adults. Nurturing and teaching basic social skills is a central component of our curricula and it helps children grow as successful, lifelong learners.

Learning Springs' commitment to an age-appropriate curriculum ensures that activities are child focused and promote positive social interactions. Teachers carefully craft the environment, communicate, and enforce clear boundaries and expectations for behavior, and may use nonverbal cues and/or redirect a child's behavior to foster success.

When a problem arises, the teacher relies on modeling appropriate behavior, teaching conflict resolution skills, and presenting stories or scenarios that reinforce the desired behavior. Children learn to make suitable choices and develop techniques for regaining self-control when they feel frustrated. Instructive and individually appropriate consequences help to strengthen the child's self-control and self-esteem.

When a child experiences a particularly challenging time, the school encourages parents and teachers to work together and develop appropriate strategies. If a specific circumstance needs attention, the teacher will follow our procedures:

- The teacher will observe and document a child's behavior.
- The teacher will discuss the child's behavior with a parent and inform them of learning-based strategies the teacher will implement. The teacher will discuss options with the school team.
- The teacher will follow up with the parent about how these strategies are influencing the behavior.
- If concern persists, a conference will be held with teacher, parent, and director to discuss options to help the child.
- Staff members will make reasonable effort to work with the child and their family to resolve behavioral concerns. At any time, an individual plan of action may need to be implemented, depending on the severity of the concern. The plan may include removal of a child from the classroom and/or calling the parent to take the child home. Repeated severe problems may result in excluding a child from attending Learning Springs.

### **Behavior Management Strategies**

Behavior Management teaches children to express their emotions, needs and wants in constructive, adaptive ways. Children need to learn developmentally appropriate problem-solving skills so that they can interact positively and peacefully with peers and adults. As such, our staff chooses, from among several strategies, to use the most effective means to assist individuals and groups of children.

### **Strategies to Use to Prevent a Problem Situation**

- Pre-teaching social skills expected behaviors and routines clearly and practicing these consistently.
- Setting up the learning environment to promote smooth transitions.
- Identifying potential "triggers" that may cause a child to react inappropriately and teaching replacement skills.
- Practicing with modeling, social stories and dramatic play.
- Cueing the child verbally, as well as through nonverbal means such as picture schedules/icons.

### **Strategies to Use When a Problem Situation Occurs**

- Cueing and redirection.
- Temporary distraction from the problem situation to refocus the child's attention.
- Calming techniques, such as speaking softly to the child.
- Separation from the problem situation, as appropriate to the child, in a "safe space."
- Protecting children from harm to themselves or others.
- Discussing the problem situation with the child or children involved to facilitate problem-solving by having them generate possible solutions and carry them out.

### **Strategies to Use After a Problem Situation has Occurred**

- Praise and recognition for appropriate behavior and problem solving.
- Reinforcing skills acquired during the problem-solving activity for future use.
- Redirection to the previous activity or to another activity.

### **Aggressive Behavior/Anti-bullying Policy**

Learning Springs aims to provide all students with a safe school environment that facilitates learning. Any form or type of aggressive behavior that has the potential to do physical or psychological harm to someone else, disrupts the learning environment or urges students to engage in such conduct, is prohibited.

As with all aggressive behaviors parents are notified with each incident. Aggressive and hurtful behavior includes but is not limited to biting, hitting, kicking, pushing, and pinching. Such behavior is not appropriate. We will use every appropriate method to help children control their frustrations and anger. Some methods include sitting out for one minute for every year of age and re-directing the child's behavior. We try to recognize and acknowledge their feelings and explain the consequences of their behavior.

Any behavior issue regarding a child is confidential and the name of a child who has been physically aggressive is also confidential. This ensures the privacy of the child and family and prevents bias from others enrolled in the program. We will keep you informed as to what steps are being taken to remediate the situation and if incidents are from the same or a different child. The family is also provided additional informative handouts regarding aggressive behaviors.

In situations of physical aggression, the following actions will be taken:

- Discussing a better solution with all children involved.
- Separation of involved children.
- Ensuring the environment provides enough challenging activities.
- Carefully observing the involved child to identify precipitating events and prevent recurrences.
- Maintaining a log to track when the behavior occurs.
- Conferences with parents to discuss the child's actions at home, parental discipline techniques, and search for outside resources if necessary.

Any or all of the above steps may be skipped or omitted as deemed appropriate based on the extent of the aggressive behavior and circumstances.

### **Learning Springs's Discipline Procedures and Policies**

A very important part of the school experience is helping children learn how to get along in the world, enjoy being with other children, and follow the direction of an adult other than their parents. A caring and positive approach will be taken regarding behavior management and discipline. The teachers will focus on the positive behaviors of the children and reinforce those behaviors as often as possible. Our goal is to help the children develop self-control and responsibility for their actions.

#### **Proactive prevention and discipline procedures:**

- Encouraging children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child. Facilitating children in their attempts to settle their own disputes.
- Redirecting behavior when this seems potentially effective.
- Encouraging a break from group activities to help the child calm down when they appear to be escalating.
- Separating a child from the group.
- Counseling children individually about their behaviors.
- Making parents aware of disciplinary concerns (Incident Report).

Disruptive and aggressive behavior distracts from the full benefit of the school program and impacts our commitment to provide a safe and nurturing educational experience for the children and staff at our school.

**Aggression** is defined as any action taken with the intent to hurt another person or to remove a perceived threat by another person (e.g., hitting a teacher to remove the teacher from the child's physical space). Aggression does not have to result in an injury to be classified as aggression.

Aggression may include one or more of the following, but is not limited to:

- Throwing objects with or without contact with another person.
- Physical contact made with another person.
- An attempt to make physical contact with another person (e.g., attempting to kick a teacher without making physical contact).
- Verbal threats or language.
- Threatening body posture.

Aggression may occur at any level of force (i.e., hitting with soft/light force meets the definition for aggression). Examples include, but are not limited to, throwing items, throwing furniture, pushing, biting, posturing, kicking, grabbing, verbal threat, and hitting with an open or closed hand. Non-examples include accidental contact made with another person (e.g., accidentally bumping into a peer when standing in line) or accidental dropping or throwing of materials with or without contact with another person (e.g., accidentally dropping a chair when picking it up to move it; accidentally hitting a teacher with a ball when playing outside).

If the aggressive/disruptive behavior continues after exhausting our resources, we may conclude it is in the best interest of the program to suspend a child's enrollment until appropriate outside resources are identified and implemented to both support the child in our program and to reduce the opportunity for injury to others. However, if aggressive or destructive behavior is a recurrent problem and beyond the scope of the program, parents may be asked to withdraw the child.

### **Communication**

- **Administrator Notification** – An administrator must be notified as soon as possible after/while the incident occurs.
- **Parent Notification** – The staff member involved in the incident will inform the parent(s) of the student and any other students involved.
- **Incident Reports** are written to address any inappropriate/unsafe behaviors that directly impact the child, other children, staff members, or the group as a whole. Incident Reports are also written when an injury occurs. This report will be shared with the parent and will explain the behavior and how the behavior has affected others. It will also explain how the situation was resolved. The incident report will be given to the parent for signature and a copy will be given to the parent. The original incident report will be placed in the child's file, once it is signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s).

### **Follow Up**

If a child has difficulty managing their behavior on a recurring basis, parents will be asked to meet with the Director to discuss appropriateness of the placement. If the child's behavior continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive, and/or dangerous, it may be necessary to terminate the child's school placement and transition to a more appropriate placement.

## **VI. Health and Safety**

Learning Springs believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We strive to make our

school a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers.

We aim to make children, parents, and staff aware of health and safety issues and to minimize the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

- All staff members have undertaken health and safety training and regularly update their knowledge and education. Our risk assessment process includes checking for hazards and risks indoors and outside, and in our activities and procedures. Our assessment covers adults and children, deciding which areas need attention; and developing an action plan which specifies the action required, the timeline for action, the person responsible for the action and any fiscal costs involved.
- Children are made aware of health and safety issues through discussions, fire, and earthquake drills, planned activities and routines.
- The arrival and departure times of adults (volunteers and visitors) are recorded in registers and all visitors are required to wear a badge identifying them to our staff.

### **Accident and Emergency Procedures**

***In the case of a medical or dental emergency, 911 will be called first. If possible, LSA will contact parents and notify them of the situation, at the same time. If it is not possible to contact the parents at the same time, the parents will be called after 911. A staff member will remain with the child at all times.***

If a child requires emergency medical attention and it is not possible to contact the parent/ guardian or emergency contact, we will take whatever measures appear necessary for the child's welfare. Every effort will be made to notify the parent(s) immediately under any emergency condition. It is essential that both parents always keep the school informed of their current home, cell, and business phone numbers and addresses.

### **Illness Policy**

We strive to maintain a healthy, safe environment for our children. You may not bring to school a child who is ill. In addition, if your child is not well enough to participate in all aspects of the daily schedule, please keep your child at home. We will notify you if your child becomes ill, and you must then pick them up as soon as possible. Any illness we believe to be contagious will warrant an immediate call to you to pick up your child from school. We will notify you if any contagious or serious illness is diagnosed regarding a child in our program and ask that you notify us immediately if your child is diagnosed with a serious communicable illness. If a child appears to have chronic symptoms or a communicable disease or has undergone surgery or been hospitalized, a physician's form must be submitted before your child can return to the program. Reports are treated confidentially.

### **Definitions and Policies:**

- COVID-19 – Follow current SCDPH, CDC, State and local guidelines whichever is stricter. Children displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 should remain home and contact a physician. A student must be symptom free and test negative prior to return.
- COVID – 19 Exposure or Diagnosis and Masks – LSA requires students to wear masks both inside buildings and outside if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or have a COVID-19 diagnosis for 10 days upon returning to school.
- Masks - LSA may require students to wear masks both inside and outside.
- Colds - Continuous nasal discharge, cough, watery eyes that has developed within the past 24-48 hours is considered contagious.
- Fever - We require that any child with a fever of 100.4 or above be picked up immediately. The child cannot return to the school until they have been fever-free for 24 hours **without fever suppressants**.

- Vomiting- Learning Springs will call parents to pick up child after one episode of vomiting. Keep child at home for a minimum of **24 hours after symptoms have resolved** and the child can keep food and fluids down.
- Diarrhea -Learning Springs will call for parent to pick up after two episodes of diarrhea. The child cannot return **until a minimum of 24 hours after the last episode**. If diarrhea is a result of medication or allergies, a doctor must specify this in writing before the child can return to Learning Springs.
- Strep Throat – Child may return to school **24 hours after antibiotics treatment has begun**.
- Conjunctivitis - If conjunctivitis is diagnosed, your child will be prescribed eye ointment and should **not return to school for 24 hours after first treatment**.
- Head Lice – Child may return to school after treatment is completed, child is nit free, and has been checked by our staff.
- Rashes – If the child develops a rash of unknown cause, we will ask that a doctor check the rash and verify in writing or by phone that it is not contagious.

In most cases, children may return to school 24 hours after the disappearance of all symptoms including the disappearance of fever and/or a note from the doctor indicating the child may return to childcare. Children returning with any of the previous symptoms or illness will be asked to return home. **The decision is at the discretion of the school staff.**

#### **Basic First Aid**

Any cuts will be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water. Ice will be applied to any bruises, bites, or other injuries. 911 will be called for any emergencies beyond our ability to treat.

#### **Medication/Incidental Medication Policy**

Learning Springs' staff will administer medication to children for whom a plan has been made and approved by the Director. **Learning Springs will administer medication only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and medication is in the appropriately labeled and stored container.** For prescription medication, parents or legal guardians will provide teachers with the medication in the original, child resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist, with the child's name, the name of the medication, the date the prescription was filled, the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription, the medication's expiration date, and administration, storage and disposal instructions. The requirement applies to both prescription and over the counter medications including ointments and sunscreen. LSA also asks for a listing of all medications and/or supplements the student takes at home. This list should be updated as medication/supplements change.

- Parents are required to provide a completed and signed Parent Consent for Administration of Medications & Medication Chart.
- Written instructions to be provided to Learning Springs from the child's physician (to include dosage, frequency, and specific directions of how to administer medication).
- Staff will record on the report tracking form each dose administered with date, time, and staff signature. Parent will be notified.
- All non-refrigerated medications will be stored in the locked first aid cabinet.
- All medications requiring refrigeration will be stored in a locked box that will be kept in the refrigerator.
- All staff will be trained to administer the medications in accordance with dosage and directions provided by the child's physician.
- For sunscreen application, the Learning Springs' sunscreen permission form must be completed.

Training includes:

- Medication administration.
- Safety procedures (use of gloves and washing of hands before and after medication is administered).
- Disposal of used disposable administration devices.
- Cleaning and sanitization of used administration devices.
- Storage requirements for refrigerated and non-refrigerated medications.
- Disposal of empty medication containers.
- Documentation of medication administration.

All staff will be trained to recognize the signs of the following medical events and to administer the above-mentioned medications in the event of a medical emergency. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Asthma attacks
- Allergic reactions

In the event of a disaster, the Director or classroom teacher will be responsible for retrieving the medications from the locked first aid cabinet. These medications will remain in the possession of the Director in an emergency. If the Director becomes unable to maintain possession, they will be given to a trained staff member.

If a child requires administration of the above-mentioned Incidental Medication Services, the following procedures will be followed:

- The child's parent or authorized representative will be notified by telephone immediately following the treatment.
- The Director will be notified in the case of any administration of an Epi-pen.
- 911 will be dispatched.
- The parent will be provided with a copy of the Parent Consent for Administration of Medication, LIC 9221, which shows the date, time, and staff member information completed at the time of administration.
- An "Incident Report" will be completed for the child with the description of the medical event that triggered the need for the administration of the medication.
- A copy of this form will be provided to the parent at the time of pick up on the day of the incident.

#### **Medication Storage:**

- Epi-pens will be stored in a locked first aid cabinet.
- Metered-dose Inhalers and non-refrigerated nebulizer medications will be stored in a locked first aid cabinet.
- Any chamber, mask, nebulizer machine, nebulizer tubing or other pediatric devices needed for administration of an inhaler or nebulizer treatment will be stored in a locked first aid cabinet.
- Nebulizer medications requiring refrigeration will be stored in the locked medication box in the refrigerator in the kitchen area.
- Used Epi-pens will be returned to their original case and packaging, placed in a sealed plastic bag and returned to the locked first aid cabinet. When the parent arrive, staff will return the used Epi-pen to the child's parent.
- Parent will be asked to replace it the next time the child attends school.
- All nebulizer tubing, nebulizer masks, inhaler chambers and inhaler masks will be returned to the parent after use for sanitization and cleaning.
- The parent will then be required to return the clean devices on the child's next day of attendance.

#### **Over the Counter/Non-prescription Medications**

For staff to administer any OTC medication, parents must complete a "Parent Consent for Administration of

Medication” form (LIC 9221) to keep on file. OTC medications include but are not limited to rash creams, lotions, or sunscreen. OTC medication must be in its original packaging labeled with your child’s name and the expiration date.

### **Epi Pen Jr. and Epi Pen**

The following applies to the use of the Epi Pen Jr. or the Epi Pen:

- Use in accordance with the direction and as prescribed by a physician.
- Always keep ready for use.
- Epi Pens are kept in a labeled container in a locked cabinet that is out of reach of children, but accessible to staff.
- Teachers take first aid kits with them to any event, outside activity or fieldtrip and keep them under their immediate supervision and availability.
- Protect from exposure to light and extreme heat.
- Note the expiration date on the unit and replace the unit prior to that date.
- Replace any auto injector if the solution is discolored or contains a precipitate. (Both the Epi Pen Jr. and the Epi Pen have a see-through window to allow periodic examination of its contents. The physician may recommend emergency use of an auto-injector with discolored contents rather than postponing treatment.)
- Call 911 and the child’s parent/authorized representative immediately after administering the Epi Pen Jr. or the Epi Pen.

### **Carrying Out the Medical Orders of a Child’s Physician/Medication**

**Parent/Authorized Representative Written Permission:** The school obtains express written consent from the child’s parent/authorized representative to permit the designated facility staff to carry out the physician’s medical orders for a specified child.

#### **Physician’s Medical Orders:**

The school must obtain from the child’s parent/authorized representative a copy of written medical orders prescribed by the child’s physician. The medical orders will include:

- A description of the incidental medical service needed, including identification of any equipment and supplies needed.
- A statement by the child’s licensed physician that the medical orders can be safely performed by a layperson.
- Description from the child’s licensed physician of the training required of the facility staff to carry out the physician’s medical orders for a specified child and whether the training can only be provided by a licensed medical professional.
- If the medical orders include the administration of medication by a designated lay person, the physician’s orders shall include the name of the medication; the proper dosage; the method of administration; the time schedules by which the medication is to be administered; and a description of any potential side effects and the expected protocol, which may include how long the child may need to be under direct observation following administration of the medication, whether the child should rest and when the child may return to normal activities.

#### **Compliance**

The school will be responsible to ensure the following:

- The facility has obtained from the parent/authorized representative of the child the medication, equipment and supplies necessary to carry out the medical orders of the child’s physician.



- The person(s) designated to carry out the medical orders prescribed by the child’s licensed physician will not in any way assume to practice as a professional, registered, graduate or trained nurse.
- At least one of the persons designated and trained to carry out the physician’s medical orders will be always onsite or present when the child is in care.
- The persons designated to carry out the physician’s medical orders have completed the training indicated by the child’s physician.
- The person designated to carry out the physician’s medical orders shall comply with proper safety precautions, such as, wearing gloves during any procedure that involves potential exposure to blood or body fluids, performing hand hygiene immediately after removal and disposal of gloves, and disposal of used instruments in approved containers.

### **Facility Record Keeping and Notification**

- Maintain a written record of when the medical orders have been performed, including if medications have been administered and inform the parent/authorized representative of each occurrence when the medical orders have been carried out.
- Maintain, in the child’s file, a copy of the parent/authorized representative written authorization.
- Maintain, in the child’s file, a copy of the written medical orders of the physician.

### **Nut Free Policy**

Learning Springs has adopted a “Nut Free” policy. We ask that parents carefully monitor foods being packed in lunch boxes to ensure that no peanuts, peanut oils, or other nuts or nut oils are among the foods selected (coconuts are considered a fruit and are okay). Food labels/ingredients may change over time, so it is always recommended that you read the label before purchasing snacks. Make sure the products are nut free. This includes labels that read “May contain traces of peanuts/nuts,” “May contain traces of almond,” “Manufactured in a plant that processes peanuts/nuts,” and so forth. Rule of thumb: if in doubt, make another choice.

In classrooms where children have potentially life-threatening sensitivities, Learning Springs may consider additional safety measures and address the situation on a room-by-room basis. Store-bought **food and baked goods are preferred. Be sure store-bought foods are NOT made in a facility that may process nuts.**

Talk with your child and help them understand that food sharing is not allowed. This is a preventative safety measure to reduce food allergy exposures. Hand washing and tabletop washing are additional risk-reduction measures that are used at Learning Springs. Parents can help by ensuring adequate hand and face washing at home before arrival at school.

### **Head Lice/Nit Free Policy**

This is a very common occurrence in young children and has nothing to do with cleanliness. Lice are very easily transmitted by leaning back in an upholstered chair where someone had previously sat who had head lice, sharing caps or helmets, hair accessories, brushes, combs, even sitting close and touching heads. If head lice are found on a child, the following steps are taken:

- Parents are immediately notified, and child must be picked up from school.
- The child's head must be treated with a product formulated to remove head lice.
- Nits must be removed with a special nit comb included in product.
- The child will be excluded from school the following day and until appropriate treatment has been administered.

- Upon returning to school, state health laws require examination of hair and scalp by office personnel before returning to school.
- The child must be nit free to return to school.
- All parents/staff/volunteers will be notified of the exposure so that they can take precautionary steps to prevent the outbreak in the school/home.
- The school will be sanitized following health guidelines to prevent, as best possible, the spread of lice to other children

To avoid infestation, it is important to inspect all family members for two weeks and treat if infected. Nits on the scalp may be seen more easily on the hair at the back of the neck and above the ears. Please be assured that we will do everything possible to prevent infestation in our school. With parental support, we can stop the lice from spreading.

### **Sunscreen**

If parents would like their child to use sunscreen, we encourage sunscreen to be applied in the morning before coming to school. Parents who want children to have a second application in the afternoon (after 2PM) must complete a Sunscreen Authorization Form and provide the labeled (child's name) sunscreen (spray on preferred). The children will apply their own sunscreen under supervision. Application dates/times will be recorded.

### **Playground Activities and Safety**

Children learn through active use of their senses. Many great opportunities for learning occur outside. The playground is an educational environment where children learn about their physical capabilities. It also helps develop social skills involved in organized and informal play. All staff will observe the following rules:

1. Staff will always know how many children are in their care by counting students prior to going outside, while outside, and prior to returning to the classroom.
2. Children will be reminded to use equipment as it was meant to be (i.e., climb on climbing equipment, not on gates or fences)
3. Children will never be allowed to engage in hazardous, violent, and/or destructive play of any kind. Redirection, distraction, praise, and other techniques of positive discipline will be used when necessary to discourage negative behavior.
4. Pebbles will be kept in their designated areas.
5. Staff will be actively involved in supervision of children.
6. Children will be kept in sight of staff on the playground and never allowed to wander out of sight.
7. Staff will give their full attention to the children in their care.

### **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

1. **Fire** - Learning Springs's fire procedure is posted on the wall of each classroom. Fire drills are held monthly with records kept of each drill. All our staff receives training on fire procedures and Learning Springs performs a formal risk management assessment at least once a year, while monitoring risks each day.

Fire exits are clearly marked, never obstructed, and easily opened from inside.

Smoke detectors/alarms and firefighting appliances conform to standards, are fitted in appropriate high-risk areas of the building, and are checked periodically for safety.

Learning Springs's emergency evacuation procedures are approved by the Fire Department and are clearly displayed in the premises; explained to new members of staff and volunteers. In the event of a fire the evacuation

procedure to follow is:

- A staff member will dial 911 and give appropriate details.
- We will use the nearest available exit. The assembly point is the church patio or the back parking lot.
- The evacuation will start immediately, and people should not try to collect bags and other personal possessions.
- If it is safe to do so, the Director (or lead teacher) will collect the emergency contact binder, medications and go to the assembly point.
- At the assembly point, the staff will check for any unaccounted adults or children, and fire department personnel will be told of any missing people. Nobody will be permitted to return to the building until the all clear is given by the fire department.

2. **Bomb Threat** (or any situation requiring extended evacuation of the building) - Children are evacuated using the fire evacuation plan. In the event such an evacuation is necessary, parents will be notified to come to Learning Springs to pick up their children.

### **Staff Training**

The staff is trained during new hire orientation in the procedures used for emergency situations. In addition, they are made familiar with the location and function of the fire alarms, extinguishers, electrical panel and switches.

### **Emergency Binder**

When a child is enrolled at Learning Springs the parents/guardians are asked to complete an emergency contact form. A current photograph of each child will be attached to the information page. A copy of this form is kept in the child's classroom in a binder designated as the emergency contact binder. Any time the school is evacuated, the binder is taken with the staff as part of the evacuation procedures including drills. This means that in case of an actual emergency evacuation, staff will have all information necessary to contact parents or to give emergency medical care for a child. **We ask that parents update this information anytime there are any changes.**

### **Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting**

Under AB 1207 all licensed childcare facilities are required to have their staff undergo eight (8) hours of mandated reporter training every other year.

All staff members can recognize the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect and are required by law to contact the local authorities to make a referral. We ensure that all staff knows the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the school.

### **Responding to Suspicions of Abuse**

We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms — physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. When children are suffering from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behavior, comments, or in their play. Where such changes in behavior occur, or where children's play gives cause for concern, the school investigates. We allow the investigation to be carried out with sensitivity. Staff takes care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.

### **Disclosures**

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff offers reassurance to the child; listens to the child; and gives reassurance that she or he will act.

All suspicions of abuse are reported to Child Protective Services as part of our mandated reporter status. The staff

of Learning Springs follows the guidance of the Child Protective Services while they undertake the investigation. This can mean that we are not able to contact the parents to inform them of our report. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents. All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of Child Protective Services.

Learning Springs takes deliberate steps in its power to build trusting and supportive relationships among families, staff, and volunteers while at the same time following our requirements as mandated reporters.

### **Missing Child Procedure**

In the event a child is missing while in the care of the school, the school follows a systematic approach to find the child and consideration is given to the levels of risk to the child. We will ensure a search is made for the child immediately and that the parents and authorities are notified. A high level of care is maintained to other children at the school while procedures are followed.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is any unsolicited verbal, nonverbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature that has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment incidents can involve a male harasser and a female victim, a female harasser, and a male victim, and also a harasser and victim of the same sex.

It is against the policy of Learning Springs for any member of the school community to harass another employee/parent or student sexually. Learning Springs is committed to providing a working and learning environment that is free from all forms of abusive, harassing, or coercive conduct and seeks to protect the rights of all members of the school community to be treated with respect and dignity.

If you believe that you may be the victim of sexual harassment, seek confidential help immediately by consulting with the Executive Director.

## **VII. Family Involvement**

We believe that children benefit most from their education and care when parents and school staff work together in partnership. We aim to support parents as their children's first and most important educators. Our goal is to involve parents in their children's education, and we fully support parents in their own continuing education and personal development. We are committed to ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support families. This is accomplished through access to written information and through regular informal communication. We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge, and interests to the activities in the classroom.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality plays a vital role in promoting respect for every individual and fostering a strong community. Learning Springs takes confidentiality very seriously and makes every effort to protect each family's privacy. Communication among staff and parents about children should always be kept confidential. Learning Springs recommends that conversations about a child, behavior, or incident should be conducted in private, away from the child and other members of the Learning Springs community. Discussions in the hallways should be kept to a minimum.

### **Family-School Communication**

We sincerely hope that you will feel secure and confident enough with us to communicate openly and as frequently

as possible. Daily communication with your child's teacher is usually brief and during drop-off in the morning or pick-up in the afternoon. Please remember that teachers are responsible for all the children in the classroom and may be unavailable for extended conversation at that time. You can help us by putting all-important information in writing, either on your child's daily report form or a separate note. Teachers can arrange to contact you by phone/email later in the day for a more extended conversation. Be aware that teachers may not always be available and may not have time to return a call that is not an emergency.

Communication between home and school is vital to a successful school program and we communicate with parents in several ways:

- Daily communication logs
- Announcement Whiteboard
- Email updates/Newsletters
- Parent conferences
- Learning Springs website
- Facebook/Instagram
- Parent Workshops

Please be sure to check the contents of your child's binder nightly so that you can find important notes, art projects, homework, and so forth.

Parent-teacher conferences are held twice per school year where parents and teachers have an opportunity to discuss the child's progress. If, at any time, you have special concerns, please feel free to contact your child's teacher. During school hours, teachers cannot accept phone calls. If you have a message for a teacher during school hours, please call or email the office, and we will relay the message. The teacher will respond as soon as possible.

Please communicate with the teacher about any changes at home or within the family (i.e., parent on a trip, family member in the hospital, sick grandparent). These changes can affect your child's behavior, and it is useful for staff to be aware of these developments. Learning Springs will always respect your privacy.

### **Parent Conduct**

It is our goal to promote positive communication, mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct amongst employees, parents, and the public to ensure a safe, harassment free workplace for children and staff. Parents and guardians are expected to demonstrate courtesy and proper conduct when on the school campus and while interacting with Learning Springs staff. Disruptive behavior and harassment will not be permitted.

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe and persistent that it creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive working environment. Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language, threatening or intimidating conduct, name-calling, and slurs or initiating rumors. Not all harassment is verbal. It may also take place online or through social media. This also will not be tolerated and will be addressed.

### **Family Education and Community Partnership**

As a school it is our responsibility to provide opportunities for parents to receive information and training on issues involving children, parenting, and family life. We offer you and the community the chance to share your areas of expertise that might be of interest to other families. In addition, we send home information about educational

opportunities for parents that take place at our school. Please feel free to inform us if there are topics you would be interested in.

In addition to various workshops and trainings that are offered for our parents and community, we also offer consultant services to other schools and professionals to assist them with challenges beyond their scope of experience. The trained staff at Learning Springs can come out to the facility to assist and train professionals and families in the community. These services are offered at an additional fee and more information can be attained from the school office.

Members of the community can contact us should they need the following resources:

- Consultants to assist with a challenging behavior that a child is displaying in their current setting.
- Transition Challenges
- Anger Management Classes: These are offered for students, parents, and staff members.
- Parent workshops at other school settings.
- Training and Support for new staff members - Learning Springs will provide an experienced school staff member to serve as a mentor for any new staff member needing extra assistance.

### **Parents' Night Out**

On the first Friday of each month, we let you enjoy some adult time to see a movie, catch up with friends or enjoy a meal without your child! Meanwhile, your children get some quality "kid time" in a safe, fun, familiar place with our staff who lead them through music, games, and a movie with pizza and milk for dinner. Sign up forms and emails will inform you when and where to sign up.

### **Fundraising**

- **AmazonSmile** is a website operated by Amazon that lets customers enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on Amazon.com. The difference is that when customers shop on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to Learning Springs. Go in and indicate you wish to support us!
- **Box Tops for Education:** Earn cash for our school by clipping Box Tops from hundreds of products and sending them to school with your child or drop them off in the collection boxes placed in the office. You can also shop with more than 300 online retailers so you can earn eBoxTops® for our school. The General Mills Box Tops Program provides money to the school at .10 cents a box top. Please cut the box tops so that only the requested part of the box is submitted. Please turn in box tops to your child's teacher. Please see [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com) for a list of General Mills' products.
- **Target RED card - Take Charge of Education:** If you use a Target RED card to make your purchases, register online and Target will donate up to 1% of your RED card purchase to Learning Springs.
- **Spring Fundraiser:** Each Spring we hold a Hop-a-thon to help raise money for our school. All proceeds from the Hop-a-Thon will help ensure essential programs at Learning Springs continue to happen and new needs of the school are met.

### **Wish list**

Learning Springs has a school wide wish list comprising of supplies that are needed all year long and benefit the entire school. Parents wishing to contribute can bring supplies to the office anytime during the school year. We thank you for your generosity and support. The wish list can be found on our website or in the school office.

## **Volunteers**

At Learning Springs, we value parent participation and expect 100% of our parents to be involved in their child's education. Opportunities are available for all parents to volunteer both inside and outside the classrooms. Several events throughout the year offer ample opportunities for students and parents to get involved including room parents, mystery readers, library volunteers, field trip chaperones, yearbook coordinators, and fund-raising events.

Teachers regularly include parents in special celebrations and welcome parents who want to share special talents with the class. Learning Springs also asks that parents share their talents and time to help make the school the special community it is.

Here are some ways you can help:

- Room Parent
- Fundraising/Events
- School Beautification/Maintenance
- Outreach/Marketing
- Library Support
- Tech Support
- Grant Writing

Learning Springs holds one to two fundraising events to earn money for specific improvements or classroom equipment. We request that families participate in this event and, in so doing, promote community spirit and financially support our high-quality program. Families are welcome to make a one-time tax-deductible donation to Learning Springs in lieu of participating in fundraising events. We will be happy to provide you with all the necessary paperwork to submit with your annual taxes.

Learning Springs holds two parent workday events during the school year. **It is mandatory that at least one parent works at least one parent workday during the school year.**

## **Complaint Procedures**

Our school believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our school and will provide serious attention to any concerns. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly. To achieve this, we operate the following complaints procedure:

- Any parent who has a concern or question first expresses their issues to the classroom teacher.
- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent brings the concerns or complaint to the Director. If there is no successful resolution at this point, the parents and director work toward a smooth transition keeping the child's best interest in mind.
- A record of complaints and suggestions is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was resolved.

## **VIII. Policies and Information**

### **Parking**

The Learning Springs parking lot is a shared space and can be a busy place at certain times of the day. Please use caution when driving through our parking lot. Help us in providing a safe environment by adhering to the following rules:

- Hold your child's hand in the parking lot.
- Make sure your child does not run ahead of or lag behind upon arrival and pick up.
- Drive slowly in the parking lot.
- Do not leave younger children in the car unattended.
- Always look behind you when backing out.
- Do not leave purses and valuables in parked cars.
- The entry gate must be closed and latched each time you pass through.

### **Holiday Celebrations**

At Learning Springs, we strive to honor the traditions, customs, and activities of the children and families in the program. Teachers invite families to share seasonal and holiday traditions that have personal meaning to them. Children may bring items from home and talk about their family's special celebrations. Our goal is to ensure that children learn about various cultural traditions in developmentally appropriate and educational ways. We seek to avoid superficial stereotypes and to minimize differences in economic status by de-emphasizing materialism and commercialization. Instead, we concentrate on the aspects of love, family and the values that give meaning to each holiday.

### **School Supply List**

A school supply list is provided for students at the beginning of each school year or upon enrollment. Learning Springs will ensure that the child will have the necessary materials for the first day of school if families are unable to provide it due to financial hardship.

### **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor experiences provide children with the opportunity to be noisy, exercise large muscles and experience exploration of the world around them. Please dress your child in appropriate clothes (please refer to the dress code). **Your child should not come to school if they are not well enough to go outside.** Exceptions are doctor's notes for chronic conditions (such as asthma). Staff-child ratios will require the entire class to stay inside which would be a hardship to the other children. Please discuss any concerns with your child's teacher or the director.

### **Field Trips**

From time to time the children will visit neighborhood facilities such as the park, fire station etc. Parents will be notified in advance of dates and schedules of field trips. Parents sign consent forms before major outings. We encourage and welcome parents to come with their children.

### **Lost and Found**

**Please label ALL personal items brought from home** (clothes, lunchboxes, etc.). Parent assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated. Items collected without names will be placed in the lost and found. All unclaimed items will be donated at the end of each month.

### **Food and Drink**

Learning Springs regards mealtimes as an important part of the school's day. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children learn about healthy eating and basic living skills.

Parents must send a snack and a lunch for their child following these guidelines:

- **No nuts or nut products.**
- Please pack a well-balanced, nutritional meal. We discourage sugary or highly processed items.
- We will not heat lunches, so please send "hot food" in a thermos.



- Use plastic containers with secure lids **labeled** with the child's name. Label your child's lunchbox also. Please provide utensils and plates (if needed) that will be sent home daily for cleaning.
- We are glad to help plan and implement the introduction of new foods to your child. Each new food should be given at home for at least four days prior to eating it at school. This will enable you to check for allergies or other negative reactions, other than dislike, such as vomiting.

### **Photography**

Photographs are taken throughout the year and used as part of class projects, yearbook activities, and special events. There are occasions when your child's photograph may appear in publications or materials related to Learning Springs, our website, Facebook page or Instagram. **Please notify the office in writing if it is your desire that your child not be photographed. This request must be signed by both custodial parents/guardians.**

### **Dress Code**

Children are expected to wear clean, comfortable, well-fitting clothing and sneakers for indoor and outdoor activities. Footwear must have closed toe shoes, backs or back straps, and do not come off easily (**no flip flops, Crocs, or sandals**). Shorts under dresses/skirts are also recommended.

Children should come dressed according to the current day's weather conditions. Suitable clothing is essential for your child to feel completely free and happy while at school.

Every child must have an extra set of clothes, including socks and underwear, clearly marked with the child's name, which will be kept at school.

Outdoor play is an important part of our social curriculum. Staff members use the following general guidelines when determining whether to go outside:

- **Winter:** If the temperature is 30 degrees or greater, children will go outside. Be sure children are dressed appropriately. The colder the temperature, the shorter the outdoor playtime.
- **Summer:** If the temperature (including heat index) is 90 degrees or greater, children will not go outside. Length of outdoor playtime will be adjusted to make sure children do not get overheated on hot days.

### **Birthday Policy**

If you would like your child to celebrate a birthday or un-birthday (a celebration for children whose birthdays don't fall within the school year), please contact your teacher one week in advance so the teacher can plan class time accordingly.

We encourage children to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. Accordingly, we ask parents not to distribute birthday or other party invitations at school, especially when all children in a class are not included. To avoid hurt feelings, if you would like us to discreetly place an invitation in children's binders, please hand the invitations to your child's teacher.

You may choose to bring in a healthy treat to celebrate your child's birthday. Please make plans in advance with your child's teacher. You need to be made aware of allergies and diet restrictions of the children in the classroom. The teacher will be able to let you know the best time to celebrate the child's birthday if parents want to be present for the celebration. Please make sure all food items are nut free and not produced in factories that also process nuts.

Our favorite birthday "treat" is a book for the classroom. You can inscribe it with your child's name and picture and

even wrap it for your child to open during class. This helps us promote a love of books and literacy. We will share the book on the day of your child's celebration, and we will place a nameplate inside as a remembrance of this happy occasion.

**Closing Statement**

A strong home and school environment is essential when building a good environment for young children. All of our staff will try to do our very best to keep you informed and involved in our school program. Clearly, ongoing communication and support from both families and staff make the connection between home and school a two-way street. Please share with us information about your child and report any changes especially during a major crisis. Anything you share with us will be held in confidence. We hope to nurture mutual trust and respect at every opportunity.

There will be many ways for parents to become involved in the Learning Springs program. We look forward to getting to know you and your family!

**Disclaimer**

The Learning Springs administrative team reserves the right to change any policy or procedure at any time, in its sole discretion, after reasonable written notice to parents.



### Learning Springs Parent Handbook Acknowledgement 2022-2023

I/We acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook for Learning Springs. I/We understand that it is my/our responsibility to read and understand the policies, provisions, and procedures contained in the Parent Handbook.

I/We acknowledge that the Parent Handbook will be revised in accordance with the rules or regulations of state, federal, and accrediting entities, best practices for childcare service providers, or at the discretion of the Learning Springs. I/We recognize that any such revisions will supersede, modify, or eliminate the current contents of the Parent Handbook.

Moreover, I/we recognize that it is my/our responsibility to contact the Executive Director for any questions I/we might have about the contents of the Parent Handbook now and in the future.

I/We certify that I/we have received and read the Learning Springs' Parent Handbook and will adhere to the policies stated in it to provide a healthy and safe educational environment for my child.

**Please print legibly. Both custodial parents/guardians must sign.**

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent #1/Guardian #1 Full Legal Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent #1/Guardian #1 Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent #2/Guardian #2 Full Legal Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent #2/Guardian #2 Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Executive Director's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_