

Star Class



Handbook

2021-2022

Welcome to the Star Class!

Our Philosophy: We strongly believe based on experience and knowledge of child development that children learn by doing. Being hands on with materials in the classroom and interacting with other children is the best and often the most enjoyable way to learn. Children also learn best when they are interested in the themes or ideas presented. In this we will take the lead of the children, offering materials and experience to expand on the emerging ideas I see happening in the classroom. In the Sunshine class we will have many opportunities to explore new ideas; my hope is that every child will feel comfortable and confident in their own learning.

A little bit about me:

This is my 15th year here at Little Acorn, I have worked with 3, 4 and 5 years over the years and enjoy the preschool years so much! I have 4 children of my own! Evelyn is 20 and a Junior in college, Isaac is in 9th grade, Kate is in 6th grade and Annie is in 2st grade. They are all Little Acorn graduates and love to come back to visit the program. I enjoy spending time with my family; we enjoy walks in our neighborhood, spending time outdoors in our garden and visiting out of town family. Being out in nature is one of my favorite things and I love sharing this passion with children. I know this year is a bit different, but we will try to do some nature exploration from afar!

Teacher Tasha

Hello! This will be my fourth-year assistant teaching at Little Acorn. My kids have been attending Little Acorn for the past 6 years and I am excited to be a part of the team!

I graduated from WSUV with my Bachelors in Human Development in 2010. During that time, I also worked at a daycare/preschool center as a Program Supervisor/ Toddler Teacher for 7 years before I became a stay at home mom.

My husband and I have been together for 16 years. We have 2 little boys and a girl. Dylan is 11 and will be in fourth grade, Corbin is 8 and will be in the second grade, and Adelynn is 3 years old and here at little acorn. We also have two dogs, Jax and Piper, and a cat named Thor. We enjoy spending time outside as a family. I love going to the beach and my boys love playing baseball.

I feel very fortunate for this opportunity to help your child learn and to watch them grow and look forward to the coming year!

Teacher Shari

Emergent Curriculum:

At Little Acorn, we use an “emergent” curriculum. This means we take the lead from the children when planning our days. Our goal is 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 inspire curiosity that sparks natural interest and excitement for learning. Our role as teachers in the classroom is to engage with the children as they take the lead! You will often find us working alongside children as they build, explore art materials, play in the kitchen/dress up area, read

books, work with playdough or clay and so much more. 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 the kids interests.

Every child in the Star Class is at a different stage in their interest and development regarding academics. We offer a wide range materials and activities in the classroom so that every child can come in and find something that meets their needs and interests. We take time to observe and reflect on what learning is happening in the classroom and provide materials to further engage a learning activity, for example, if we notice that many children are interested in building a zoo with the blocks, we will add more zoo animals, pictures of zoos and word labels that can be used to further the children's learning and interest in this activity. As Mr. Rogers said "Play is really the work of childhood"!

Daily Schedule:

Children thrive when they know what to expect next. 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. We will also follow their lead. If circle time is flowing, and the kids want another story or song, then that is what we will do. Although not listed in the daily schedule, we do have time scheduled for bathroom breaks, hand washing, and clean-up.

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Star Class Schedule

9:00 Welcome/Sign in/Helper Jobs

9:10 Separate into groups

9:15 Table activities (STEM, fine motor)

9:30 Bathroom

9:40 Outside Play (Gross motor)

10:15 Snack (Social development)

10:30 Quiet Book Time (Literacy)

10:40 Circle time/group activities

11:00 Free Choice/classroom exploration (all centers open including dramatic play, sensory, art, fine and gross motor)

11:35 Closing circle/Yoga (Group cooperation, gross motor)

11:50 Story (Literacy)

12:00 Goodbye

Sign-in/Sign-out:

This year we will be using our online platform, Brightwheel to sign in and out each day. You will use the app to check your child in and confirm a health check before dropping your children off. Before we can release them at the end of the day you will need to use the app to sign your child out. We will confirm that they have been checked out before releasing them for the day.

You may add authorized people to the app so they can sign you child in and out. 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.

Our day starts at **9:00am**, 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 classroom 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 teachers. At pick-up time, we will open the door when class is over and release the children one at a time by calling their name.

Late Charge:

Our day begins at **9:00am** ends at **12:00pm**. 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 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** you are late. This will be paid directly to the teacher and must be paid within 48 hours. After the 5-minute grace period, check the classroom for your child. If they aren't there with a teacher, check in Katie's office.

Backpacks:

What child doesn't love to carry a backpack to school with them? Please have your child bring in a backpack each day with extra underwear (for children who use the toilet) or diapers & wipes (for those who may need them). Please send an extra set of clothes in the backpack because accidents do happen. There may also be situations when the kids will get wet from playing in the sensory table or from water/milk spills at snack time.

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). Coats and backpacks may be hung just outside our classroom door. At the end of each day, please take his or her backpack home, as well as the contents of their cubbies. This will give you the opportunity to refill diapers and to choose "extra" clothes suitable for the weather. Please make sure that the bag is sent back to school with your child each day.

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 prohibits outdoor play.

Dressing for School:

We will offer painting projects daily and go outside whenever possible. Please dress your child in play clothes that can get dirty and are weather appropriate. If you would like to leave an extra change of clothes at school for your child, please send them in their backpack.

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. They can be left at school, hung on the bottom level of the coat rack outside the classroom.

Classroom supplies:

We don't have a list of specific supplies that each child will need, but do ask that each family bring in a white, 2-inch binder for their child's classroom portfolio. We also accept donations of frequently used items that count toward your two hours of volunteer time for the year. These items/instructions are listed on the website, as well as outside our classroom. We may also mention in the weekly newsletter items that are needed in the classroom for specific upcoming projects and events. Thanks in advance for your support!

Field Trips:

We will take field trips approximately 2-3 times per year. Preschool policy is that parents are responsible for transporting their own child to and from field trips and for supervision. 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.

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 text me at (360)624-3673 or call Katie Coop in the school office at (360)693-5614 to let us know what your child's symptoms are and will be staying home.

Mask Wearing: Here at Little Acorn we are following CDC guidance and asking that everyone (staff, students and parents) wears a mask in the building. Anyone doing drop off or pickup must properly (covering mouth and nose) wear a mask while in the building. Your child's mask will need to be properly fitting and easy for them to put on correctly. Please have a couple extra masks in their backpack in case it needs to be changed during the school day.

Covid-19 Policy & Procedures:

Parents will be required to submit a daily health check for their student on Brightwheel each day they attend. Students will not be allowed into class with out a completed health check.

By checking your child in on Brightwheel each day, you are confirming that you and your child do not have any of the following symptoms:

- Had a temperature at or above 100.4° or reason to be concerned you may be developing a fever. If you don't have a thermometer, additional fever signs and symptoms may include: sweating, chills and shivering, headache, muscle aches, loss of appetite, irritability, dehydration, or general weakness.
- Experienced a new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- Experienced a new shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- Experienced a new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- Experienced new muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition or a specific activity such as physical exercise
- Experienced any chills that you cannot attribute to another health condition
- Experienced a new loss of taste or smell that you cannot attribute to another health condition

In Addition, you are also affirming that have not:

- Received a positive test result for COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Currently have or are suspected of having COVID-19?
- Been in close contact with someone who suspects or has tested positive of Covid-19.

Little Acorn Preschool is requiring that all students, parents, volunteers and staff are masked at all times. Masking is similar to wearing a bike helmet or wearing your seatbelt. It's the easiest line of defense to help keep your child, your teacher and our community safe.

Preschool staff are taking extra steps to reduce exposure to the best of our ability through enhanced cleaning measures & cleaning products, increased hand washing/sanitization, reduced classroom sizes and clear communication with families.

We are asking that parents are diligent about monitoring any symptoms that their child presents and errs on the side of caution. Do not send your child to school if they are not feeling well. We will call parents and send students home if we notice a student is not feeling well or presenting with concerning symptoms.

In the event of exposure, or increased illness amongst our students and staff, we will change drop-off/pick-up to an outside activity. If this happens, we will need to stagger start times to accommodate safe drop-off/pick-up for all students.

In the event that the school is forced to shut down, we will move to our LEAF hybrid learning program. Preschool staff have created an excellent alternative curriculum that is engaging, stimulating and fun for our students.

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

Birthdays/Holidays:

Children love to have a party! We would like to encourage parents to bring in food free treats this year, 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 throwing your child a party outside of school, we ask that you not put invitations in the cubbies. Please contact families outside of school for party invitations. We understand that families celebrate 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.

In Our Community:

Little Acorn is blessed to be close to a community park. Shumway Park is right across the street by VSAA. When weather allows, we will plan a park visit in advance, as well as

set out a reminder note day-of. The Director is always notified 24 hours in advance of our park play times, and our class will always be back to the school in time for pick up. Anytime we are off school grounds, we have our cell phones with us in case a situation arises for which we need help.

Volunteer Time:

Each family is asked to volunteer during the school year. This is a great way to build community and demonstrate to your child that their school is important to your family. Tracking volunteer time is the responsibility of the parent. I will provide a notebook with a sheet for each family to track their hours. We ask for 3 hours of volunteer time per child. Volunteer hours can be fulfilled during a fundraising event, playground clean-up, or family fun night or by one of many at home activities. You may also donate snacks/supplies for up to one hour of your time. The instructions for these donations are on our website, as well as posted outside our classroom. We completely understand that for some families, life schedules can make it difficult to give time. As a family, you may opt out of this commitment by donating \$150 per child.

Communication:

This year we will be using a new online platform called brightwheel! Each student will have a profile in our brightwheel classroom, this will be where you check your student in and out each day and where we will share classroom happenings and upcoming events.

I know there are times when you'd like to discuss things, but we won't always have a chance during school hours. Please email, text, or message me on Brightwheel, and I will get back to you as quickly as possible. If you need to find information about upcoming events, check out our website at www.littlecornpreschool.com. Any questions regarding tuition, taxes, enrollment, etc., should be directed to Katie in the office.