

# Family Handbook

2023/2024



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## **Administration**

Owner and Director: Danielle Shea - [danielle@littlegreensprouts.us](mailto:danielle@littlegreensprouts.us)

Administrative Officer: Terrie Lucero - [admin@littlegreensprouts.us](mailto:admin@littlegreensprouts.us)

Human Resources Coordinator: Sheila Stalder - [info@littlegreensprouts.us](mailto:info@littlegreensprouts.us)

Little Green Sprouts is happy to be a part of your child's education. We want you to feel free to contact us with any concerns, questions, or issues. Our doors are always open. Please feel free to call or email the office to schedule a parent/ teacher conference at your convenience. Parent-positive and constructive feedback is imperative to the continued success of LGS.

## **Mission Statement**

Our mission at Little Green Sprouts Preschool is to provide a loving, supportive, educational environment where children participate in programs that promote individual growth and a lifelong love of learning.

## **Vision Statement**

Our community vision is to offer superior childcare to the Eldorado neighborhood and surrounding area. Our school location offers a proximally accessible education to families outside of Santa Fe proper. We aim to provide local children with a nurturing childcare center. We seek to nourish young minds with a culturally inspired and locally rooted curriculum. Our professional goal is to offer childcare to two dozen local families and to create new jobs for community educators. We aim to ramp up local businesses by promoting patronage at businesses in Eldorado.

## **LGS Philosophy**

Little Green Sprouts is a play-based, child-centered preschool. Playful learning, both guided and unguided, helps children begin to master fundamental skills and concepts needed for later school experiences and lifelong learning. Units will be based on concepts such as the environment, academic skills, interpersonal cooperation, the surrounding community, and the history of the Southwest. To this end, we will also be partnering with local first responders, artisans, librarians, dance and music teachers, and gardeners, to name a few. Our curriculum will ensure that every child is Kindergarten ready when they graduate from LGS. We are working closely with the Eldorado Community School teachers to establish a smooth transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten.

## Hours of Operation

The full-time program hours of operation are:

Monday through Friday from 8:15 am - 3:15 pm.

The part-time program hours of operation are:

Monday through Friday from 8:15 am - 12:15 pm.

**Little Green Sprouts operates year-round.**

## 2023/2024 School Calendar, including holidays & closures

DAY	DATE	HOLIDAY	SCHOOL STATUS
Monday	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	First Day Of 2023 School Year	School is open!
Monday	September 4 <sup>th</sup>	Labor Day	Closed
Monday	October 9 <sup>th</sup>	Indigenous People's Day	Closed
Tuesday	October 31 <sup>st</sup>	Halloween	Open Costume Party!
Thursday & Friday	November 23 <sup>rd</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup>	Thanksgiving	Closed
Monday - Monday	December 25 <sup>th</sup> through January 1 <sup>st</sup>	Winter Break	Closed
Monday	January 16 <sup>th</sup>	MLK Jr. Day	Closed
Monday	February 19 <sup>th</sup>	Presidents' Day	Closed
Monday – Friday	March 25 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Break	Closed
Monday	May 27 <sup>th</sup>	Memorial Day	Closed
Wednesday	June 19 <sup>th</sup>	Juneteenth	Closed
Thursday	July 4 <sup>th</sup>	Independence Day	Closed
Monday – Friday	August 5 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup> (TBD based on SFPS Calendar)	Summer Break	Closed

## LGS Daily Schedule

TIME	ACTIVITY	INSTRUCTION TYPE
8:00 – 8:30	Arrival	Put belongings in cubbies. Gather on carpet for Circle Time.
8:30 – 8:45	First Circle	Good morning song, calendar, and daily topic introduction.
8:45 – 8:55	Bathroom & Handwashing	Toilet reminders, diaper changes & getting ready for snack.
8:55 – 9:10	Morning Snack	See “Snack Menu”
9:10 – 9:25	Movement	Alternating between Yoga, dance, music & large motor skills practice
9:25 – 9:40	Second Circle	Circle games, listening practice & language comprehension.
9:40 – 10:20	Station Rotations & Small Groups	Free choice at learning centers, as well as skill extension & individual guidance.
10:20 – 11:20	Outdoor Exploration	A combination of guided activity and free choice.
11:20 – 11:30	Bathroom & Handwashing	Toilet reminders, diaper changes & getting ready for lunch.
11:30 – 12:00	Lunch	Followed by free choice until all students are finished eating.
12:00 – 12:15	Unit-themed Read-aloud	Information processing skills & vocabulary building.
12:30 – 12:45	Relaxation	Guided meditation and mindfulness.
12:45 – 2:00	Rest	Nap for those who fall asleep, afternoon crafts for those who don’t.
2:00 – 2:15	Bathroom & Handwashing	Toilet reminders, diaper changes & getting ready for snack.
2:15 – 2:30	Afternoon Snack	See “Snack Menu”
2:30 – 3:00	Second Recess	Including visits to our garden, the sculpture park, horse stables or the farmers’ market.
3:00 – 3:15	Closing Circle	Review of the day and goodbye song.
3:15	Pick-up	

## General Tuition Information

### Tuition costs:

- Full-time tuition is \$1,195 per month.
  - Tuition will be discounted to \$12,906 if paid annually.
- Part-time tuition is \$945 per month.
  - Tuition will be discounted to \$10,206 if paid 12 annually.

Monthly tuition is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, in advance for the month, and will be considered late after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Tuition will be prorated for students who start school mid-month.

Annual tuition is due the Monday before your child's start date.

The total tuition payment (whether monthly, bi-annually, or annually) is due and payable regardless of the days attended, days LGS is closed, the number of weeks in the month, or absence for any reason.

### Sibling Discount

We offer a 5% discount for siblings attending school simultaneously.

Payment Type: LGS accepts payment by check, cash or online by credit card. Returned checks will be charged a \$35.00 processing fee.

## Delinquent Accounts

A late payment charge of \$25.00 per week will be applied to your account until the balance is paid in full. Tuition of more than two weeks in arrears may cause the child to be removed from the school until the tuition is current. If legal action is taken to collect delinquent accounts, parents or guardians are responsible for the payments of all costs associated with the collection of their debt, including but not limited to the following: any collections costs, court costs, applicable service fees, and attorney fees.

## Schedule Change Requests

All changes in the schedule require a 30-day written notice, completion of a new Tuition Policy Agreement, and approval from the Director. No schedule changes are permitted for illness or holidays. We will facilitate schedule changes on a first-come, first-serve basis.

## General Policies

Withdrawal from LGS requires a 30-day written notice to the Director and completion of an LGS Withdrawal Form. If written notice is not given, tuition will be due and payable for the following month.

### Registration Information

For your child's safety, we require that all the forms from your Enrollment Packet be turned in before your child's first day of attendance. LGS requests that forms be updated annually.

### Parents' Right to Immediate Access Policy

Parents and guardians of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at Little Green Sprouts, as provided by law. In cases where the child is the subject of a court order, we must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments to it. The demands of the court will be strictly followed. Without a court order on file with Little Green Sprouts Preschool, all guardians shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law.

### Confidentiality Policy

For your child's safety, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees who have a "need to know" to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Personal and sensitive information about faculty, others parents, and children will not be shared with parents, as Little Green Sprouts Preschool strives to protect everyone's right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, special needs information, or health-related information. New Mexico authorities with legal rights may review children's files upon request.

### Requirement of Respectful Behavior

Little Green Sprouts Preschool expects parents to respect all children, families, and staff at the school. We ask for respectful behavior from our families at all times. LGS reserves the right to dis-enroll any family, at any time, without notice for any of the following behaviors (including, but not limited to behavior towards children, staff, or other LGS families):

- Use of inappropriate language towards or in front of staff, families, or children
- Unprofessional behavior
- Yelling in a loud voice
- Physical harm or intimidating behavior
- Threatening or intimidating language or behavior
- Harassment, including face-to-face contact and social media
- Speech that harms the school's reputation

- Gossiping about other children, staff, or parents
- Group text chains that are hurtful or negative towards other children, staff, or families
- Any activity or conversations that impede a positive, loving, learning environment for both our LGS students and staff

### What to Bring To 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Preschool

On your child's first day, please bring:

- Any missing forms
- Two extra sets of clothes (shirt, shorts, pants, underwear, and socks labeled with your child's name). These items will be stored in your child's cubby.
- A nutritional lunch (each school day); Morning and afternoon snacks will be provided.
- A labeled refillable water bottle for your child to use throughout the day. Water bottles should be taken home and washed weekly.
- We provide a water filtration system for re-filling water bottles.
- A lovey, blanket, or pillow for cuddling and rest time, to be stored in your child's cubby. These items should be taken home and laundered weekly.
- Diapers and wipes (for children who are not yet using the toilet) are supplied by the parent. Please label these items and give them to your child's teacher.

### Items Not Allowed at LGS

We do not allow the following items at Little Green Sprouts Preschool:

- candy
- any type of screens
- any kind of recording device
- gum
- money
- medicine (medicine provided by families must be accompanied by an authorized use form and locked in the teacher's only cabinet)
- glass bottles
- guns, swords, "war" toys, or weapons

### Adjustment to Preschool

The first few weeks of school will be an adjustment for you and your child. Some children adjust immediately, while others take a while to become comfortable. Prepare your child by discussing school and visiting the school before their first day of attendance



Children are required to bring a nutritional lunch. Good lunch foods include sandwiches, fruit, cheese and crackers, milk, and juice. LGS discourages sugary food items for lunch. LGS does not allow candy or gum. Please ask our staff or your child's teacher for an idea list if you need lunch suggestions.

### Dropping Off and Picking Up Your Child

When you drop your child off each day, you are required by State law to sign in with your full signature and sign-in time. Before you leave, please check in with the teacher so they know that your child has arrived. When you pick up your child, you are required by State law to sign out with your full signature and the sign-out time. Please check in with the teacher so that they know your child is departing.

When coming and going to and from the LGS parking lot, we encourage you to hold your child's hand and proceed cautiously. Give your child the gift of your full attention when you pick them up from school. Leave your cell phone in the car and ask them about their day. It is the greatest gift you can give.

Little Green Sprouts Preschool reserves the right to terminate its services to those who disregard the sign-in and out policies.

### Late Pick Up

Please pick up your child at or before 12:15 or 3:15, part-time or full-time respectively.

### Authorized Pick Ups

Only persons listed on your Authorization Form will be permitted to pick up your child. These authorized persons must check in with the Director or teacher on duty and show photo identification. Authorized persons must follow the same sign-in and out procedures as parents/guardians.

If you would like to allow an individual not listed on your Authorization Form, you may pick up an additional Authorization Form. This form will be used for short-term authorization (i.e., when grandparents are in town). These authorized persons must check in with Director or teacher on duty and show photo identification. These authorized persons must follow the same sign-in and out procedures as parents/guardians.

### Notification of Absence

We ask that parents notify Little Green Sprouts Preschool via phone or email if their child will be absent from school. Please provide a potential return date, if possible.

## Medication & Sunscreen Policy

LGS does not dispense any medication except asthma inhalers or EpiPens. Parental permission forms for applying sunscreen and diaper cream must be completed before administering. Sunscreen will be applied before children go out for afternoon playground time unless otherwise instructed. Please check expiration dates before bringing them to LGS - expired items will be disposed of properly.

## Illness Policy

Children may not attend school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or above
- Diarrhea or Vomiting
- Discharge from the eyes or nose
  
- Head Lice
- Rashes of unknown origin
- Presence of contagious disease
- Other symptoms or behavior indicative of oncoming illness

If any child develops any of the above symptoms while in our care, we will isolate them and contact the parents for pick up.

LGS's policy is that your child is symptom-free and on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Please note that LGS cannot dispense medications.

Keep in mind that when children are ill, their immune responses may be lowered, leaving them more susceptible to other illnesses. Additionally, when children come to school sick, teachers and other children are exposed to disease, creating an unhealthy environment.

If your child has been exposed to or contracted any contagious diseases or infections such as (but not limited to) Covid, chicken pox, whooping cough, or strep throat, please keep your child at home and contact the office to report the condition. Two negative Covid tests must be submitted before child can return to school.

LGS reserves the right to deny services to a child who is ill.

## Lice Policy

Children with nits or lice will be sent home. If a child is sent home with lice, they must have their head checked in the administrative office upon returning to preschool. Your child and

siblings must be re-checked in the administrative office ten days after being sent home with lice.

Should any child have lice or nits while in our care; we will isolate them and contact the parents for pick up. LGS reserves the right to deny services to a child who has lice.

### Biting

Little Green Sprouts Preschool recognizes that biting is developmentally appropriate. Parents with children should expect that their children may be bitten or will bite another child. We understand that parents may be concerned or upset if their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember that this is developmentally appropriate behavior and that the staff is working to identify the situations that provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. Parents must work with the team to determine methods and strategies to curb biting behavior.

### Incident Reports

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the school day, an LGS staff member will complete an Incident Report. The Incident Report will be put in your child's cubby and can be picked up when you pick up your child. If the Incident Report requires a call, the administration office will call the contacts on your child's emergency card in order of contacts. If your child needs to be picked up, we will continue to call all contacts on the emergency card until we reach a contact. Should you need to have an in-depth discussion or meeting about the incident, it is most appropriate to talk to the Director. Please schedule a meeting or telephone conference when the Director can focus on the conversation versus the other children in their care.

### Rest Time

Children learn and play hard during the day. Therefore, we provide them a time to rest and sleep. Rest time is from 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm every day. During this time, relaxing music is played, and the lights are turned off. Children are not required to sleep, although they are required to rest quietly. Please note that the school provides a nap mat, and parents provide two child-sized blankets or sheets. It is the parent's responsibility to launder these items weekly.

### Dress Code

We encourage parents to dress their children in appropriate play clothes and shoes. "Dressing for success in preschool means dressing for a mess." Busy, creative learning play can be messy

regardless of your child's age. Please dress your child in play clothing that is washable and durable so that they can enjoy activities without fear of soiling an outfit.

LGS does not take responsibility for clothes or shoes that are soiled, stained, or ruined. For your child's safety, we do not allow children to come to school with open-toed or open-heeled shoes such as thong sandals or flip-flops. If you have any questions regarding the dress code, feel free to inquire with your child's teacher or the Director.

### Toilet-learning Policy

Learning to use the toilet is a significant step in your child's life, and we want to ensure everyone is ready. Some of the signs of readiness are:

- your child asks to use the toilet
- your child tells you when they have a wet/soiled diaper
- your child stays dry for long periods

We will let you know if your child shows these signs at school. If you detect these signs at home, please let us know. Together we will establish a starting date. Parent/teacher communication is essential at this time.

Helping a child learn to use the toilet is a full-time job. The most important key to successful toilet learning is consistency. Toilet learning will not be accomplished unless your child is wearing underwear at all times (except at the beginning during naps and overnight) for two whole weeks (including weekends). If during the two weeks there is no progress, your child will need to go back into diapers, and we will try again in a few months.

At LGS, we have found that pull-ups may prolong the process of toilet learning because children use them in the same manner as a diaper.

Extra clothes will be needed during toilet learning. Please make sure that your child has four different pairs of pants or shorts that are easy to pull off and on—extra socks and shoes.

Initially, your child may not tell you when they need to use the toilet. Try having them go in 30-minute intervals. Begin gradually increasing the time between breaks. To encourage them, try giving them rewards when they successfully use the toilet. At school, we will be giving them stickers. It is expected that toilet learning for bowel movements may take a little longer.

Toilet learning is a big part of your child's development and takes much work. Working together, we can make this growing experience happen easily and quickly.

### Share Days

Share days are determined in advance by your child's teacher. The items that your child brings to share day should be educationally relevant. Please remember that toys, guns, swords, or "war" are to be left at home. Please label items with your child's name and place them in their cubby. If you are unsure about potential share items, please discuss them with your child's teacher.

### Birthdays

Each child at LGS will be celebrated on their birthday with a special birthday circle and celebration. If you wish to enhance the celebration for your child, we ask that you make arrangements with your child's teacher to bring in treats or non-edible items for the class. You are welcome to bring in a fun art project, a gift for your child's class, or come in to read a book. For additional information or clarification, please speak with your child's teacher.

### Curriculum

A child's preschool years are among the most important for literacy development. Little Green Sprouts Preschool utilizes a homegrown curriculum called, *Growing Together*. We have three curricula designated for each age group: Toddlers (ages 12 months - 24 months), Preschoolers (2 & 3-year-olds), and our Kindergarten readiness program for 4 & 5-year-olds, who will enroll in kindergarten by the following fall. Our multicultural curriculums are designed to build on the children's experiences within the community and focus on developing three critical areas for future success: Language and Communication, Physical Development, and Social-Emotional Growth. Children can explore, read, sing, build, create, write, laugh and play. Our teachers provide a safe environment where children are free to explore various learning activities. An essential part of our mission is for children to develop a lifelong love of learning.

### Guidance Policy

We use age-appropriate guidance by encouraging the children to use words to express their feelings to other children and teachers. We encourage children to learn to control their behavior and follow good behavior patterns when interacting with others. When inappropriate behaviors do occur, we believe that it is essential for children to understand why the behavior is unacceptable and how to modify that behavior. Time-outs are not used at LGS. Instead, a teacher might redirect a child to a different activity where they can play more appropriately.

If a child becomes consistently violent, disruptive to an effective classroom, repeatedly uses inappropriate language and endangers the health, peace, safety, and well-being of LGS's students, teachers, or parents, a parent meeting will be called to discuss a course of action. It may be required that the parents and teacher create a Plan of Action Agreement. Parents must abide by the terms and conditions set in the agreement. LGS reserves the right to terminate its services to any child for behavioral issues at any time. Moreover, LGS reserves the right to terminate its services to a child whose parent(s) persistently disregards school rules and policies.

## Emergency Plan

LGS has a detailed emergency and evacuation plan, which is viewable at the sign-in table.

## Audio & Video Monitoring Policy

LGS has a video monitoring system throughout our facility, including our playgrounds and classrooms. We can view and listen to activities on our premises for the safety and security of our staff and children. This system is for administrative and internal purposes, not for live stream parent viewing. We keep video records for one week. Due to other students' confidentiality, parents cannot view these videos without a court order.

## Staff Changes

Your child will likely have a teacher change during your child's career at Little Green Sprouts Preschool. We strive to have higher employee retention than the preschool industry average. We constantly strive to improve employee retention, but statistically, people in our job market change jobs every three years. We will do our best to make the change as easy as possible for your child and family. Please feel free to address your questions and concerns to our administration.

## Non-Solicitation Policy

Families that tour or enroll at Little Green Sprouts Preschool agree not to solicit, employ, or enter into any contract with any employee of Little Green Sprouts Preschool to perform childcare or similar services under any circumstances that might interfere with their role or employment at Little Green Sprouts Preschool. No exceptions can be made as it creates a conflict of interest, can lead to favoritism of children/families and provides opportunities for breaches in confidentiality and privacy. We ask LGS parents to maintain a strictly professional relationship with LGS staff.

## Acknowledgement Form

Located in the enrollment packet is a form acknowledging receipt and understanding of the handbook. After reading and familiarizing yourself with the handbook, please sign and return this form as soon as possible.