



Bienvenidos to Little Spanish Garden (LSG) Early Learning Center. This handbook references general policies along with the additional policies included in your registration packet.

From the Directors Desk

Hola my name is Elizabeth Brooks; the role of our teachers is passive and serves as a guide for the children, by building an atmosphere of calm and order that encourages children with praise towards all their efforts. We focus primarily on equipping your child with the developmental skills and education they need to set themselves up for success. Through a well-rounded educational approach, we can ensure your child reaches the appropriate milestones, and achieves a solid learning foundation. Recognizing the advantages of being bi-lingual in a diverse country, we provide Spanish language immersion during the early stages of childhood development, when it is easiest for children to master these skills, Understanding languages and cultures beyond their own provides an array of benefits that will help your child get ahead later in life. Through our multi-faceted approach, your child can take their first steps on the path to successful development. With each classroom equipped with quality learning centers and materials for art, science, math and manipulatives, music, sensory, fine and gross motor activities including dramatic play with a daily curriculum. Team LSG ensures that our program will continue to implement a welcoming learning community in the ways that families and staff interact with respect and openness. Thank you for taking the time to read our mission and our handbook. We look forward to working with you.

Please read this handbook thoroughly and sign and date it at the end.

At Little Spanish Garden (“LSG”) Childcare, you are paying for a specific slot; not per hour or per day, so no discounts are given if your child doesn’t come to care. This includes parent vacation and exclusion due to sickness/illness. Payment is to be made prior to a vacation. If for any reason your payment is not made by any third-party agency for example Department of Social Services (DSS), Workforce Development Institute. Info here <https://wdiny.org>

The parents will be held responsible for any days unpaid and occurred late fees. This policy is standard with most reputable childcare centers in the area and reflects the centers ongoing operating expenses.

Cheektowaga location

Days and hours of care are Monday – Friday, 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM

Amherst location

Days and hours of care are Monday – Friday 7:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Registration

A non-refundable fee \$50.00 is charged upon registration for each child. If your child's or children's start date is two or more weeks later than your contract date, you are also required in advance a fee equal to one week's childcare services to secure your slot. This fee is non-refundable, and it ensures that slot can't be filled by another family. It is parent's sole responsibility to update the emergency contact information, yearly physical and immunization records for each child and review the financial agreement. Please notify us immediately of any changes concerning health, allergies, home address, employment change, pick up authorizations. LSG has the right to terminate any child's enrollment immediately for falsifying any information.

Payment Schedule

Fees are payable in advance and are due on Monday every week and will be considered late after 10:00 am Monday. All new enrollments must pay their first two weeks in advance along with registration fee. The tuition deposit and registration are non-refundable if you decide not to begin enrollment and or without a two week notice to terminate present enrolled childcare at LSG. Any payments made for future care are non-refundable. No exceptions are made for absences due to illness, vacations, or any other reasons including any third-party payment mishaps. You can always pay early, but payment is still due on every Monday of the week and is considered late if not paid by Monday at 10:00 am. A fee of \$5.00 per day will be charged for late payments.

Automatic Ach Payments- Autopay: For your convenience we accept payments from Checking, Savings account. By enrolling in automated payment, you are agreeing to have your account automatically debited on a weekly basis.

Parent-Provider Relations

LSG is very involved with parents of children enrolled in the program. Daily communication on our parent connectivity app, monthly newsletters along with via email. Parents may address any issues or concerns related to care prior to enrollment and thereafter. Parents are encouraged to communicate with and address LSG concerning the care of children in the program, make or share artifacts, music, stories, or other appropriate information within the classroom.

Drop-off and pick-up times are not times to discuss problems. These times often become very busy. Parental communication is vital; LSG recognizes that it is the key to a successful childcare arrangement. If there are any problems, concerns for lengthy discussions concerning your child please contact the director.

Children Not Picked up as Scheduled

In the event that a child is not picked up as scheduled, an emergency contact on the family registration form will be notified in order to make alternative arrangements to pick up the child.

Children Absences/Attendance

Please call or inform us directly from the Parent Connectivity app if your child will be late or absent. Activities, staff along with the overall program is based upon the children scheduled for each day. If we do not receive a telephone call from guardian or parent by 9:00am, your child will be marked absent for the day and will not be able to attend. Therefore, it is imperative to inform the director.

Overtime Fees

A late fee of \$1.00 a minute per child shall be made for late pick-up or early drop off for all slots. If you are late picking up your child; you will be assessed a late fee due to the staff member caring for your child passed scheduled time that is obtained by the Centers time clock. Please make contact with LSG in any emergency that would force you to be late, for example accident or weather- related situations. This will be strictly enforced, and more than 2 notices can result in termination of services.

Returned Check Fee

In the event of a “bounced” check you will be responsible for all bank charges. This will be strictly enforced and more than two notices, can result in alternative payment arrangements or termination of services notice.

Extra Fees

From time to time parents may be requested to pay extra fees for Field Trips and/or other projects and activities.

Holiday/Closures /Celebrations – Working with diverse children/families we embrace the opportunities to celebrate traditions, holidays, and other celebrations that are important to our peers.

Daycare holiday fees for your child will be as follows: Daycare will be closed with pay on these holidays: New Year’s Day, MLK Day, Labor Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Daycare will be closed with no pay on these additional days: New Year’s Eve, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and the day after Christmas.

Staff Personal Development Day (provided in writing 3 months in advance)

Regular tuition charges will continue to apply for the days indicated, as the Child Care Center has ongoing expenses; even If and when federally observed holidays fall on an operable day of a child’s attendance.

Sibling Discount

LSG provides a discount for siblings attending Full time. The savings of 10% to the oldest sibling. We do not discount infant tuition.

Transportation

LSG does not provide transportation services for children enrolled in the program at this time.

Health Plans

Health plans are to be provided to LSG in order to complete enrollment in the program.

Medical Emergencies

Minor bumps and scratches are inevitable, but LSG makes every effort to keep the children safe through supervision and child proofing. Minor injuries receive appropriate first aid and if an injury or illness occurs, you will be contacted with the telephone number provided on the family registration form as soon as possible. If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital where you will be asked to meet us. Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment including emergency transportation if required. LSG; its administration and staff will not be held liable for any sickness/injury of either parent or guardian or child while on these premises or while the child is in the company of the provider during field trips and or outings.

Illness

No child will be accepted with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, runny crusty eyes, loose bowel movements, unidentifiable rash or irritation, unusual fatigue or irritability when s/he has any of these symptoms within the last 24 hours. In cases of colds, sore throats, coughs and any other sickness-related symptoms, a phone call to LSG is required to decide on acceptance for the day. Should the child become ill during his or her day in care, parents will be notified, and we will determine the best course of action concerning appropriate care, which may include the child being taken home. If the child is thought to have a communicable disease, parents will be notified and asked to pick him/her up. The child will be gently isolated from the other children and given special attention for comfort until the parents arrive. The child will be accepted back when no longer contagious, and a release from the primary doctor will be required. All other parents will be confidentially notified of the possibility of a communicable disease and what symptoms to watch for.

All children are required to have a physical form annually and the form must be completed by their physician. It is parent's responsibility to keep their child's immunizations up to date. Please respect the welfare of all the children at the center and report to the director if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease such as chicken pox, head lice, pin worm, strep throat etc. For additional public health information please visit <https://www.cdc.gov>

Medication

Only non-prescription ointments and creams may be given to your child while in care, so please medicate your child upon arrival if necessary. We do not give medication at LSG.

Childcare Rules

The following rules are enforced for the safety and well-being of everyone. There is no running, hitting, pushing, biting, grabbing and or kicking other children. Obscene language is not allowed. Children are not allowed to walk around with cups or bottles. Respectable treatment of other children and all property, toys, and furniture is expected. Willful destruction of property will be charged to the parent at cost to replace the item. All incidents are documented no matter how minor.

Discipline

LSG's philosophy is that you use discipline to teach a child. LSG achieves this through love, consistency, and firmness. The children are explained the rules frequently so that all know the guidelines. Once a child understands the rules and disobeys them, the following developmentally- appropriate guidance techniques that are used are redirection, removal of privilege. The last resort when a child's behavior is dangerous to LSG staff or administration, a conference will be called with the parents. If it cannot be resolved, arrangements will have to be made for the child to go elsewhere for care.

Behavior Management

At LSG LLC we pride ourselves with providing our community with a high-quality learning environment; focused on building positive relationships, teaching empathy, social and emotional skills along with providing individualized supports when needed. We believe that every child has the potential to learn appropriate behavior. If and when challenging behaviors recur regularly and redirection seems ineffective; a parent, teacher and director conference will be scheduled to discuss and further develop strategies for success. If there is no to little improvement and a child becomes a detriment to the program, termination of childcare services will become necessary.

Biting

Although this behavior is common particularly for toddlers as a form of communication. It is unpleasant and unacceptable behavior. Teachers at LSG will strive to minimize biting incidents. When a biting incident occurs, a teacher will immediately aid to the child that has been bitten following an incident report, which is shared with each parent. We do maintain confidentiality in all biting incidents, the report cannot include the name of the child who was involved. If your child bites we will work to try to help your child move past this stage of development with more appropriate outlet when a child feels the need to bite. If the behavior does not improve in a reasonable amount of time, termination of enrollment may be necessary.

Arrival and Departure

Children are to arrive clean and fed (if arriving after 8:30am). It is normal for children to get hesitant and sometimes even cry when dropping them off, especially if it's their first day. Please be very brief (no more than few minutes is sufficient) during drop-off times. The longer you prolong the drop-off, the harder it gets. A smile, cheerful goodbye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is all you need to do. Please be brief during pick-up times also. This is the time of testing when two different authority figures are present (parent and teacher), and typically children will test and see if the rules still apply. It is important that you back up LSG's rules at this time but if you do not, we will remind your child of

inappropriate behaviors being displayed and will take action to correct them if needed. Please be in control of your child during pick-up times. Do not allow your child to run outside of childcare while you are inside or while you are in the side or rear of property. The safety rule is “No one goes outside without a parent.”

For brief periods of time; in morning or pickup certain age groups may be combined. Please ask the center director for specific information on which classroom your child should be dropped or picked up from. Your child must be escorted in and out of the building every day, signed in and taken to the appropriate location/classroom. Please hang up your child’s jacket and remove his/her boots when entering the classroom. When leaving, please sign out your child and take his/her belongings home (art, projects, notes etc.)

Mandatory Notification

There is a change in the registration paperwork on file, any communicable disease, and or other than parent/guardian picking up your child, your child is absent by 8:30am the latest or arriving late than scheduled contract, changes notified in advance with the director as well as changes to your child’s previous permanent schedule will require a two week in advance written notification although the schedule changes may not be granted in instances when the new schedule conflicts with enrollment, waiting list, and typical enrollment patterns.

Individual Conferences with your child’s teacher are always available upon request and can be made by speaking with the director. “Tea with the Director” is held with LSG staff once a month and parents two times a year as a group meeting.

Adding or Changing Days – If your child is contracted part time, provided that there is space available in their appropriate classroom. Please review our Hoppingin.com platform for availability or inform the director in advance for accommodations. Refunds will not be given should your child not attend on added days for any reason.

Mandated Reporting - All faculty staff at LSG are actively trained in identifying and reporting child abuse and maltreatment therefor are Mandated Reporters.

In the event of suspected child abuse or maltreatment, Team LSG will share information regarding the child and family with the appropriate agencies. This is required by various federal and state regulatory rules. It shall be reported immediately by telephone to the New York State Central Register of Child Abuse at 1-800-342-3720. Calls can be received 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you suspect a child has been abused by someone please call for help. You may also call the local police or sheriff’s department. Additional information can be found at <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps/>

Supplies

Parents are required to bring a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing (including socks) for weather to be kept at childcare. During the winter months the children enjoy going outdoors please include hat, mittens, boots, snow pants and coat. Soiled clothing will be sent home and a clean change of clothes should be brought back the next day. Parents are required to provide wipes and diapers. We will notify you when your child needs more supplies. Parents must also supply rash ointment, creams, a small daily bag or backpack. For infant’s please include bibs and two changes of clothes. We kindly

request that children are dressed in comfortable clothing to provide the ease and safety in movement and encourage self-help. All items brought from home must be labeled with your child's name. LSG is not responsible for any items lost or missing.

Toys

No toys should be brought from home. If required, a small toy to sleep with such as an animal may be brought to LSG; it will be for naptime only.

Toilet Training

We will be more than happy to help with potty training provided that it is done before the age of 2.5 years and parents initiate the process first, whether it is over the weekend or during vacation. We expect parents to work with us in this process which means once potty training is initiated, the child is to be in training pants or pull-ups at all times. Putting a child in a diaper for your convenience because you are going out will only confuse the child and delay the process. It is also required that all potty-training children wear clothing that they can handle successfully on their own – no onesies, overalls, belts or jeans with buttons or snaps. Elastic-waist pants are most appropriate. Parents will be asked to supply extra sets of clothing during the training period.

Celebrations

We are joyed to celebrate the children's born day. Parents of the birthday child are welcome to bring any special food treat for their child's "special birthday. We also have holiday parties several times throughout the year. Our program staff also ensures that we include traditional holidays as well as those holidays that are unique to the culturally diverse children and families. LSG welcomes any assistance with these days.

Meals

All food is provided at no charge. This includes breakfast for children arriving before 8:30am, snack before lunch, lunch and snack after lunch prior to pickups. Parents are responsible for feeding children if he/she will arrive to childcare after a mealtime. Infants are always fed on demand. LSG is a member of the Child Care Food Program which assures all meals provided are nutritious and well- rounded. Except for special occasions and when requested, please do not send any food, drink, or candy with your child. Infants, if enrolled in the Child Care Food Program, are provided with cereal, baby food, and juice at no additional cost to the parents. Written feeding instructions are required from parents of infants including type of food and or formula feeding times. Parents of infants must provide formula and appropriate baby food for their child if the child requires a modified diet. LSG will need a physician's written instruction. Food allergies will be documented in your child's registration forms and posted in the classroom for staff only. Commitment to providing healthy meals prevents childhood obesity. Additional information on daycare center menu guidelines can be found at <https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/>.

When a family requires special diets there will be additional charges and will be discussed prior to implementations. Our staff will happily prepare a healthy alternative if health, cultural or religious

considerations preclude your children from eating a particular menu item. Please contact the director to arrange for these pre-planned menu substitutions.

Infants: Parents must provide formula or breast milk with bottles and any necessary baby food. Bottles must be filled and ready to serve with a written feeding schedule. Please provide a complete instruction. It is also required for your baby items are labeled with their first and last name.

Nap and Rest Time

Each child 5 years or younger is required to have a rest period. If your child no longer naps, he or she are provided with quiet opportunities to learn and play. Infants rest time is scheduled based on the child's needs and the parent's preferences. Infants are placed in their individualized crib, placed on their backs according to the New York State regulations of the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). A group nap is scheduled for all other classrooms such as toddlers, preschoolers beginning at 1pm. Teachers will provide a cot or mat and encourage parents to provide the comfort of a small pillow and or blanket. Teachers will also provide story time then soft music with dimming lights to comfort the children into the rest period. Some locations will utilize an OCFS approved waiver for toddler, preschool and pre-k classroom to allow one teacher to briefly leave the classroom while children are asleep. One responsible adult must and always will remain in a classroom.

Preschool Program

LSG provides a preschool program. Our program will extend from September through May, for children ages 18 months to 5 years old. It consists of 38 objectives divided into nine areas of development and learning: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies and the Arts which was originated by Teaching Strategies; titled as The Creative Curriculum Volume 1-3. Because of the fun of learning, Little Spanish Garden included a tenth area, Spanish Language Acquisition. Outdoor play is an integral part of Early Childhood Education, contributing to your child's health and overall development. Children only remain inside when the weather is inclement (extreme cold or heat). For additional information and the goals per classroom, please visit our website here <https://littlespanishgarden.com>

LSG educational approach is Developmentally appropriate practice (DAP). Our teachers meet all children where they are, both as individuals and as part of a group, helping all children meet challenging and achievable learning goals. More info here <https://littlespanishgarden.com/development/>

Assessments

Observations are recorded on a weekly-monthly basis and filed in your child's individual assessment portfolio. This information is kept in your child's classroom and is always available for your review. We also have a partnership with Help Me Grow WNY. With parent's consent we will provide quarterly assessments utilizing questionnaires, more info here <https://brookespublishing.com>

Referrals

Referrals from a current family is one of the biggest and best compliments we can receive. As a special thank you, LSG waives 50% of the referred family registration fee (savings of \$25.00). We also have a

Share and Save Incentive for active parents for helping us build a strong community of future leaders. Ask us how you can save tuition by sharing the Amor for LSG.

Facility Rules – Gentle Reminders

- Parents are required to notify LSG a day prior or latest by 8:30am if their child will not be coming for the day.
- Someone other than guardian picking up your child.
- Child exposed to a communicable disease.
- No smoking is allowed anywhere on the premises.
- The childcare will have a fire drill once a month.
- Parent notified of a performed Shelter in Place drill two times a year.
- Parents are not to allow children to bring any toys.
- In accordance with New York law, LSG will promptly report to the proper authorities if any signs of neglect or abuse of the children in care.
- Provider maintains an open-door policy for parents during childcare hours.
- When entering the building, we ask that you do not hold the door open for anyone that you do not recognize. This will assist us obtaining a safe environment.
- Parents with children that move up to another classroom are required to complete a new enrollment contract that reflects tuition, schedule changes.
- Please dress your child appropriately for the weather, outdoor play such as sneakers or other sturdy rubber soled shoes or boots. No jeans for children in care along with infants; no pajamas or outfits with more than a few snaps.
- If any disagreements with parents and teachers it is expected for it to be handled in a respectful, calm manner or please ask to speak with the director.

Trial Period and Termination of Services

The first 14 calendar days from the child's start day are a probationary period for the provider, child, and parent(s). This agreement may be terminated at any time during this period; however, if it is terminated before 14 days, the parents' two-week payment is nonrefundable, even if the contract is canceled by provider. After the probationary period, this agreement may be terminated by either party by giving a 2-week written notice if the child or children are to be permanently withdrawn from childcare. Two weeks' pay will be accepted in place of two-week notice. Little Spanish Garden will also give the family two weeks' written notice of intent to cancel this agreement except in cases of family emergency (provider's) or gross misconduct on the part of the parent or child. Failure to follow the agreement and rules in the contract may be cause for immediate termination with no additional notice. Little Spanish Garden will give families a minimum of two weeks written notice of any increases in fees or significant changes to this agreement. Any and all additions/changes to this contract must be initialed by both the parent and provider to be valid.

Confidentiality

At LSG we respect the right of each family to privacy and confidentiality by keeping all records and information about your child and your family private, unless I have your written permission to reveal specific information. This is also consistent with the NYS child regulations.

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

This handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented.

Thank you for your acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the **Early Childhood Education Program Family Handbook**, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the **Early Childhood Education Program** staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the **Early Childhood Education Program Family Handbook** that I do not understand.

Recipient Signature

Date

Center Staff Signature

Date

WELCOME TO OUR HEARTS AT LITTLE SPANISH GARDEN!