

Little Sprouts Family Handbook



Updated September 2026

Welcome!

Welcome to Little Sprouts! This handbook contains important policies and procedures for parents and guardians of our students.

We strive to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children in our care.

Please review the following policies and documentation to ensure that you are familiar with our procedures, and feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Our Story

Olivia worked for 10 years at the former “Avila Child Care Center” which ran in this very building for decades prior. She fell in love with the field of education and worked as an educator for 10 years. She has her bachelor's in education from Grand Valley State University. Olivia lived in Italy teaching English as a second language then moving to Australia to work as a school director. When the opportunity to purchase the center came about, Olivia recognized the gap which is often seen in Child Care between Educators and Administrators. She jumped at the opportunity to make a difference in the community and in that process, “Little Sprouts Child Care Center” was created. She is proud to present you with quality, safe and educational child care. Her goal is for the center to feel like a warm hug to each child and family member that walks in.

Paige has been a valued member of the Chelsea community for more than 10 years and brings a strong background in technology. Her twins previously attended the former Avila Child Care Center, located in the very building where this new chapter begins.

Paige's vision is to create a safe, loving, and educational environment for children and families in the community. She believes that every child deserves to be treated with kindness, respect, and compassion—as if they were part of the family. Her goal is to provide a nurturing space in Chelsea where children can learn, grow, and thrive while feeling supported, valued, and loved every day.

Our Values

We value safe, nurturing and quality education. We want to build kids to have a smooth transition into the rest of their educational journey.

Educational Philosophy -

Our mission is to provide a safe and comforting center. We believe in creating a space to help each little mind grow based on the world around them. We are a play and nature based center where each family feels at home.

Our Curriculum

At Little Sprouts, we implement the Blossom and Root curriculum. Here at Little Sprouts, we believe in protecting the joys of childhood. Learning through play and nature is rooted into who we are. Blossom and Root is a creative, nature based curriculum to aid children in their development to prepare them for their future education journey.

Center Overview

Address

13920 E. Old US Hwy
Chelsea, Michigan 48118

Administrative Team

Olivia Clarke, Owner/Center Director
Paige Housner, Owner/remote administrator

Student Ages

6 weeks-5 years old

Before/after-school and break programming available for 5 years old and up

Summer Camp for children 5+

Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday, 7:00am-6:00pm

Children must be picked up by 6:00 pm or you will be charged late pick-up fees.

We offer a 5 minute grace period. Following that a fee of \$1/minute is charged.

Little Sprouts will be closed for the following days:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Thursday & Friday
- Christmas Eve until January 2nd
- New Year's Day
- Easter Friday
- Memorial Day
- The week of Fourth of July

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the holiday will be observed on a Friday.

If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the holiday will be observed the following Monday.

If Little Sprouts must close due to unforeseen circumstances, the closure will be communicated through the Brightwheel and our social media pages.

Unplanned closure reasons may include (but are not limited to) pandemic, severe weather, utility failure that could impact the safety of staff and children, or the declaration of a State Emergency.

The State of Michigan will not allow us to operate if we do not have running electricity, heat, hot water, or a landline telephone.

Inclement Weather Policy

At Little Sprouts we, our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for our students remains unwavering, even in the face of inclement weather. Our policy is designed to prioritize the well-being of our staff members, students, and their families while ensuring educational continuity.

School Operations on Inclement Weather Days

Little Sprouts will remain open on inclement weather days, allowing for continuous learning and care for our students. **Exceptions may occur in extreme circumstances.** We advise all families to exercise extreme caution when transporting children, especially when the local school district announces closures.

Any updates or changes to the regular schedule will be communicated promptly through Brightwheel via push notification, email and text message.

Safety Precautions

Our staff and leadership team are fully committed to taking necessary precautions to ensure the safety of all individuals within our school community. Precautions may include housing staff members locally when needed and providing safe, company-sponsored transportation if/as required.

Backup Childcare Option

On inclement weather days, a backup childcare option will be available for local families with children under the age of 5 who may experience daycare or school closings. Back-up childcare passes may be purchased for \$100 per day.

Siblings of children under the age of 5 are welcome to join Little Sprout on inclement weather days with the use of a back-up childcare pass, providing a reliable solution for families

Center Policies & Operations

Admission/Withdrawal Policy

To enroll in our program, parents/guardians must complete an enrollment form and provide all necessary documentation and place a deposit in the amount of **one half (½) of monthly tuition**. This deposit is applied to the first month of tuition.

A registration fee of **\$50** will be applied to each new member's account at time of enrollment.

If a student needs to withdraw, parents/guardians must notify the Center Director in writing at least four weeks in advance. Little Sprouts reserves the right to pursue legal actions for fund collection, and families will be responsible for any legal costs ensured.

Fee Policy

Fees are due at the beginning of each month. Payment must be made in full, and no partial payments are accepted. A late fee of **\$75** will be charged for payments not received by the **5th of the month**. All fees will be processed through Brightwheel via credit card or ACH payment. Any credit card payment will have a 3% processing fee. ACH payments do not have a processing fee.

Tuition Schedule

Tuition is due before care through the Brightwheel app. Payment is due regardless of attendance, and will not be reduced or refined for absence due to illness, center closings, disaster or declared emergency, holidays or vacation. This is to guarantee your child's spot in the program during their absence. Families are responsible for their child's tuition on the **1st of every month**.

Schedule & Attendance

We ask that all students arrive at school no later than **9:30 am**. At enrollment, families will be asked to provide Little Sprouts with a predetermined schedule of attendance. It is expected that families will inform the center if the child will be tardy or absent. Drop-off will not be permitted between the hours of **9:30 am-2:30 pm** unless it has been pre arranged and approved by the Director or Assistant Director.

Late Pick-Up Fee

A late pick-up fee of **\$1 per minute** will be applied to the family's account if a child is picked up past closing time. Staff will contact family and authorized emergency contacts until pick-up can be arranged.

If no family or authorized persons can be reached within one hour, it is at the discretion of the director to notify local authorities.

Family Communication Tool

Little Sprouts uses digital communication through Brightwheel to keep families and teachers connected on a daily basis. As a new family, you will receive information on the Brightwheel App during your orientation. Brightwheel is your source for daily progress tracking, program messages, reminders, alerts, check-in and picture sharing.

All families are expected to check their children in and out of the Brightwheel app when getting dropped off and picked up via QR codes posted outside of their children's classrooms, as well as near the front office window.

Media

Children enrolled at Little Sprouts may occasionally be photographed and recorded in an effort to create memories for sharing with families or to enhance our learning environment. Recordings, videos, and photographs of children are not stored on personal devices. An *Informed Consent Form* will be signed at the time of enrollment grant or deny permission of photography or other recordings.

Orientation

New Families must complete all required forms, and participate in any requested orientations. Any remaining paperwork must be completed prior to the start of care.

Mandated Reporting

All staff of Little Sprouts are mandated reporters and are required by law to report suspicion that a child in care has been or is being subject to any form of abuse.

Custody & Visitation

Parents of enrolled children have open access to their child throughout the day when their child is in care. If a child is subject to a court order, we require a certified copy of the order and will follow the order of the court.

Health & Safety

Food Service Policy

We provide opportunities for children to have breakfast, lunch, and morning/afternoon snacks. Food for meals will not be provided by Little Sprouts. Healthy meals must be provided for each child by the family, and it is recommended to be packed with an ice pack to maintain freshness of the food. Little Sprouts will provide morning and afternoon snacks for children starting at twelve (12) months old. Emergency food is kept on hand for unexpected occurrences. We ask parents to please refrain from foods high in sugars including but not limited to deserts, candies, high sugar snacks and juice boxes. Our goal is to help grow little minds and a nutritious meal is key .

Please inform us of any food allergies or dietary restrictions when enrolling your child, so a plan of action is able to be developed.

Infant & Toddler Feeding

A child's profile will be completed at the time of orientation for the details of your child's routine. Families will provide feeding supplies, prepared formula, breastmilk and/or meals for infants six (6) weeks to twelve (12) months old. The families and Little Sprouts will collaborate together when transitioning children onto solid foods according to the child's developmental needs.

When providing bottles for children, they must be labeled with date, time of preparation and a child's first and last name.

Mothers wishing to nurse their infant while in the care of Little Sprout will be welcomed at any time, and provided a designated comfortable space.

Immunization & Medical Evaluation

Prior to a child under school-age starting care at the center, families must provide the center with a certificate of immunization showing a minimum of one dose of each agent specified by the Michigan Health Department.

A Health Appraisal Form is required within **30 days** of initial attendance, and physical evaluations must be updated annually. When a child under school-age whose immunizations were not up to date at the time of enrollment and has been in

attendance for four months, an updated certification showing completion of all additional immunizations requirements must be on file unless there is a signed statement by a licensed health care provider stating immunizations are in progress. Waivers will not be accepted.

Exclusion for Child Illness Policy

At our school, we understand the importance of preventing the spread of illness among our students, staff, and families. Our exclusion policy is designed to protect the health and well-being of everyone in our community by preventing the spread of communicable diseases. **We encourage all families to have a back-up plan in the event of short or long-term exclusion due to a child's sickness.**

Little Sprouts will perform daily health checks upon arrival to objectively determine if the child is ill or well and will determine if a child could remain in care, without risk to others. If a child appears to be ill upon arrival or becomes ill during the day, parents will be asked to pick up their child within the hour.

If a child becomes ill while at school, we will isolate the child from other students and notify parents immediately. The school will make the final decision about whether children who are ill may stay in the classroom, and will be based on our exclusion criteria. A child who becomes ill during care will be safely isolated within the classroom or the director's office to eliminate exposure.

Criteria for Exclusion

Staff must exclude a child from care if the child's illness or symptoms prevent the child from participating comfortably in daily activities, require care beyond what staff can reasonably provide while supervising other children, or pose a risk of spreading illness to other children or staff.

We follow the exclusion guidelines recommended by the local health department and require that children be excluded from school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4°F or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Any rash
- Severe cough, difficulty breathing, or significant cold symptoms
- Conjunctivitis
- Any known or suspected contagious disease (e.g., chickenpox, measles, influenza, tuberculosis)

Families are required to report illnesses to Little Sprouts by phone informing the center of diagnosis. A child who has been excluded from care due to illness may return only when they have been **fever-free and symptom-free for at least 24 hours**, without the use of fever-reducing medication, or a medical provider's note is provided stating that the child is no longer contagious and may safely return to

care. We request a doctor's note for re-admission when a child's illness could be a risk to others, or if special care guidance is needed for the child.

If a child has been exposed to a communicable disease, the family will be notified by our family communication app Brightwheel and/or a posting at the center. In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the director must notify the local health department.

We understand that it can be difficult for parents to manage work and family responsibilities when their child is ill. However, we ask that parents prioritize the health and well-being of all children in our community by keeping sick children at home.

Medication Policy

We request all medications are administered at home. Medication may only be administered with written consent from a parent/guardian, and a doctor's authorization. All medications brought to school require a *Michigan State Medication Authorization Form* to be filled out.

With exception of first aid, staff shall not dispense prescription or non-prescription medications without specific authorization mentioned above.

All prescription medication should be dated and kept in the original, child-safe container. The container should be labeled by a pharmacist with:

1. The child's first and last name

2. The date the prescription was filled
3. The name of the prescribing health professional who wrote the prescription
4. The prescription's expiration date
5. The manufacturer's instructions or prescription label with specific, legible instructions for administration, storage, and disposal
6. The name and strength of the medication

Topical Ointment Application

Families will be asked to fill out a *Topical Ointment Application Form* once a year.

This will be for diaper cream, lotion and sunscreen.

Inside The Classroom

All items and belongings must be labeled with the student's full name.

Items From Home

Each child should come to school with a full change of clothing. Toddlers and preschoolers must bring a small sheet and blanket or a nap set for rest time.

Personal emotional support items may be used for rest time only.

We ask that you please refrain from bringing personal toys and books from home. Throughout the year, children will have opportunities to bring meaningful items to class for special event days. Pacifiers with stuffed animals are prohibited.

Attire

Please dress your child appropriately for play. We ask that you refrain from putting your child in clothing that can not get messy.

Diapering & Toilet Training

Children in diapers will be changed a minimum of every two hours, after naps and when soiled. **Families are expected to supply sleeves of diapers**, baby wipes will be provided. Diapers and wipes are kept on hand at all times for unforeseen circumstances. If your child requires cream or ointment, it must be provided by the family.

Learning to utilize the toilet typically begins around two (2) years of age. Little Sprout staff will partner with families and develop a plan that is right for their child. Little Sprouts does not use potty training chairs and will utilize the child size toilets. Families are responsible for informing the staff of home routines and providing adequate clothing, underwear, and/or pull-ups.

Rest & Nap Time

Licensing Rules and Regulations require that a child in care for more than five (5) hours must be provided a rest or nap time. Children under three (3) years old will be provided an opportunity to rest regardless of the number of hours in care.

Infants will rest on demand in a crib or cot. Infants are not allowed to have anything in the crib while resting. Blankets may be introduced after 13 months of age. Little Sprouts staff is trained in following all safe infant sleeping practices including frequent checks while sleeping, putting the child on their back to sleep, keeping items out of the crib and sleeping in approved areas such as a crib or cot.

Discipline Policy

We believe in positive reinforcement and redirection to promote good behavior. However, if a child consistently interferes with the safety and learning of others, we will work with the parents/guardians to create an action plan to address the behavior. In extreme cases, we reserve the right to dismiss a child from the program. Our teachers are trained to redirect, and model positive behavior. We do not tolerate physical punishment and time-outs/exclusion are prohibited.

Bullying Policy

Little Sprouts has a zero tolerance for bullying behavior. Students are expected to treat each other and Little Sprouts Staff with respect at all times.

Parent Notification Plan

Our first means of communication for updates regarding your child will be sent through the school's communication app. We will also notify parents/guardians of any changes in the program, such as schedule changes or policy updates.

We will notify parents/guardians in the event of an emergency or if their child becomes ill or hurt immediately by phone. If a minor incident occurs at the school, parents/guardians will receive an incident report detailing type and circumstances regarding the incident via **Brightwheel**

Incident Reports

An Incident Report will be completed for a child involved in an accident, resulting in an injury requiring medical attention. The confidentiality of all involved children will be maintained.

Transportation Policy

Transportation is not provided by Little Sprouts

Pick-Up & Drop-Off

It is important that Little Sprouts and our families partner together to create a consistent and predictable drop-off and pick routine for each child.

- A parent/guardian must physically check the child into the center each day by bringing them to their classroom, greeting the teacher to alert them of a new arrival.
- The parent/guardian will use the posted QR code to check children into the center via the Brightwheel.
- Parents/Guardians will re-enter the center for pick-up and check out the child from the teacher assigned to care at the time of pick-up.

Children will only be released to parents, legal guardians or persons listed on the *Child Information Record*. Families must provide verbal notification if your child will be pick-up by an authorized person who does not typically pick-up the child. Authorized persons will be asked to show identification.

In the highly unlikely event that an unconfirmed person is attempting pick-up, the child will not be released and parents/guardians will be notified.

Class Schedules

Here is a sample schedule for our Infant program.

Morning

- Arrival and greeting time with staff and parents
- Free play time with age-appropriate toys and activities
- Snuggle time and/or tummy time to promote bonding and development
- Diapering and feeding as needed

Mid-morning

- Outdoor stroller walk or indoor movement activity
- Sensory exploration activity such as a soft fabric bin or a water play mat
- Diapering and feeding as needed
- Story time or puppet show with simple visuals and sounds

Afternoon

- Lunch time with formula or pureed foods as appropriate
- Nap time with quiet music and comfortable bedding
- Wake up and diapering and/or feeding as needed
- Free play time with age-appropriate toys and activities, indoors or outdoors
as weather permits

Late afternoon

- Group activity such as a musical instrument play or sensory bin exploration
- Snack time with finger foods and/or formula as appropriate
- Departure time and goodbye with staff and parents

Note: This schedule is just a sample and can be adjusted to fit the needs of individual children and the program. The focus is on providing a nurturing and stimulating environment to promote healthy growth and development.

Here is a sample schedule for our Toddlers

Morning

- Arrival and greeting time with staff and peers
- Free play time with age-appropriate toys and activities
- Circle time with songs, stories, and simple games
- Art activity such as painting, drawing, or coloring
- Snack time with healthy options, such as fruit or crackers

Mid-morning

- Outdoor play time with toys and activities
- Group activity such as a sensory bin, water play, or block building
- Diapering and/or potty training as needed
- Story time or music time

Afternoon

- Lunch time with healthy options like sandwiches, veggies, and milk
- Quiet time with calming activities such as reading or soft music
- Nap time with soothing music and cozy blankets
- Wake up and snack time for those who nap
- Free play time indoors or outdoors as weather permits

Late afternoon:

- Group activity such as a movement game or dance party
- Circle time to review the day's activities and play with friends

- Departure time and goodbye

Note: This schedule is just a sample and can be adjusted to fit the needs of individual children and the program.

Here is a sample schedule for our Preschool programs.

Morning

- Arrival and greeting time with staff and peers
- Free play time with age-appropriate toys and activities
- Circle time with songs, stories, and discussion of the day's activities
- Art activity such as painting, drawing, or collage
- Snack time with healthy options like fruit, crackers, and cheese

Mid-morning

- Outdoor play time with toys and activities
- Group STEAM activity
- Literacy and language development activity
- Bathroom break as needed

Afternoon

- Lunch time with healthy options like sandwiches, veggies, and milk
- Nap time with soothing music and cozy blankets, or quiet time activities
- Wake up and snack time for those who nap
- Free play time indoors or outdoors as weather permits

Late Afternoon

- Group activity such as music and movement
- Circle time to review the day's activities and play with friends
- Departure time and goodbye

Note: This schedule is just a sample and can be adjusted to fit the needs of individual children and the program.

Notice of Licensing Notebook

Little Sprouts does not keep a physical licensing notebook, but the internet is available onsite for families to review reports online. Reports from at least the last three years are available at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Center Policies and Procedures

Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Bureau of
Community and Health Systems

Child(ren)'s Name(s): Center: Little Sprouts

I acknowledge that Little Sprouts Family Handbook has outlined the policies and procedures of the centers and my role as the parent/guardian of a child enrolled in care. I understand that Little Sprouts reserves the right to amend any of the policies and procedures of the Family Handbook at any time.

A written information packet has been provided at the time of enrollment. The packet included the following information:

Admission & Withdrawal Policy	Food Service Policy
Schedule of Operations	Discipline Policy
Fee Policy	Typical Daily Routines
Program Philosophy	Family Notification Plan
Typical Daily Routine	Exclusion policy for Children's Illnesses
Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect	Notification of Licensing Handbook

I certify that I have read and understand all of the above items.

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

Permission for Non-Prescription Topical Ointment Application Michigan Department
of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs
Bureau of Community and Health Systems

Child(ren)'s Name(s): Center: Little Sprouts

I give permission for the staff of Little Sprouts to apply to the following over the counter
topical products:

- Soap
- Lotion (as needed)
- Diaper Rash Cream
- Sunscreen
- Antibiotic Ointment
- Aquaphor // Vaseline (as needed)

Families are asked to provide all of the above for their child except Soap and Antibiotic
Ointment. I certify that I have read and understand all of the above items.

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

Permission to Administer Medical Treatment

Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs

Bureau of Community and Health Systems

Child(ren)'s Name(s): Center: Little Sprouts

I give permission to Little Sprouts permission to perform and administer medical treatment to my child(ren). In case of an emergency, I give permission to have my child(ren) to be treated at an emergency facility.

I give permission for my child to be taken off the premises in the event of an emergency.

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

In the event of an emergency, after 911 is notified the parents/guardians and emergency caregivers will be called.

Permission to Photograph/Video & Release

Child(ren)'s Name(s): Center: Little Sprouts

I understand that my children may be photographed at Little Sprouts & Little Sprouts during regular school hours and activities. I understand that these photographs may be used in arts & crafts and for children. They may also be used for the purpose of promoting and marketing Little Sprouts and may be used on but not limited to the website, Facebook, Instagram, print advertising, Brightwheel classroom profile, classroom decor and artwork.

_____ I give permission for Little Sprouts to photograph and release photos of my child(ren).

_____ I do not give permission for Little Sprouts to photograph and release photos of my child(ren). I understand that this will result in no photographs or videos provided on the Brightwheel app.

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

Tuition Agreement

Little Sprouts and the undersigned Parents/Guardians (“Guardians”), by entering into this tuition agreement to enroll their child listed below (“Student”) for the 2024-2025 school year, executed by the Guardians on the signed date below, agree as follows:

- 1. Consent:** This agreement is entered into with mutual consent of Guardians and Little Sprouts & Little Sprouts.
- 2. Enrollment deposit:** The School requires a non-refundable enrollment deposit (“Deposit”) to reserve a spot for the student in the 2023-2024 school year. The Deposit is credited towards payment of the first month’s tuition.
- 3. Tuition and charges:** Guardians agree to pay the full amount for tuition and late fees. Tuition is billed on the first of every month. Tuition is based on room and schedule.
- 4. Late fees:** Guardians understand and agree that a **\$75.00** fee when their payment is late.
- 5. Additional fees:** Guardians agree that if they choose to pay via credit card they are required to pay the processing fee of 3%. There is no fee for the ACH payment option.
- 6. Payment obligation:** Guardians have an individual and joint obligation to pay all tuition and late fees under this agreement. Guardians who fail to pay any amount when due pursuant to the terms of this Agreement, may, at the School’s

sole discretion, result in the suspension or dismissal of the Student from the School. Guardians shall pay any costs and attorney's fees the School incurs in collection of Parents' outstanding balance. Payment is due regardless of attendance. Guardians are responsible for payment of all school days in order to hold their child's place in the program.

7. Early Withdrawal: It is the School's right to end the child care arrangement by providing the Guardians with a two-week written notice. Guardians must continue to pay tuition costs during the termination period. Guardians must provide a thirty (30) days signed WRITTEN NOTICE to the Center Director to withdraw the Student from Little Sprouts. After the notice period, families will no longer be responsible for tuition payments

8. Policies and Procedures: Guardians understand they are required to review and agree to the policies and procedures determined by the "School" prior the Student(s) start date.

This tuition agreement is individualized. This agreement must be renewed annually.

Child(ren)'s Name(s): Center: Little Sprouts

Days of the Week: Mon. // Tues. // Wed. // Thur. // Fri

Monthly Rate:

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date