

# Welcome

to the



# Butterfly Class

Handbook

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Welcome to the Butterfly class! I am very excited to get to know your child and your family and I look forward to spending the upcoming school year together! My name is Shari Powell and I am the teacher in the Butterfly class. My family has been a part of the Little Acorn community since 2013 when my oldest son was in the Rainbow Room. I have been teaching at Little Acorn since 2017. Previously I was the Assistant Teacher in the Star Class teaching 3 year olds before transitioning to the Butterfly class. I have a Bachelors Degree in Human Development and spent 8 years at a daycare center working as a Toddler Teacher and Program Supervisor before becoming a stay at home mom. During that time I babysat while I was at home with my kids.

My Husband and I have been married for 10 years and have 3 children. Dylan, who is 11 and in 6<sup>th</sup> grade; Corbin who is 9 and in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; and Addy who is 4 and will be in the Busy Bee and Leap Frog class this year at Little Acorn. Both of my sons play baseball, and my daughter loves to dance and is very interested in playing soccer. As a family, we like to go camping and spending time outdoors.

The Butterfly Class is a fun, creative, safe, and positive environment where kids can learn through play at their own pace as they prepare for kindergarten. Playing is an integral part of our classroom as the children engage in exploring, risk taking, problem solving, and developing their imagination all while interacting with their surroundings through play. Social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth will be promoted through our class activities, as well as a positive self- image and a love for learning. We will also be incorporating all aspects needed for kindergarten readiness in our classroom activities.

I am so excited to spend the next school year together! Thank you for sharing your child with us and allowing us to be a part of their preschool experience!

**Ms. Sierra:** Hi my Name is Sierra Lohner, I am the new assistant in the Butterfly class! I have worked as a sub in several classrooms and as the Dragonfly assistant. My Daughter Poppy has attended Little Acorn since 2019. Poppy and I love to do any and all creative projects we can, we both enjoy camping, kayaking, going to the beach, and pretty much anything outdoors.

I love the Little Acorn community and have loved watching it grow over the years. I am so excited for the opportunity to get to know the LAPS families and to have a year full of fun, creativity, and growth. Thank you for sharing your wonderful families with us, I am looking forward to getting to know you.

## **Emergent Curriculum:**

At Little Acorn, we use emergent curriculum. This means we take the lead from the children when choosing what to study. We want to help your children explore and grow in their interests and learn to value the interests of others. We also believe that a child's "work" is their play. They learn by doing, touching, tasting, smelling, listening, and seeing. Our environment and our curriculum should create curiosity that sparks natural interest and excitement for learning. We will begin the year with some seasonal, teacher-chosen themes, but as we get to know each other, we will develop our curriculum around their interests. The Butterfly Classroom is also divided into specific centers in order to enhance learning. Our centers consist of art, science, dramatic play, reading and writing, blocks, games and manipulative and outdoor play. During free choice/center time, students are able to be self-directed in their learning and choose which center they wish to play in. We encourage cleaning up before moving to another play space.

Every child in the Butterfly Class is at a different stage in their interest and development regarding academics. Most, if not all, of the children will be moving on to Kindergarten the following year, we will be focusing on the things which will prepare them well to succeed. We will be incorporating the skills needed for Kindergarten readiness in all aspects of our classroom activities.

### **Reading Readiness:**

Many children are beginning to understand what it means to read and show many pre-reading skills as they enter our classroom. We will challenge kids on their individual levels of reading readiness as we move through the year. For example, we start with letter recognition, then move on to letter sounds, then finally putting sounds together to form and sound out small words. Sometime near the middle of the school year, we will start weekly reading groups based on their readiness, we will look at small books, learning how to follow along in a small group setting. This is a great way to introduce something that they will encounter when they get to Kindergarten.

### **Arrival:**

Our day starts at **9:00am or 12:30pm**, and we get rolling with activities right away. We ask you to please do your best to be on time to class so your child doesn't miss out on any of our activities. We will provide lots of fun opportunities for you to come and spend time in our school, but drop off time is not the best time for that. We highly encourage you to converse with other parents in the hallway and get to know one another but, for your child's most successful adjustment, please say your goodbyes at the door and confidently release your children to their classroom. **Please make sure to take your child to the bathroom before they arrive at school, as to not interrupt their daily activities!** Although not listed in the daily schedule, we do have time scheduled for bathroom breaks, hand washing, and clean-up.

### **Pick up/Drop off:**

Our doors open promptly at 9:00am. We will take attendance inside our classroom. We will only allow the people whom you have authorized to pick up your child. If someone other than the people you have listed will be picking up your child, please let us know in writing and have them bring a photo ID. We strive to keep your children as safe as possible, and this is one of the ways we do that.

At pick-up time, we will open the door when class is over and release your children to you one at a time by calling their name.

### **Daily Schedule:**

The following is a **sample** schedule of our day. We will follow a daily routine, but as we get to know the children, it may change with their needs.

### **Arrival/Sign In/Class Jobs**

At arrival students will get a chance to greet teachers and their classmates and say goodbye to the special grown-ups who will be dropping them off. We find it best to make good byes quick so children can engage in class activities. Every morning, students will practice writing their name and signing in to the classroom. They will also pick which classroom jobs they wish to participate in for the day, which helps them feel a part of the classroom community.

### **Morning Meeting:**

During class morning meetings, students will discuss the day's activities. This will also be a time for relationship building, listening to stories, discussing the weather and calendar and large group learning activities.

### **Small Group Activity:**

Students will hear instructions for small group activities during the morning meeting. This will be a time to focus on specific skills, and goals, such as cutting, writing and counting. They will receive focused attention from teachers to help guide them through the activity.

### **Free Choice/Open Centers:**

Our classroom is divided up into centers of students to explore and learn at their own pace. Centers include art, science, dramatic play, reading and writing, blocks, and manipulatives. Each day there will be special activities such as painting, cooking or games to go along with what theme or study that we are learning about. During this time, students discover independently while being guided by teachers to help them choose activities and work on sharing and conflict resolution.

**Music/Movement:**

Songs, rhymes and movement games are an important part of our preschool day! This gives students the chance to discover new skills through their body movements and music. We also discuss taking turns during games and practice listening and following directions.

**Outside:**

We hope to go outside every day! Please make sure to dress your child in play clothes and shoes that are good for outdoor play, along with rain gear. Playing outside, rain or shine helps students discover nature, dig in the sandbox and rocks, use their gross motor skills to climb, swing and run. If the weather does not permit us to go outdoors, we spend our playtime in the playroom where we still get a chance to get lots of energy out.

**Snack:**

During snack time, we use family style eating by passing food and pitchers around the table and practice pouring skills and using tongs. This is a great time to develop social and language skills by having table conversations with classmates and teachers. Trying new foods is also encouraged!

**Quiet Reading/Journals/Yoga**

As the day nears to the end, we will spend some time quieting our bodies down, reading books, journaling the day's events and doing some yoga stretches and relaxing together.

**Say Goodbye/Dismissal:**

Here we spend a short time in circle to discuss the day's activities and say goodbye. Each child will also have a book bag that they will get to take home at the end of the day, with a book that they choose from the reading center. Students will be dismissed at the door when their special grown up arrives to greet them and sign them out.

**Late Charge:**

Our day ends at **12:00pm** or **3:30pm**. Please be on time when you pick up your child. As the end of their day approaches, the children's anticipation builds to see their parents. If you are late picking up your children, and everyone else's parents have already come and gone, they feel disappointed and start worrying about you. If you know you are running late, please send us a message or please call Katie to let her know, so we can let your child know you are on your way!

Little Acorn has a **five-minute grace period**, and then there is a late fee of **\$1 per minute** if you are late. This will be paid directly to the teacher. After the 5-minute grace period, check the classroom for your child, then check in Katie's office.

Little Acorn tuition is due on the 1st of each month. If tuition is not paid by the 10th of the month, there will be a \$50.00 late fee.

**Backpack:**

Please have your child bring in a backpack each day. We use backpacks to store hats, gloves, etc. in throughout the school day. We also use backpacks to send home the days activities. Please make sure the backpack is large enough to fit all of these items.

Please make sure that you **write your child's name on everything that you send to school** with them (i.e. backpacks, coats, and other clothing). Backpacks may be hung just outside our classroom door. At the end of each day, your child needs take his

or her backpack home, as well as the contents of their cubbies! We have a morning and afternoon class and will be using the space for the next class coming in!

**Cubbies:**

Your child will have their own cubby in the hall just outside the door. Please check these each day for parent handouts and your child's work. We will be saving some work/artwork for the children's portfolios that will go home at the end of the year.

**Outside Play:**

We will try to have an outside playtime each day. If it looks like it may be cool during the day, please send a warm jacket and gloves/mittens. In the winter season, **please** don't forget those mittens and even a hat. We do go outside even if it is cold. It is important for the kids to get outside for fresh air whenever possible. There is a playroom inside for when the weather forces us to stay inside. **Children of this age generally should be able to put on their own jacket or coat**, please send them in one that they can take care of themselves.

**Cooking Projects:**

We will be having a cooking project once a month in our classroom. We will cook something, as a class, that is simple and age-appropriate. We like to introduce the concept of following a recipe as we cook. We use simple, step-by-step cooking projects. As the dates approach for these projects, we will let you know more specific details. **(Please let us know if your child has any allergies).**

**Dressing for School:**

We will offer painting projects daily and go outside whenever possible. Please dress your child in clothes that can get dirty and are weather appropriate. We want you child to be able to participate in all messy activities without worrying about the mess! It's part of learning! We will have a few smocks available for painting and water play!

**Extra Clothes:**

Please send an extra set of clothes, including shirt, pants, underwear and socks in a plastic baggie labeled with first and last name, because accidents do happen! There may also be situations when the kids will get wet from playing in the sensory table or from water spills at snack time. We will keep these here at school throughout the year to use if needed. **This year, we ask that you also include extra masks!**

**Bike Helmets:**

When the weather is appropriate, we will have bikes and scooters out on the playground to enjoy. We require that kids who ride bikes or scooters on the playground wear bike helmets. If your child would like to join in this activity during play time, they must bring their own helmet from home that fits them correctly. Please label it with your child's name. Please make sure to take them home each day, as the space will be used for the next class coming in.

**Classroom Supplies:**

We don't have a list of specific supplies that each child will need, but we do ask that each family bring in a white, 1-inch binder for their child's classroom portfolio. A list will be provided of other items we use frequently if you would like to donate! We also mention in the newsletter items that are needed in the classroom for specific upcoming projects and events. Thanks in advance for your support!

**Classroom Library/Book Bags:**

In our classroom, the children will have an opportunity to borrow a book from the classroom bookshelf. They can only choose one book at a time, and they must return the book to borrow another. This helps introduce responsibility and how to take care of books. Book bags will begin coming home sometime during the first month of school.

**Field Trips:**

We will take field trips approximately 1-2 times per year. Preschool policy is that parents are responsible for transporting their own child to and from field trips. Teachers may **not** transport the children. If you cannot transport your child, then you may authorize another parent to do so. This needs to be done in writing.

**Birthdays:** Birthdays are always fun celebrate! If you want to bring in birthday treats, we ask that they are store bought and you let us know what you are bringing a few days ahead of time so those with allergies/food restrictions can be accommodated. We also encourage bringing non-food items such as fun stickers or pencils.

**Illness:**

**PLEASE** do not bring your child to school if they have had a temperature of 100° or above, or if they have had a cough, diarrhea, or a green runny nose in the last **48 hours**. This policy exists to protect your kids and to keep yucky germs from spreading. If your child has any of these symptoms while at the preschool, we will call to have them picked up to go home. I know that your children hate missing school (and we miss them too!) and will often want to come even when they are feeling badly, but please, for the sake of our teachers and the other children, don't bring your child if they are sick. Please contact us through Parent Square, or email [shrclwll@yahoo.com](mailto:shrclwll@yahoo.com) , or call Lindsay in the school office at (360)693-5614 to let us know your child will be staying home.

**Little Acorn preschool is unable to refund tuition for missed schooling due to illness.**

**Head Lice:**

Children will be checked for lice in the event of an occurrence in the classroom. When lice are found at home, please report it to teachers and Lindsay **immediately**. If head lice are found at school, we will take the child to Katie's office and contact the parents to pick up the child. The classroom will be cleaned and sanitized in every event of head lice. We will send a notice home to all families in that classroom with pertinent information attached. The child will not be re-admitted to the classroom until verified he/she is "nit free," a doctor's note is strongly suggested.

**Birthdays/Holidays:**

Children love to have a party! We would like to encourage parents to bring in healthy snacks or food free treats, such as pencils, stickers or something else small to give to the students to celebrate your child's birthday (or un-birthday for children with summer birthdays). Just let us know in advance.

If you are choosing to put birthday invitations in cubbies, there needs to be one for each child or please contact them outside of school for party invitations. Teachers may not hand out birthday invites for home parties.

We understand that different families celebrate different holidays in different ways. If you have special holidays you celebrate in your family, please let us know. We're open to your ideas and family traditions as we plan on celebrating various holidays.

**Volunteer Time:**

Each family is asked to do some volunteering at our school. This is a great way to build community and demonstrate to your child that their school is important to your family.

Some possible ways to help are: making play dough for the class, taking home dress up clothes to wash, take home activity prep (cutting), cleaning classroom toys, wiping down the playroom and donating snack or supplies. As a family, you may opt out of this commitment by donating \$150 per child.

### **Meet and Greet and Conferences:**

Our first meet and greets are held in August before school starts, which gives us an opportunity to get to know each other, talk about any concerns you may have, and ask questions before the school year gets rolling. Throughout our year we put together progress reports to keep you informed about your child's growth and progress! Conferences can be scheduled if needed for further discussion.

However, if at any time you have concerns or questions you would like to discuss, we are available. We value your input and would like to resolve any issues as soon as possible. We will return your email or message promptly!

### **Guidance:**

We will not use "time out's" in our classroom. When conflicts arise, we like to let the children attempt to work things out on their own, while we observe. If they need help, we will step in and offer ideas on working together to find a solution. Quite often, children will work out their differences when guided by an adult and given the correct tools to resolve the situation. This may involve asking them how they could have handled the situation better. We often practice with a "try it again" scenario. We want to encourage kind and respectful behavior of everyone in our class.

Please keep in mind that we are not able to speak with you regarding the behavior of other children in our classroom. Your child may at times come home and complain of a situation that happened in the classroom. Please know that we are aware of it and have either taken care of it, or are in the process of doing so.

### **Parent Square**

Little Acorn uses the Parent Square app as our primary source of communication with families. This is easily downloaded onto your smart phone or computer. You will receive quick updates and photos of class activities weekly. Parent Square is also a way to send private messages to us in a secure environment. We ask that you download this app to stay updated on all that is happening within the Butterfly Class and Little Acorn.

### **Communication:**

We want to emphasize how important it is that we as teachers and parents have open and honest conversation with one another. If you ever have a question or concern, come directly to us and talk about it. We are very open to hearing from you. We promise to be respectful of your thoughts and feelings, and we ask that you do the same for us.

If you have questions or concerns please send a message via Parent Square or email anytime at [shrclwll@yahoo.com](mailto:shrclwll@yahoo.com).

We will provide a lot of opportunities for you to be up to date on what's happening at Little Acorn and in our class. You will receive a newsletter that will include lesson information, as well as upcoming events.

**Please read through this newsletter to be well informed.** We also have a chalkboard outside the classroom that will keep you informed on upcoming events.

If you need to find information about upcoming events, check out our website at [www.littleacornpreschool.com](http://www.littleacornpreschool.com). Any questions regarding tuition, taxes, enrollment, etc., should be directed to Katie in the office.

We are looking forward to a wonderful school year with you and your child!