

*Little Acorn Learning*  
*Nature Nursery School*  
*Parent Handbook*  
*Updated 8/3/09*



*Mighty Oaks from Little Acorns Grow*

*Brookfield, CT 06804*

*203-740-2611*

*Eileen Straiton, Owner/Operator*

*First Aid & CPR Certified*

*State Licensed Provider*

Little Acorn Learning Nature Nursery School Program is a gentle transition from home to school. Emphasis is placed on practical life skills such as dressing, brushing hair, cooking, cleaning, washing, baking, crafting and gardening. A respect and love for nature is fostered by daily nature walks, creating a seasonal nature table, gardening and pet care.

Little Acorn Learning also provides after school care for older children. The Buses for Brookfield Public School System and Saint Joseph's School pick up and drop off at the end of our driveway with the exception of Whisconier Middle School which is dropped off at the end of our road.

Children enjoy circle time, fingerplays, puppet shows, watercolor painting, beeswax modeling, coloring, nature walks, outdoor play, healthy meals (organic when possible) and creative free play.

### **Hours of Operation**

\*\*Please contact us for availability on additional hours. We work hard to be flexible and open to the needs of our clients.

We have a two day minimum for enrollment.  
You may choose two full days or two half days.

**2009-2010**  
**Nature Nursery School & Summer Program**  
Monday - Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
(half day option available)

## **Philosophy & Goals**

Little Acorn Learning provides a creative, natural and explorative approach to childcare. We believe that Play is the true “work” of a child. Children are provided with plenty of opportunity for imaginative free play and creativity.

We believe that young children learn primarily through imitation. We work to ensure that the children in our care are surrounded by people, actions and activities that are worthy of being imitated.

We believe that children thrive when provided with a healthy flow and rhythm to their day. Little Acorn Learning has established times for various activities that children can depend on.

## **Religious Orientation**

Little Acorn Learning strives to create an atmosphere where all religions are valued and belief is a matter of personal choice. While our program is not religiously oriented, we do honor a Creator by saying or singing grace at meals and in verse and songs. We celebrate many seasons and festivals, with an emphasis on Christian saints and holidays. We encourage you to share your traditions and customs with us so we can incorporate them into our program for your child.

## **Environment:**

Little Acorn Learning aims to create a natural, nurturing, home-like environment that stimulates children’s bodies, spirits and souls. Most play materials are kept simple and usually made of all-natural materials such as wool, wood, cotton, silk, etc.

## **Media/TV Policy**

Little Acorn Learning does not use television, video games, computers or hand held games during daycare hours. We occasionally enjoy books on tape or child-appropriate music. If you have special restrictions regarding recorded media with your children, please let us know and we will be happy to accommodate your requests.

## Holiday Closings

Little Acorn Learning follows the Brookfield Public School Calendar with regard to closings. Parents **MUST** have back-up care in case of an emergency and to cover all holiday closings and inclement weather closings. We will give you a copy of the school calendar upon enrollment in our program. **Please remember we are closed on Tuesdays.** Parents are responsible for payment in full during all scheduled school year closings as well as snow days, delayed openings and early dismissals.

### 2009-2010 School Year Closings:

#### August 2009

31st – First Day of Nursery School, Summer Program Over

#### September

7<sup>th</sup> (Monday) - Labor Day

28<sup>th</sup> (Monday) – Yom Kippur

#### October

12<sup>th</sup> (Monday) - Columbus Day

#### November

3<sup>rd</sup> (Tuesday) – Closed Anyway - Election Day

11<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) - Veteran's Day

26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> (Thursday & Friday) - Thanksgiving Recess

#### December

23<sup>rd</sup> - Half Day – Little Acorn Learning will Close at 1 p.m.

24<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> – Holiday Recess

#### January

1<sup>st</sup> (Friday) - New Year's Day

18<sup>th</sup> (Monday) - Martin Luther King Day

#### February

11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> (Thursday, Friday & Monday) - President's Weekend

#### April

2<sup>nd</sup> (Friday) – Good Friday

19<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> Spring Recess

#### May

31<sup>st</sup> (Monday) - Memorial Day

#### June

June 18<sup>th</sup> is the Last Day of Nursery School

Parents are responsible for payment in full during all daycare closings EXCEPT when the provider has closed due to illness, vacation or personal time.

## **Snow Delays, Closings and Early Dismissals**

Little Acorn Learning follows the Brookfield Public School closings, delayed openings and early dismissals with regard to inclement weather. Please check your local news or radio station to find out what time to arrive at Little Acorn on snow days.

## **Diapering and Supplies**

Parents are responsible for supplying their children with diapers and wipes. Whenever possible, we will notify you when your supplies are running low. However, parents are encouraged to check their child's cubby to make sure they have enough diapers for the week. We are pleased to accommodate cloth diapering. Parents are responsible for washing their cloth diapering materials and providing clean diapers each day.

## **Pets**

We have a dog named Stoli and two cats, Tuxi and Meeko. They are all friendly and lovable creatures. They have been certified as healthy by a veterinarian and are current on all immunizations and rabies vaccinations.

## **Late Pick-Up Procedures**

Children who are picked up late will be charged \$5.00 for every 15 minutes a parent is late unless otherwise arranged with Little Acorn Learning.

## **Naps/Quiet Time**

All children under the age of five are required to have rest time if they attend our full day program. Your child will be provided a safe, warm, quiet place to rest daily. Children will sleep on a mat, sleeping bag or in a portacrib as appropriate.

Children who wake early and older children will be asked to engage in quiet activities during this time.

## **Food & Nutrition Program**

Little Acorn Learning believes that the type of food a child eats can have a direct effect on his or her behavior, health, and ability to learn.

We offer children nutritious snacks and unlimited water each day at no additional cost. These foods will include fresh fruits, fresh/raw vegetables, whole wheat breads, organic meats, eggs and milk/soy/rice milk, etc.

Packaged foods and items enhanced with artificial flavors and colorings that contain high concentrates of sugar will be avoided. Children will be offered water, organic milk or rice/soy milk with meals. Fruit Juices will be offered occasionally.

Whenever possible, foods will be organic and homemade. Children are often asked to help in the preparation and cleaning up of snack and meals. Children will wipe their eating area and help rinse their plates and utensils after meal time (if capable).

We are more than happy to accommodate any special food restrictions or choices you may have for your child – please let us know ahead of time. Keep in mind that we do allow parents to bring in treats (cupcakes, cookies, etc.) on special occasions.

Parents are responsible for providing their child with a healthy lunch and drink each day. Both full day and part day children will enjoy lunch time in our program. We have a refrigerator in our childcare space for your convenience.

## **Vacation, Personal and Sick Days**

Little Acorn Learning can take up to two weeks unpaid vacation per year. Vacation time will be scheduled ahead of time and clients will be given advanced notice. Parents are required to pay tuition in full when their child is not in the program due to sickness, vacation or personal time. Please provide us with as much notice as possible when the absence is planned. Paid holidays are indicated in the beginning of this handbook. In the rare event that we must close our program due to illness or emergency, parents will not be charged for that day. It is the parents responsibility to find back-up care during this time.

## **Tuition & Payment Procedures**

Upon registration, parents are required to make a two week non-refundable deposit. This deposit is calculated according to the days and hours your child will attend Little Acorn Learning. This deposit is applied to the child's last two weeks at Little Acorn Learning in the event of termination or withdrawal.

All forms and emergency information must be completed before your child attends Little Acorn Learning. Each child must have an updated physical annually and the appropriate health forms provided to Little Acorn Learning. No child may be enrolled in daycare unless all immunizations are up to date or the appropriate waiver is provided by you or your child's pediatrician.

Any bounced checks or missed payments will be charged a 20% late fee on the amount due and your child will not be permitted to attend the program until the balance is paid.

## **Termination of Service**

Parents may terminate service by giving two weeks notice in writing. Earlier notice, if possible, would be appreciated. Parents will leave a two week non-refundable deposit upon registration for childcare service. This tuition deposit will be applied to the child's last two weeks at Little Acorn Learning.

Little Acorn Learning reserves the right to reevaluate any child's continued participation in our programs. Little Acorn Learning may request early withdrawal of any child who has needs which cannot be met by the provider or which may be detrimental to the program they are attending. Unless the child is in immediate danger to himself or others, two weeks notice will be given should Little Acorn Learning request the withdrawal of the child.

## **Sick Policy**

Under no circumstances will a sick child be allowed to attend Little Acorn Learning. It is recommended that parents arrange for back-up childcare in the event that Little Acorn Learning is closed due to the provider's illness or the illness of the provider's children. Parents will be notified as soon as possible in the event that the daycare provider is ill.

**PLEASE do not bring your child if they have the following symptoms or illnesses within the last 24 hours – NOTE \*Your child must be SYMPTOM-FREE for 24 hours:**

Fever

Vomiting

Diarrhea

Green Discharge from Nose (Must be on Antibiotic for 24 hours before attending)

Conjunctivitis or Pink Eye

Flu (Must be symptom free for 48 HOURS)

Unusual rash

Severe cough

Severe cold

Head Lice

Contagious illness of any sort which results in child being too ill to participate in daily activities and which can jeopardize the health and well-being of our other children.

It is extremely important that Little Acorn Learning is completely aware of your child's health to avoid putting your child or other children at risk. If a child shows symptoms of illness while in care, the child will be removed from the group and the parent or authorized adult will be notified to pick up the child within one hour.

## Items to Bring to Little Acorn Learning

**\*\*Important – We go outside in all but the most extreme weather, it is imperative that you dress your child accordingly. If the day is calling for rain, please pack rain boots, raincoat and an extra set of clothing/socks and extra clothes – do expect their clothes to be muddy when they are returned to you (don't dress your best – we like to have fun!) If it is snowy, please pack boots, warm clothing, mittens/gloves, extra socks and a change of clothes as well – and expect a wet set of clothes to come home as well!**

Complete change of clothes, weather appropriate

Diapers or Pull-ups or extra underwear

Wipes Each Week – Please Check to Keep In-Stock

Pillow, Blanket and Sheet for Nap Time if here for full day

Swim Suit and Towel during the summer (we do not use the pool but do use the hose, sprinkler and water table often)

Suntan lotion during the summer

Boots, Hat, Gloves, Snow pants and Socks

Raingear, Umbrella, Rain boots, Etc.

Formula, Milk or Drinks for each day

Indoor Soft Shoes/Slippers

Warm Cap for Infants Daily Use

Plate and Mug with a set of utensils for daily use, preferably not plastic (we will wash here)

All items must be labeled in permanent marker. Non-perishable items will be kept in your child's cubby. Perishable items will be refrigerated.

**Agreement**

**I have read and fully understand this Parent Handbook. I now agree to enter into this agreement with Eileen Straiton of Little Acorn Learning.**

**I understand that the contents of this contract may be changed at anytime by the provider by giving two weeks written notice to me. Anytime a change is made, I will be given a new contract.**

**I have received an exact copy of this Parent Handbook for my own records.**

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Provider Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Names of Children Attending:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program and Hours of Care:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Rate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Deposit Amount and Date Received:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Little Acorn Learning  
Childcare Rate Chart  
2009-2010**

**Tuition Schedule**

Half Day Program 8:30-12:45 \$42/Day

Full Day Program 8:30-4:30 \$60/Day

Healthy Snacks Included in Above Price. Please bring your own healthy lunch each day to Little Acorn Learning.

Payments are to be paid on the Friday prior to the upcoming week and placed in the Tuition Box before leaving your child at Little Acorn Learning. Please talk to us if you require different payment options.