Welcome! My name is Caroline Fields and I have been working at Little Acorn Preschool since 1997. I continue my education in Early Childhood by taking classes offered through Clark College, Washington Stars Education Credits, ESD and any other Early Childhood field related classes. Little Acorn is a very special program that provides creative curriculum and an engaging atmosphere, where PLAY is valued.

Our students learn, grow and thrive here, I am committed to providing a safe, inviting and positive learning environment for your child. It is my hope that this school year be filled with many successful experiences, helping to foster a life-long love of learning.

Together we will read stories, solve problems, make friends, do messy art projects, learn about the world around us and have many, many engaging conversations along the way, I look forward to getting to know you and your families!

I was born Buenos Aires, Argentina and speak some Spanish which I enjoying sharing with my students. I have 3 children, a daughter and 2 sons who are all former students here at Little Acorn Preschool. I love my job, working with young children has always been something I have enjoyed, it’s such a precious, tender and meaningful time in their lives.

Thank you for letting me be a part of your child’s experience!

Here at Little Acorn we use an emergent curriculum. This basically means we sometimes take the lead from the children when choosing what to learn about. I have found that children learn and get excited about learning when they can relate it to their own world and when it is something they’ve have already demonstrated an interest in. I want to help your children explore and grow in their interests and learn to value the interests of others. I 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. Every child in the Leap Frog Class is at a different stage in their interest and development regarding academics. I understand that for some of you, academics are of no importance and others of you are very concerned about the things they are learning. We are flexible.. The things they are learning through their play are extremely valuable and we will do our best to facilitate that as well as provide academic learning opportunities that they may participate in if interested. They will have opportunities to grow through art projects, science projects, games, songs, stories, classroom jobs, and through many classroom conversations and problem solving as they work through conflicts with friends. They will learn things like letters, numbers, shapes, etc… when they are interested and ready to. However, if there is something specific you are concerned with, please let us know and we’ll be happy to look for opportunities to encourage that for your child. For example, one year we had a parent who was concerned about her child’s ability to use scissors/fine motor skills, so we looked for opportunities to encourage the child to participate in cutting activities whenever possible. Please never hesitate to ask questions, or share any concerns you may, I am available most days and really value my relationships with you.

**Here is a sample of our Daily schedule in the Leap Frog Class**

**Morning Meeting:** Begin with talking about our question of the day or conversation starter. Each child can share their idea. We sing a good morning song together, pick helper jobs for the day and talk about our activities for the morning.

**Transition to Centers:** This is our ‘work’ time, the kids work on the planned activities and once they have moved thru the planned activities they may move about the room for free choice time. During this time teachers can give one-on-one help where needed and are engaging with the children, guiding them along.

**Play/ Free choice time:** Allow for exploratory play, make observations about play and help model play and interactions with children. Open centers like sensory table, provide playdoh, kinetic sand, paint easels open, puzzles or other table type activity. Whole classroom open for children to explore and make their own choices about play.

**Transition:** Have ‘timer helper’ set timer for all to see a visual of how much time is left for our free-time**.** Allow the timer to ring for our next transition for the day (give a 5 minute warning before the timer rings, begin and encourage children to clean up area and to help friends also clean up, physically show time on clock). Cleaning up is a big part of the day and we all help take care of our room.

**Story time/Calendar time and/or Movement/song play:**

This is usually the time we look at the calendar together making observations about numbers, patterns and days of the week, also upcoming events. I also use this time to read a story together. Occasionally we will do a group activity like a following directions activity, group art, use white boards, and play games, yoga time, and/or some music movement.

**Transition to Bathroom:**. We use various ways to line up, sometimes we call-up a friend, call our first letters in name, use numbers, etc. All the children are encouraged to use the bathroom and everyone washes their hands before snack time.

**Snack:** Have a snack and socialize, children help with cups, napkins, and sometimes pouring their own water. Each child is responsible for cleaning up their snack area when finished.

**Reading:** When children are done with snack, toys and centers are closed. During this time Students may pick out different books to read together or independently, they will need to pack up any papers/material for home and place in their backpack, we will also practice putting on our coats. When most students are over at the carpet and ready we will line up for our outside playtime.

**Transition to Outside**: Line up and go play outside, occasionally bikes and scooter are out too.

**Transition to home:** Start lining up at 11:45, come back to the classroom, call on students to pick a sticker and stamp, we will sing a goodbye song together and then a teacher will open the door to dismiss the children one by one to their guardian.

A few reminders:

**Sign In- Sign Out:**. Please sign your children in when you drop them off, and sign them out when you pick them up each day. 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.. Our day starts at 9:00 am (12:30 for afternoon classes) 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.. 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

**Late Charge** The morning class starts at 9:00AM & ends at 12:00PM. The afternoon class begins at 12:30pm & ends at 3:30pm. Our pre-school asks that you 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 call/message, 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 you are late**. This needs to be paid before your child attends his next class time.

**Backpacks** Please have your child bring in a backpack with their name each day. Coats and backpacks may be hung just outside our classroom’s door. At the end of each day, your child may take his or her backpack home as well as the contents of their cubbies! We encourage all children to pack up their belongings each day, this DOES mean that many papers will come home crushed in the process as the kids learn how to pack up, please know that I also save a lot of their work for you in a portfolio in the classroom to give to you at the end of the year, uncrushed ☺.

**Cubby**: Your child will have their own cubbie/box in the hall outside the door. Please check these each day for parent handouts and your child’s artwork. Your child is very proud of their work that they do and I encourage you to talk with them about it. Ask them to tell you about it ☺

**Dress**: Please dress your child in “play clothes,” clothes that are okay to play in the dirt and paint in. We will be doing various activities, and play clothes are the best. Children who are worried about getting their clothes messy/dirty aren’t going to open to being themselves and exploring further.

**Outside Playtime:** 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 bad weather forces us to stay inside, however we will go outside most days, even if its lightly raining.

**Parent Volunteering**: Little Acorn requires all families to volunteer 3 hours per school year per enrolled child. Volunteering may be completed in the following ways: classroom support (cutting projects, etc), playground clean-up, Carnival/Silent Auction or Family Fun night events at school. The Director will be posting opportunities throughout the year as event arise, you can then sign up. Parents may opt out of the annual volunteering commitment by donating $150.00 per enrolled child directly to the school.