



1200 W. Spring Valley Rd. Richardson, TX 75080 (972) 231-6998
14045 Waterfall Way Dallas, TX 75240 (972) 437-3880
Admin@LittleScholarsDFW.com

PARENT HANDBOOK

MISSION

Our mission at Little Scholars Academy is to take children on an educational journey to expand their imagination and introduce them to new learning experiences while further enhancing each child's cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and fine and gross motor developmental skills.

- We are dedicated to giving children a love of learning in a safe and secure environment.
- Our school is a safe, secure, clean and happy environment for children to grow and learn.
- We will make the transition from home to school a positive experience.
- Each child is treated as a unique individual. They are given individual attention within a group allowing them to progress according to their own needs and rate of development.
- Communication with parents is the key. It is open, honest and respectful, encouraging involvement and support. Parents are informed daily and/or weekly of their child's progress and development.
- We strive to provide the best in childcare and development. We are committed to Little Scholars Academy standards of excellence and are continually seeking to improve.
- Our number one priority is providing every child with a loving and caring atmosphere conducive to the development of self-esteem, confidence, creativity and a love of learning.

PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy at Little Scholars Academy is to incorporate playing as part of learning. Learning is integrated into the daily routine and not separated from playing. Each child will be viewed as a unique individual and their learning experience will be planned to meet their individual needs. We are committed to providing a warm, loving, and enriching environment for each child entrusted in our care. The children at Little Scholars Academy are an important part of our family and will be cared for with respect and individual attention.

GOALS

Our goal at Little Scholars Academy is to provide a developmentally appropriate and safe environment for infants, preschool, and school aged children. We strive to provide the highest level of educational learning, through our hands-on approach. Each child will receive quality instructions and guidance while nurturing their individual talents. Learning happens best when we align our goal and methods with the parents. Parent/family involvement represents one of the most important factors in successful childhood development. In addition, Little Scholars Academy pledges to cater nutritional foods which promote healthy eating habits.

ADMISSION PROCEDURE

Before your child can be placed in our care, the following documents must be completed and returned to our office:

1. Admission Information forms
2. Registration Fee \$75
3. Physician Statement
4. Immunization Record
5. Food Program Application
6. Infant Feeding (if applicable)

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

At Little Scholars Academy, we do not discriminate against any child or family based on race, color, religions, creed, civil union status, national origin, ancestry, sex orientation, sex, age, and/or disability.

DISABILITY POLICY (INCLUSIVE SERVICES)

We act in compliance with The Americans with Disabilities Act and other applicable federal, state or local laws pertaining to the provision of services to children with disabilities. We will make reasonable accommodations to afford children with disabilities full/equal enjoyment to our program using what tools we have available. We will make individual assessments and trials to determine if we can meet each child's need in our group childcare setting.

Childcare center's responsibilities when planning activities for a child in care with special care needs. These responsibilities include:

- Providing a child with special care needs the accommodations recommended by a health-care professional or a qualified professional affiliated with the local school district or early intervention program;
- Utilizing as recommended any adaptive equipment provided to the childcare center for a child's use;
- Ensuring a child who receives early intervention services or special education services can receive those services from a qualified service provider at the operation, with parental request and approval;
- Ensuring that activities integrate children with and without special care needs; and
- Ensuring that caregivers adapt equipment and procedures and vary methods as necessary to care for a child with special needs in a natural environment.

HOURS OF SERVICE

Monday – Friday 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM (unless otherwise noted)

Saturday – Sunday CLOSED

HOLIDAYS

Little Scholars Academy observes the following holidays (refer to the Holiday Schedule for exceptions to the list):

- New Year's Eve (this day may float on some years) and New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and Friday following
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, Little Scholars Academy will follow Richardson ISD's closure policy. Parents should monitor RISD homepage at www.risd.org or media outlets, email, and/or text message regarding school closing during this kind of weather.

ENROLLMENT FEES AND POLICIES

TUITION PAYMENTS, REGISTRATION FEES, AND VACATION

A registration fee of \$75 is due upon enrollment and annually thereafter to re-enroll for the upcoming school year. Tuition is due every Monday. There is no credit for scheduled school closings and holidays, children's illness, or school closings due to inclement weather and acts of God. Example: Child is not present for 2 weeks during Christmas break, tuition is still due for the 2 weeks. Tuition does not include fees for field trips and/or extracurricular activities.

If your child has been attending Little Scholars Academy for at least ONE year, then you are eligible to receive ONE week (FIVE consecutive days) of vacation without charge and your spot will be reserved. Parents must request an absent/vacation credit in writing prior to the absence

If you unenroll, you must pay \$75 to re-enroll each child AND wait 4 weeks before reenrollment. After the 4 weeks absence, you are considered a new customer.

FEE STRUCTURE & PAYMENT PLAN

Tuition is due every Monday. Regular tuition is still due even if we are closed due to Holidays or inclement weather. If a Holiday we observe falls on a Monday, tuition may be paid on Tuesday. Once enrolled, tuition is due every week,

regardless of sickness or vacation. (Example: Child is not present for 2 weeks during Christmas break, tuition is still due for the 2 weeks.)

LATE PAYMENT

Tuition is late if not paid by Tuesday. The late fee of \$5 per day will be assessed. Late Pick-up is \$1 per minute (with a grace period of 5 minutes). Please call if you foresee being late.

ATTENDANCE AND ENROLLMENT

If your child will be absent due to vacation or illness, please notify the school as soon as possible. If your child is enrolled in our after-school program, you must notify us by **1:30 pm**, so we can properly inform our bus driver that your child will not need to be picked up. A \$5.00 charge will be assessed if you forget to cancel after-school pick-up. After three failures to notify us, the charge will double to \$10.00 per incident.

REFUND INFORMATION

If you have paid a \$75 registration fee and your child does not enroll, you will be refunded \$50.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

Please walk your child into the Center; do not leave your child at the front door enter on their own. It only takes a moment to ensure their safety. Parents must sign your children in and out upon arrival and dismissal. While dropping off your children, please make sure the teacher has greeted the child to verify attendance. As well, when you pick up, please be sure to speak to your child's teacher so they may give you valuable information about your child's day.

To ensure all enrolled children benefit from the curriculum and activities planned, non-school age children must arrive by **9:30AM**, unless prior arrangements were made. School age children must arrive by **9:30AM** if school is out of session and after **2:50pm** during the standard school year. If your child is going to be late, you must call to notify the Center. For all enrolled School Age children, the Center must be notified in advance for any absences from bus pick up.

DRIVEWAY USE

If you plan to be in the building for an extended period of time and during **high traffic** times for drop off (7:45AM to 8:30AM), and pick up (5:00PM to 6:30PM), please park your vehicle in the designated parking spaces. The carport is for quick drop off's and pick up's.

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Children are to arrive clean and fed (unless arriving just before meal time). We always try to send your child home with a clean diaper and would appreciate the same consideration when you drop off. It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when dropping off. Please make your drop off brief. The longer you prolong the departure, the harder it gets. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is all that is needed. From our experience, children are generally quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as parents are gone.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

LSA is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and productive environment for all persons occupying our schools. Considering the significant risk posed by vehicle exhaust emissions, especially to children, we ask that vehicles in our parking lot avoid idling for any longer than 5 minutes. Vehicle exhaust is linked to increases in asthma, allergies, and heart and lung disease. Children are especially at risk because their lungs are still developing, and they inhale more air per pound of body weight than adults. When entering and exiting school property parents should drive slowly and avoid distractions as young children are present while parents are loading and unloading children from their vehicles. LSA cannot be held liable for damages that occur in our parking lot. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that their vehicle is secure before entering the building and that no valuable property such as purses or brief cases are left in plain sight. Please understand that it is your personal responsibility to be proactive with your vehicle and personal belongings. Our cameras will only monitor certain areas of the parking lot and could act as a deterrent to criminal activity. Our primary focus remains with your children and their safety within our school.

WELLNESS POLICY

Little Scholars Academy will do all we can to promote a healthy environment for your children. Our teachers make sure children wash their hands before and after meals, after art/craft projects, after toileting and diapering, after coming in from outside, and after wiping their nose. Our teachers also wash their hands before serving meals and

snacks, wear latex gloves while diapering or assisting a child with toileting, and when coming into contact with any bodily fluids. We also disinfect toys on a daily basis.

HEALTH CHECKS

Our teachers will do a visual check of the children upon arrival each morning. If a staff member notices anything unusual, they are required to point this out to the parent(s). If your child has an accident overnight, please notify staff members when dropping off so that we can assist in watching the child for side effects.

ILLNESSES / COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Little Scholars Academy observes the standards set by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services for ill children. Children who are ill cannot be appropriately cared for in a childcare setting. Exclusion is merited whenever care exceeds the capability of the teachers or when the child cannot participate in all activities. Parents will be contacted to pick up their child and must pick up an ill child within 1 hour of notification by phone. Temporary care will be given to the child within the means of the facility until parent arrives.

With your cooperation in keeping a child home when he/she is showing symptoms of illness will help cut down on the spread of illness throughout the school. By maintaining a healthy environment and reasonable health policies, all of our children will benefit.

Please do not bring your child to school with a fever or any other contagious illnesses. Your child should be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school. Children must present a doctor’s note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. Little Scholars Academy reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the Center Director or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

The State of Texas requires the children be sent home or kept out of school if they have been diagnosed with a communicable illness or if they are exhibiting the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Rash with fever
- Wheezing
- Head lice
- Any other signs of possible illness

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the Director. This enables our staff to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with faculty on a “need to know” basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Director, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. Little Scholars Academy will take all measures necessary to protect your child’s confidentiality.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENERING

The Vision and Hearing Screening Program, Texas Health and Safety Code requires that all children enrolled for the first time in any public, private, parochial, or denominational school or in a Department of Health and Human Services licensed child-care center and licensed child care home in Texas, or who meet certain grade criteria (specified below), must be screened or have a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems. We will have outside agencies conduct hearing and vision screenings at our school and the cost to perform this service will be billed directly to the parent by the vendor. Parents may also bring in a screening proof from their local pediatrician.

WHO MUST BE SCREENED	WHEN SCREENING MUST BE DONE
4-years-old by September 1st Kindergartners Any other first-time entrants (4 years* through 12th grade)	Within 120 days of admission

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Revised 1/22/2024

Little Scholars Academy maintains a strict policy regarding the individuals to whom we will release a child. Our normal procedure is to release the child only to his/her parents, or someone else the parents designate on the **Authorized Pick Up and Emergency Contact Form**. In the event that a parent is unable to pick up their child, they may authorize another legal adult to pick up. Children will not be released to a minor. A verbal notice is fine on that day, if this person is on the list of people who are authorized to pick up your child. If the person is NOT on that list, we MUST have written permission to release your child. Authorized adult must bring a picture ID. Children will not be released to adults without a picture ID. If you have questions or concerns, please schedule a time to meet with the Director of the facility.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of LSA are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of LSA are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behaviors, or conditions prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. LSA takes this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children. As mandated reporters, the employees of LSA cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith." Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/I_Am/parents.asp or <http://www.getparentingtips.com>.

The statewide Abuse & Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400, if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect

ALLERGIES & MEDICATION

ALLERGIES

Allergies of any kind must be documented in writing and will be communicated to all staff as well as the cook. In addition to the type of allergy the student has, we also must know the type of reaction that it may cause, i.e. rash, hives, swelling, and anaphylaxis. Once the allergy and reaction have been established, the parent, director, and teacher will implement a plan of action in case of emergency, i.e. Epi Pen.

- Allergies need to be posted above the infant's cubby as well as on the refrigerator.
- Allergies for preschoolers and above must be posted in the student's classroom.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

We do not dispense any over the counter medication. If a child is sick, the director will inform the parent or emergency contact person if it is necessary for the child to be picked up. Refer to the policy listed above regarding picking up ill children.

BPA AVOIDANCE

BPA stands for bisphenol A, an industrial chemical used in the manufacturing of certain polycarbonate plastics and epoxy resins. BPA can cause a number of negative health effects and should be avoided when used in contact

with food and drinks. BPA may be used in sippy cups, toys, canned foods, etc. so extra vigilance is required to monitor for BPA in the facility.

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

As a professional organization you can be assured that all information regarding your family's needs, file contents and handling, medical information and conversations will be handled with the appropriate confidentiality. Information will be shared only with those persons requiring the knowledge to better serve your family.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Below is the Emergency Preparedness Plan designed for Little Scholars Academy. Parents are encouraged to read this information carefully. In the event a parent is present in the building during an emergency, Little Scholars Academy will ask parents to participate accordingly. During any emergency the best course of action is to BREATHE AND STAY CALM. Each staff will carry emergency contact information and class attendance records. Parents will be contacted by phone and given the pick up location.

In all situations in this Emergency Preparedness Plan, the Director or designated person in charge will notify Child Care Licensing and/or the Health Department and/or call 911 as each situation dictates.

FIRE / EMERGENCY DRILLS

Little Scholars Academy conducts monthly fire and emergency/evacuation drills. Parents, staff and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans. If the school is in the midst of a fire/emergency drill, parents will be required to wait until the drill is completed and the staff and children are returned to the building to sign their child out of the program. If the school is having a real fire/emergency situation, parents will be asked to wait until the director or designee has accounted for all staff and children and gives the staff permission to release children. Once again, it is important for parents and staff to work together, remain calm, and cooperate with the fire/emergency personnel and center administration during these important and critical situations.

PANDEMIC

In the event of a pandemic, Little Scholars Academy will, at a minimum, follow the rules set forth by Local County and State regulations. Additionally, we will in certain circumstances, add additional safety precautions to maximize the safety for all individuals in our facility. Please watch for our emails, social media and postings at the front for additional safety precautions.

Additional Safety Measures

For everyone's safety, we ask that you please wear face masks anytime you are in the facility. Also, if you are going out of state, please either keep your child home and away from the center for 14 days from the day you return or provide a negative covid test result completed after your return to the state. Our staff members also fall under the same rules, ensuring the safety and well-being of all our families. Please abide by the guidelines to help keep all our children, parents and staff healthy and safe.

Basic hygiene, social distancing, staying home, masks, and mindfulness are all steps we can take to help combat the virus around us. Lastly, honesty during this time plays a vital role. If you feel sick or your child has any other COVID-19 type of symptoms, please stay at home.

TECHNOLOGY USAGE

Children are not to use personal electronic devices such as cell phones, MP3 players, smart watches or video games in the classrooms.



**EMERGENCY/DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PARENT INFORMATION
FORM FOR REUNIFICATION**

Name of Provider/Program	Little Scholars Academy
Program Address	1200 W Spring Valley Rd, Richardson, TX 75080
Emergency/Disaster contact at the childcare program	Elaine Webb
Phone Number of emergency/disaster contact	(972) 231-6998
Alternate emergency/disaster contact phone Number	(972) 437-3880
In the event the facility must be evacuated because of an emergency/disaster, the staff and children will leave the building and gather in the immediate area at	Carolyne Bukhair 13900 Esperanza Rd Dallas, TX 75240 (469) 593-4900
In the event the facility must be evacuated because of an emergency/disaster in the immediate area, the children and staff will be transported by <u>VANS</u> to	Little Scholars Academy at 14045 Waterfall Way Dallas, TX 75240
Address, Phone Number, and Contact person at the relocation site is	14045 Waterfall Way, Dallas, TX 75240 (972) 437-3880 Jennifer Tamayo Vickie Vicente
Address, Phone Number, and Contact person of the alternate relocation site (#2) if the first relocation is not accessible is	Dobie Pre-Kindergarten School 14040 Rolling Hills Ln, Dallas, TX 75240 (469) 593-4100
If necessary, children will be transported to this health care facility	Medical City Hospital
Address, Phone Number, and position title of contact at health care facility	7777 Forest Lane Dallas, TX 75230 (972) 566-7000

*Please see your childcare provider if you would like to review the complete emergency/disaster preparedness plan.



EMERGENCY/DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PARENT INFORMATION FORM FOR REUNIFICATION

Name of Provider/Program	Little Scholars Academy
Program Address	14045 Waterfall Way Dallas, TX 75240
Emergency/Disaster contact at the childcare program	Jennifer Tamayo
Phone Number of emergency/disaster contact	(972) 437-3880
Alternate emergency/disaster contact phone Number	(972) 231-6998
In the event the facility must be evacuated because of an emergency/disaster, the staff and children will leave the building and gather in the immediate area at	Cottonwood Animal Hospital (Next Door) 14055 Waterfall Way Dallas, TX 75240 (469) 330-0357
In the event the facility must be evacuated because of an emergency/disaster in the immediate area, the children and staff will be transported by <u>VANS</u> to	Little Scholars Academy at 1200 W Spring Valley Rd Richardson, TX 75080
Address, Phone Number, and Contact person at the relocation site is	Little Scholars Academy 1200 W Spring Valley Rd, Richardson, TX 75080 (972) 231-6998 Elaine Webb Syble Scales
Address, Phone Number, and Contact person of the alternate relocation site (#2) if the first relocation is not accessible is	Dobie Elementary School 14040 Rolling Hills Ln, Dallas, TX 75240 (469) 593-4100
If necessary, children will be transported to this health care facility	Medical City Hospital
Address, Phone Number, and position title of contact at health care facility	7777 Forest Lane Dallas, TX 75230 (972) 566-7000

*Please see your childcare provider if you would like to review the complete emergency/disaster preparedness plan.

CURRICULUM

Little Scholars Academy believes that essential readiness skills are nurtured through play. Children involved in hands-on experiences, real-life adventures, and assisted discovery as they explore concepts through play. The following curriculums provide developmentally and age-appropriate activities and materials for exciting and wonder-filled environments.

Infants & Toddlers – *Frog Street Early Learners and Leaps & Bounds*

Based on the research about how infants learn and develop, this curriculum is packed with strategies and activities to help provide the very best in early childcare in a nurturing environment. The skills include:

- Developing Cognitive Skills
- Communication and Language Skills
- Literacy Development
- Gross and Fine Motor Skills
- Music and Movement
- Enhancing Sensory Development
- Exploring the Natural World
- Encouraging Social Skills

Preschool – *Language Enrichment Activities Program LEAP – Learning by Leaps and Bounds* by Nell Carvell (funded by Texas Instruments Foundation and supported by Southern Methodist University). *Learning by Leaps and Bounds* focuses heavily on the following:

- Language with Stories – Listening and Literature
- Language with Words – Vocabulary and Expression
- Language with Sounds – Phonological Awareness
- Language with Letters – Alphabet Knowledge
- Language with Ideas – Concept Development and Linguistic Skills
- Language with Math & Science – Numeracy and Pre-Math Development
- Language with Motor Skills – Fine Motor Skills Development

After School Care and Holiday Care – Our program goes beyond homework assistant. We take into consideration the special needs of this active group. Whether they want to work on homework, do creative art project or just relax, we assist the school-age in creating a fun environment where School Age students want to be. We also offer transportation for kids from their local public school to our facility.

Summer Camp - We provide ample of fun and engaging learning opportunities through our planned, theme-based curriculum, age appropriate field trips, indoor and outdoor enrichment activities including science experiment, arts & crafts, and sports that promote teamwork, collaboration, and exploration. Students are expected to work independently and in teams to develop a sense of responsibility. A weekly lesson plan is compiled of the following concepts:

- Creative Arts
- Healthy Living
- Guidance
- Dramatic Play
- Relationships
- Math Activities, Language Arts
- Creating Effective Environments
- Clubs and Enrichment
- Characteristics
- Field Trips

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

At Little Scholars Academy, we believe the best way to prepare children to live successfully and productively, is to help them develop self-control, self-esteem, self-direction, and resolve conflicts, and become increasingly responsible for their actions and behaviors. Adults must model desirable behavior in order for children to learn to understand, acknowledge, and cope with their feelings. We accomplish this through the use of positive guidance techniques that offer developmentally appropriate choices and set clear and consistent rules and consequences. We know children must be involved with each other, with teachers, and with materials and equipment to learn how to work and play. Sometimes children may be separated from the group for short periods when they need a quiet place away from the overwhelming emotions of peers and play. At Little Scholars Academy, this cooling-off period, often called “Time Out”, is only used judiciously and as a last resort for serious behavior problems. We firmly believe children should never be made to feel humiliated or rejected. Physical, verbal, or emotional punishment or abuse is never allowed. If we have concerns about a child’s behavior, we will inform his/her parents as soon as possible and collaborate on

a plan of action for positive change. Little Scholars Academy will never use Corporal Punishment or negative discipline that may hurt or humiliate a child.

PARENT'S ROLE AND INFLUENCE

For many children, the most important role models are their parents and caregivers. Children look up to their role models to help shape how they behave in school, relationships or when making difficult decisions. Encourage your child to become involved in activities that reflect your values.

At Little Scholars Academy, we value your opinion. You have an opportunity to influence and impact the center to enhance the quality of your child's experience. We accomplish this by requesting our parents to complete surveys throughout the year. In order to have the biggest impact, you must complete and return the surveys.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Parents are welcome in the Center at any time, in any area of our school to observe their child. Little Scholars Academy is privately owned and operated facility. We have the right to refuse service at any time to anyone.

CELL PHONE USAGE

Proper parent communication is imperative when working with young children. It is difficult to communicate when cell phones are in use. Effective December 1, 2010, the Texas Department of Health and Human Services passed new regulations prohibiting the personal use of cell phones in classrooms. Please end all calls prior to entering the building so that our teachers and directors can properly communicate with you.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Classroom assignments are based on each individual child's chronological age, developmental age, emotional age, and physical age. LSA typically will transition children to new classrooms twice a year, however from time to time we may request a transition sooner based on the individual child's needs.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. There are many ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at LSA. Parents may volunteer to attend field trips, read in the classroom, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. We want you to feel confident that your child is getting the best care. Parent teacher conferences may be requested and be scheduled at your convenience. If you have any questions about the policies and procedures of the center, please schedule a time to meet with the classroom teacher and/or the Director of the facility.

Any person who volunteers are required to pay for and secure all criminal background checks, as required by our licensing regulations. Any person, including parents, with felony convictions, sex offender convictions and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom, or on field trips.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

For children 2 years old and under you will receive a daily report which includes the following information: Diaper Changes, Naps, Meals, Activities, Medication, and any needed Supplies (i.e. diapers, wipes, formula, etc.).

For children 2 years old through Pre-K, folders go home every Friday with: completed projects, weekly newsletter, and any additional necessary information.

PARENT – TEACHER CONFERENCES

Teacher conferences can consist of a face to face meeting, phone call, or written evaluation. They are scheduled at the parent/teacher convenience.

Infants & Toddlers – Teacher will discuss the assessment of your child's cognitive, language, motor, social, and emotional development. (Teacher completes assessment 2 or more times per year.)

Preschool – Teacher will discuss the assessment of your child's cognitive, language, motor, social, and emotional development and Kindergarten readiness. (Teacher completes assessment 2 or more times per year.)

CUSTODY SITUATIONS

Little Scholars Academy will NOT get involved with custody disputes. LSA will follow a court order exactly as written. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. **PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS.** It is imperative that all

enrollment forms are completed with both parents' information. A copy of a child's birth certificate may be requested at the Director's discretion. In the event that a custody dispute takes place on our property, the local police will be called and asked to handle the dispute. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk for our facility or staff, Little Scholars Academy has the right to terminate childcare.

GANG-FREE ZONE

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a childcare center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organizational criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty. Little Scholars Academy is a gang-free zone.

WITHDRAWAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

We are always sad when one of our Center's children leave. We do request that a two weeks written notice be given to the Director if you intend to withdrawal from our Center. Should written notice not be received, you will be responsible for one week of tuition after withdrawal. If your child is dismissed from the program, it goes into effect immediately.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Little Scholars Academy is proud of our history of working with the individual needs of our children and will work with the parents whose children may need additional support and will make reasonable accommodations to their policies, practices and procedures as appropriate in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. LSA will allow outside resources/therapists into the program to work with any child as needed, provided those services are communicated in advance, the provider of the services has the appropriate clearances to be in the building, the behavioral/therapeutic plan is shared with the administration and the resource/therapist works cooperatively with LSA staff to meet the needs of the child. Any child who is a safety threat to themselves or to others will be subject to suspension/exclusion and/or disenrollment from the program if the dangerous behavior cannot be eliminated through reasonable accommodations provided for under applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Temporary suspension from the school may be necessary for the safety of the child and others while any appropriate evaluations are completed and/or while securing the appropriate support services from the appropriate agency.

OPERATIONAL POLICIES

1. Little Scholars Academy is open Monday through Friday 6:30am to 6:30pm (unless otherwise noted) year-round with the exception of the following holidays: New Year's Day, MLK Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the following Friday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Additional holidays (facility closure days) may be added but will be noted on the Holiday Closure schedule.
2. Children will be released to parents or other individuals designated by the parent, only with proof of identification; we always ID those that we are not familiar with.
3. If you are sick, you may not come to our school. (Enclosed is a child development center wellness policy).
4. Procedures for handling medical emergencies are as follows: For major emergencies, 911 will be called. For minor emergencies, staff certified in First Aid will administer safety procedures in the child's best interest. Parent will be notified by the Director directly after the "incident".
5. Parental notifications are only done through the director. Parent is notified by phone for all emergencies. Parents may also receive an email blast through our Procure system.
6. Discipline and guidance practices are enclosed.
7. We reserve the right to warn, suspend, or dismiss any child that harms, disrupts, distracts and/or disrespects another student or teacher. Additional factors considered in student dismissal may include the following: late pickups, late payments, disrespectful parents. All efforts will be made to educate the child/children on acceptable and unacceptable behavior while they are under LSA custody of care. Parents will be given as much advance notice of concerns and issues as soon as reasonably possible but given the uniqueness of each infraction, LSA reserves the right to immediately terminate service for any child when necessary.
8. All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at Little Scholars Academy will follow the safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS):
 - Always put infants to sleep on their backs unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [§746.2427 and §747.2327].
 - Place infants on a firm mattress, with a tight-fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements for full-size cribs and for non-full size cribs [§746.2409 and §747.2309].
 - For infants who are younger than 12 months of age, cribs should be bare except for a tight-fitting sheet and a mattress cover or protector. Items that should not be placed in a crib includes soft or loose bedding (such as blankets, quilts, or comforters), pillows, stuffed toys/animals, soft objects, bumper pads, liners, or sleep positioning devices [§746.2415(b) and §747.2315(b)]. Also, infants must not have their heads, faces, or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing [§746.2429 and §747.2329].
 - Do not use sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe. Their use may increase the risk of suffocation [§746.2415(b) and §747.2315(b)].
 - Ensure that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult [§746.3407(10) and §747.3203(10)].
 - If an infant needs extra warmth, they may use sleep clothing such as sleepers or footed pajamas) as an alternative to blankets [§746.2415(b) and §747.2315(b)].
 - Place only one infant in a crib to sleep [§746.2405 and §747.2305].
 - Infants may use a pacifier during sleep. But the pacifier must not be attached to a stuffed animal [§746.2415(b) and §747.2315(b)] or the infant's clothing by a string, cord, or other attaching mechanism that might be a suffocation or strangulation risk [§746.2401(6) and §747.2315(b)].
 - If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (such as a bouncy chair or swing, or arrives to care asleep in a car seat), move the infant to a crib immediately, unless you provide Form

3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health-care professional [§746.2426 and §747.2326].

- Our childcare program is smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed in Texas childcare operations (this includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers) [§746.3703(d) and §747.3503(d)].
 - Actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound [§746.2403 and §747.2303].
 - If an infant is able to roll back and forth from front to back, place the infant on the infant's back for sleep and allow the infant to assume a preferred sleep position [§746.2427 and §747.2327].
 - Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times daily. This will help them strengthen their muscles and develop normally [§746.2427 and §747.2327].
 - Do not swaddle an infant for sleep or rest unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [§746.2428 and §747.2328].
9. Meals are prepared in the kitchen and brought to the classroom to be served "family style". Children are allowed to say grace before eating. (Children with certain religious beliefs are excused.)
 10. Immunization records MUST be kept current at all times. A copy of the current immunization record MUST be provided to Little Scholars Academy as new immunizations are administered.
 11. Hearing and vision screening is required for all four year old children.
 12. Parents will be notified in writing/email of any changes to the operational policies and enrollment agreement. Parents will be required to sign the acknowledgement of any changes that have been implemented and a copy will be retained in their child's records.
 13. Written permission is required for any children being transported (transportation not provided at the Waterfall location).
 14. Water activities can only be authorized by a parent. (Only child seven years old and older will be permitted to participate.)
 15. Permission slips must be filled out and signed by a parent to participate in field trips.
 16. Little Scholars Academy is a pet free facility.
 17. Caregivers will provide planned activities designed to meet the individual needs and developmental levels of each child. That includes both indoor and outdoor structured and unstructured play and learning. We ask that all children come properly dressed for the weather and with proper footwear that will allow a child to participate freely and safely in physical activities. Weather permitting children will have outside time twice a day
 18. Insect repellent and sunscreen will not be applied to your child unless they have a doctor's note. You must apply repellent to your child before they come.
 19. If you have a concern, complaint, or suggestion, please immediately discuss them with the Director. You are welcome to do so in person, by phone, or by email ewebb@LittleScholarsDFW.com or jtamayo@LittleScholarsDFW.com. Your input is very valuable to us.
 20. Parents are welcome in the Center at any time to observe your child's classroom. We also welcome parent participation on field trips. We want you to feel confident that your child is getting the best care.
 21. Parents may review a copy of our current Licensing Inspection Report located at the front door on the bulletin board. Also, for a copy of the State of Texas "Minimum Standards you may follow the link at Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers (texas.gov).
 22. Parents may contact the Local Licensing Office, Hotline, and Abuse Hotline.
 - Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400
 - Child Care Licensing Office 1-800-582-6036

Revised 1/22/2024

- 8700 N. Stemmons, Suite 104 Dallas, TX 75247
- www.dfps.state.tx.us

23. Little Scholars Academy Emergency Preparedness Plan practices safety for all types of inclement weather; tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, or even intruders. Our Staff is responsible for walking and moving children to the designated Tornado Safe Zones and/or Evacuating Children to designated evacuation routes which are posted in each classroom while doing name to face check. Director will gather all Students Files, Evacuation Bag (supplies, transition activities, snacks & water etc.) and Attendance Sheets located at the front door while being the last to exit the building. All infants/children with limited mobility that may need assistance will be moved in an evacuation bed. Director will delegate someone to contact parents of the situation. Director is the contact for emergency personnel and parents.

- Toddler Center (located on Waterfall Way)
 - i. Safe area for tornadoes – Laundry Room and Restrooms
 - ii. Safe area in case of fire – Cotton Wood Animal Hospital (next door)
 1. 14055 Waterfall Way, Dallas, TX 75240 (469) 330-0357
- Pre-School Center (located on Spring Valley)
 - i. Safe area for tornadoes – Back hallway going towards playground
 - ii. Safe area in case of fire – We will relocate to Carolyn G Bukhair Elementary
 1. 13900 Esperanza Rd, Dallas, TX 75240 (469) 593-4900

Once we are able to reunify the children with their parents the center's usual verification process for pick will be used at the evacuation site. Only persons listed on Admission Forms will be allowed to pick up with ID.

24. We understand that breastfeeding is a natural process, and we encourage mothers to feed their children here at Little Scholars Academy. We have set up a specific place for you to privately nurse your child with a rocking chair. We also strongly encourage those breastfeeding to bring their breast milk for us to feed their child while they are in our care.

25. At Little Scholars Academy, our staff goes through annual training to gain recognition of neglect and abuse of children. The Director will assist parents and/or children who are victims of abuse or neglect to help obtain assistance and intervention. Employee and parent awareness is key in ensuring the safety of our children; knowing the early warning signs is fundamental. Flyers are displayed at the front of the building to make the public aware.

26. Little Scholars Academy performs a visual health check assessment on each student upon arrival. The child is inspected for any signs of illness, abuse, or neglect. Teachers observe to see if the child seems out of the "norm" and are not their usual self, if so; a more in-depth assessment is performed. If any signs of illness, neglect or abuse are present, they will be documented on the attendance sheet and the director will be notified right away.

27. Employees at Little Scholars Academy are suggested to get the Influenza (Flu) immunization at the beginning of Flu season every year. If an employee is exposed to a sick child that could potentially be contagious, the employee given Airborne Immune Booster as a preventative measure. Immunization records are retained in each employee file.

- Little Scholars Academy has an open-door policy. Our parents may visit the child-care center at any time during our hours of operation to observe their child, our program activities, the building, the premises, and the equipment we use.
- Little Scholars Academy is a gang-free zone. A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather. Any gang related criminal activity that takes place within one thousand feet around our facility will be immediately posted to our parents on our front door.

ASSESSMENTS & OBSERVATIONS

Employees will assess themselves, assistants, and classroom environments. Employees will design weekly classroom lesson plans around the emerging skills of the whole class. The director will conduct observations in each classroom and make independent assessments. A period of adjustment may follow before compiling a final determination.

TOILET TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES

Revised 1/22/2024

Toilet learning is an important role in child development. Make sure children wash their hands before and after meals, after art/craft projects, after toileting and diapering, after coming in from outside, and after wiping their nose. Teachers will wash their hands before serving meals and snacks, wear latex gloves while diapering or assisting a child with toileting, and when coming into contact with any bodily fluids. Teachers also disinfect toys on a daily basis.

TOUR OF FACILITY

New parents and new employees will always be provided with an introductory tour of the facility.

COMPANY EQUIPMENT & VEHICLES

When using Little Scholars Academy property, including computer equipment or hardware, employees must exercise care, perform required maintenance and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines. Notify your supervisor if any equipment or machines appear to be damaged, defective or in need of repair. This prompt reporting could prevent the equipment's deterioration and could also help prevent injury to you or others. Should you have questions about the maintenance and care of any workplace equipment, ask your supervisor. If you use or operate equipment improperly, carelessly, negligently or unsafely, you may be disciplined or even discharged. In addition, you may be held financially responsible for any loss to Little Scholars Academy because of such mistreatment.

INCIDENTS, SAFETY & SUPERVISION

Employees will document any accidents and incidents for reporting to the director and parents on the Incident/Illness Report Form. Once a teacher accepts a child into their classroom, they will be responsible for ensuring the child's safety and supervision. Incidents include:

- Injuries that require medical attention by a health-care professional
- Any other situation that places a child at risk, such as forgetting a child in a center vehicle or not preventing a child from wandering away from the child-care center unsupervised.

Employees may obtain a copy of Licensing's Incident/Illness Report form on the DFPS website at:

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Information_for_Providers/cclforms.asp

After the caregiver completes the form, the director of the childcare center, or if the director is not available, the person in charge of the center must sign and date the completed report.

Employees must share a copy of the report with the child's parent and obtain the parent's signature on the report indicating the parent has reviewed it or received a copy of the report within 48 hours of when the incident occurred.

DRUGS, SMOKING, SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Little Scholars Academy strives to maintain a workplace free of drugs and alcohol and to discourage drug and alcohol abuse by its employees. Misuse of alcohol or drugs by employees can impair the ability of employees to perform their duties, as well as adversely affect our customers' and their confidence in our organization.

Per the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers, employees are not to consume alcohol or illegal drugs on the property. Employees must not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on the property. Little Scholars Academy has the right to require a mandatory drug test at any time based on suspicion. Failure to complete a drug test is grounds for immediate termination.

PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE SEARCHES

Little Scholars Academy may conduct searches for illegal drugs or alcohol on company facilities or worksites without prior notice to employees. Such searches may be conducted at any time. Employees are expected to cooperate fully. Searches of employees and their personal property may be conducted when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the employee has violated this policy or when circumstances or workplace conditions justify such a search. Personal property may include, but is not limited to, purses, boxes, briefcases, as well as any Little Scholars Academy property that is provided for employees' personal use, such as desks, lockers, and files. An employee's consent to a search is required as a condition of employment as the employee's refusal to consent may result in disciplinary action, including termination.

FIREARMS

The unlawful carrying of firearms will not be tolerated on these premises. Should you have a question, complaint, or dispute about firearms, contact the Director and/or management team.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy provides guidance for employee use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.

- Employees need to know and adhere to the Code of Ethical Conduct, Employee Handbook, and other company policies when using social media in reference to LSA Child Care & Preschool
- Employees should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their images, as well as that of LSA. The information that employees post or publish may be public information for a long time.
- Employees should be aware that LSA may observe content and information made available by employees through social media. Employees should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to LSA, its employees, or customers.
- Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct include posting commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile work environment.
- Employees are not to publish, post or release any information that is considered confidential or not public.
- If employees encounter a situation while using social media that threaten to become antagonistic, employees should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of a supervisor.
- Social media use shouldn't interfere with employee's responsibilities at work. LSA computer systems are to be used for business purposes only.
- Subject to applicable law, after-hours online activity that violates the LSA Code of Conduct or any other company policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action or termination.

PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION

- Actively supervise children on playgrounds
- Check playgrounds where your children play. Look for hazards, such as rusted or broken equipment and dangerous surfaces. Report any hazards to the school or appropriate local office.
- Teach children that pushing, shoving or crowding while on the playground can be dangerous.
- Dress appropriately for the playground. Remove necklaces, purses, scarves or clothing with drawstrings that can get caught on equipment and pose a strangulation hazard. Even helmets can be dangerous on a playground, so save those for bikes.
- Ensure that children use age-appropriate playground equipment. Separate play areas for children under 5 should be available and maintained.
- For babies who are learning to walk, the play area should have a smooth and easy surface to walk on.
- If your baby has fairly good head control and can sit up with support (usually around 9 months old), give the baby (bucket-shaped) swings a try.
- Avoid playgrounds with non-impact absorbing surfaces, such as asphalt, concrete, grass, dirt or gravel.
- Recommended surface materials include: sand, pea gravel, wood chips, mulch and shredded rubber. Rubber mats, synthetic turf and other artificial materials are also safe surfaces and require less maintenance.
- Surfacing should be at least 12 inches deep and extend at least 6 feet in all directions around stationary equipment. Depending on the height of the equipment, surfacing may need to extend farther than 6 feet.
- For swings, make sure that the surfacing extends, in the back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar. So if the top of the swing set is 10 feet high, the surfacing should extend 20 feet.
- Double check with your school and child care center to make sure they have age-appropriate, well-maintained playground equipment.
- If there are any hazards in a public or backyard playground, report them immediately and do not allow children to use the equipment until it is safe.
- Report any playground safety hazards to the organization responsible for the site (e.g., school, park authority or city council).

NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICE

What are the basic requirements for snack and mealtimes?

- You must serve all children ready for table food regular meals and morning and afternoon snacks as specified in this subchapter.
- If breakfast is served, a morning snack is not required.

Revised 1/22/2024

- A child must not go more than three hours without a meal or snack being offered, unless the child is sleeping.
- If your child-care center is participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture, you may elect to meet those requirements rather than those specified in this section.
- You must ensure a supply of drinking water is always available to each child and is served at every snack, mealtime, and after active play in a safe and sanitary manner.
- You must not serve beverages with added sugars, such as carbonated beverages, fruit punch, or sweetened milk except for a special occasion such as a holiday or birthday celebration.
- You must not use food as a reward.
- You must not serve a child a food identified on the child's food allergy emergency plan as specified in §746.3817 of this title (relating to What is a food allergy emergency plan?).

All meals are served FAMILY STYLE, although all meals and snack times must:

- Be unhurried; and
- Include adult supervision of children.

If meals and snacks are served family style, caregivers must supervise children to prevent cross-contamination of the food.

Only food prepared by the center will be served to the children, unless it was store bought.

ANTI-IDLING

Car exhaust releases pollutants that are harmful to health (especially to children) and the environment. Pollution from idling vehicles can also enter a facility, thus affecting the indoor air quality. All vehicles should turn off their engines within the facility's designated parking areas as soon as possible to protect children from inhaling harmful car exhaust.

Parent & Personnel Policies are reviewed a minimum of every two years and updated as necessary.

Written Operating Procedures are reviewed and updated a minimum of every two years and as necessary.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

We are all part of the team working to support your family. Little Scholars Academy strives to meet all your family's needs. In the event that you have a concern, please contact your respective director at your center. If your concern is still not resolved, please contact the owners.

Texas Department of Health and Human Services
8700 North Stemmons Freeway, Suite 104, Dallas, Texas 75247
1-800-252-5400
https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/

On-site Owners, Michael & Stacy Sun Admin@LittleScholarsDFW.com
Director, Elaine Webb at Spring Valley Location ewebb@LittleScholarsDFW.com
Lead Teacher – Kalli Henry at Spring Valley Location
Director, Jennifer Tamayo at Waterfall Way Location jtamayo@LittleScholarsDFW.com
Lead Teacher – Vickie Vicente at Waterfall Way Location

FAMILY SUPPORT RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES

Child Care Group - Child Care Assistance

1420 West Mockingbird Lane, Ste. 300

Dallas, TX 75247

Phone: 214-630-5949

www.childcaregroup.org

City Of Dallas Program - Child Care Assistance

Lucy Hernandez

Phone: 214-670-8838

Phone: 214-885-5724

Network Richardson

741 S. Sherman Street

Richardson, Texas 75081

Phone: 972-234-8880

www.thenetwork.org

- *Food Pantry*
- *Clothing Closet*
- *Big Meals for Little Kids Project*
- *Toyland Express Program*
- *Tools 4 School*
- *Tooth Fairy Dental Outreach Program*
- *Stabilization Programs*

Warren Center

320 Custer Road

Richardson, TX 75080

Phone: 972-490-9055

<https://thewarrencenter.org>

- Early childhood education from birth to three
- Therapy services from 3 – 5
- Autism
- Parent Support Groups
- Workshops



1200 W. Spring Valley Rd. Richardson, TX 75080 (972) 231-6998
14045 Waterfall Way Dallas, TX 75240 (972) 437-3880
Admin@LittleScholarsDFW.com

PARENT HANDBOOK POLICY REVIEW AND REVISIONS

This handbook of policies and procedures is reviewed by the Owners and Director annually or upon state regulatory changes. Should changes occur, you will be notified of the changes.

I, _____, (Parent/Guardian Name) have been given a copy of the Little Scholars Academy Parent Handbook, I have read the policies outlined, and given the opportunity to ask questions regarding LSA policies. I understand the policies and will agree to follow the policies outlined in the Little Scholars Academy Parent Handbook. I understand that LSA has the right to terminate care at any time if the parent policies are not followed.

Parent & Personnel policies are reviewed a minimum of every two years and updated as necessary.

Written operating procedures are reviewed and updated a minimum of every two years and as necessary.

Child(ren)'s Name(s): _____

Parent/ Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____