



# LITTLE NEST CORE VALUES

Integrity Matters  
 Emotional Safety: Staff, Students, Families  
 Having fun daily  
 Quality teachers are the key to exceptional care and  
 education  
 Care for children like they are our own  
 Parents who are thrilled

## Parent Handbook

**Day to Day Inquiries:**  
**Little Nest Child Care and Learning Center**  
 317 East St Patrick Street  
 Rapid City, SD 57701  
 605.430.4268 Ext 4  
 605.939.6428

Main Manager: Lori Eberly 605.430.4268 Ext 5

**PLEASE DON'T TEXT 605.430.4268. Text messaging is managed through the Remind App**

**Business Office:**  
 605.430.4268 Ext 3  
 Bookkeeping and Payment Accounts  
 Bookkeeper.littlenestpreschool@gmail.com

### **Welcome to our handbook! We're so glad you're here!**

Our Little Nest locations are the early childhood educational facilities for busy, working parents who are looking for reliable, quality care, and well-rounded learning experiences for their child. With Little Nest, parents have peace of mind during the workday knowing their child is in a fun and safe learning environment that is committed to excellence.

Our policies and procedures help us provide a fun and professional learning environment, without any "grey area" for what we do or don't do, what we expect and what our parents can expect. Read on to see if we're the right fit for YOU- and we hope we are 😊

**Please CAREFULLY read this document, bookmark it or print it and reference it!**  
**Thank you for blessing us with the care and education of your child!**

## Admission

- Complete online registration
- Provide current immunization records
- Pay deposit equal to one week's tuition (applied to the last week of the two week notice)

## Ages

6 weeks - 12 years

## Allergies

**We are a "nut free" (this includes tree nuts and peanuts) facility**

**DO NOT SEND NUTS OR NUT PRODUCTS TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD**

If your child has any allergies:

- Complete the allergy section in your online enrollment
- Complete a care plan which details their allergy list, symptoms, steps to avoid triggers, and a treatment plan in the case of a reaction.

## Attendance

- Going to be gone? Call the facility (605.430.4268 Ext 4) to report absences or if your student will
- Going to be later than 10 AM? Be sure to call the facility if your child will need lunch!

## Behavior

- Most kids test their limits, especially in new situations
- Children will be provided guidance and help as they continue to hone their skills
- We will work with families, therapists, specialists, DSS, and Early Childhood Connections in any situations that require focused intervention
- We will provide a healthy, safe, and fun environment for all students and staff
- Any child who exhibits extreme verbal or physical violence will be provided with a written action plan. Continued extreme behavior may result in unenrollment and referral to a facility with a behavioral specialist onsite.
- Everyone inside of our facility needs to help create an environment of fun, kindness, learning, and professionalism

## Birthdays

We love to celebrate birthdays! 😊 Families can bring in treats or let us know and we'll make sure to plan treats for snack that day.

## Child Care Assistance

- Apply: <http://dss.sd.gov/childcare/childcareassistance/>
- Our provider number for your application: 016597890
- Enrollment begins only after Child Care Assistance is approved
- DSS may assign you a copay. If your child is frequently absent your copay may increase.

## Child Care Safety - Child Abuse

- All staff is trained annually and are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to DSS.
- Any staff member awaiting investigation outcome and evaluation will be removed from the center until the investigation is complete.

## Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma

- Staff has been trained to recognize the symptoms that a child is suffering from Shaken Baby Syndrome or Abusive Head Trauma. These apply to all children under the age of five.
- Staff have been trained to recognize the risk factors, reduce these factors for families and in the center, and how to provide support to prevent incidents.

## Communication

- Parents are welcome to visit our classrooms anytime!
- Newsletters are emailed each month detailing curriculum, menus, and important announcements. Check your spam folder or contact us if you don't receive it. Newsletters are also posted in the building.
- Remind App is utilized for our text messaging to the facility.

### DAY TO DAY INQUIRIES

**LITTLE NEST CHILD CARE LEARNING CENTER 605.430.4268 Ext 4 or 605.939.6428**

### ACCOUNT INQUIRIES

**Bookkeeper.littlenestpreschool@gmail.com**

## Community

- Please fill out the parent/child questionnaire! We want to know you as a family, info about your child, and how you might want to become involved in your child's time here. We believe that keeping families, students, and teachers involved will instill a sense of pride for the children in the center, in their families, and in each other.

## Community Activities

- We love to get together! Join us at the following activities. Also look for us at events at Main Street Square!
- Teacher Meet and Greet (September)
- Saturday Winter Holiday Party (December)
- Easter Egg Hunt (March/April)

## Cost

Enrollment	Age	Cost
Full time	6 weeks- 23 months	\$180 per week
Part time (6:30 am-12:30 pm)	6 weeks-23 months	\$130 per week
Full time	2 and up	\$160 per week
Part time (6:30 am-12:30 pm)	2 and up	\$100 per week
Before and after school	Elementary School Age	\$85 per week
After school only	Elementary School Age	\$75 per week
Drop in care (no contract)	All ages	\$40 per day

- All snacks, meals, and educational materials are included in this price.
- Tuition is due whether your child is present or not.
- A one-week deposit is required to hold your place, and is retained for the last week of your two-week notice should you wish to remove your child from care. This deposit is nonrefundable.

- Tuition is due Mondays prior to care unless you have a different written agreement with our office, however payments are always due in advance. Changes to your payment plan **MUST** be submitted in writing with 10 business day to accommodate your request. Note that Little Nest Child Care does not accept payments onsite. Please see Fees section for additional Field Trip and Supply Fees.

### **CPR**

- All fulltime/substitute/part time staff members are CPR certified
- Certifications are kept current and on file.

### **Discipline**

- We offer guidance and redirection to help children develop self-control and respect for the rights of others.
- Other methods of discipline that will be utilized are talking with the child, loss of certain privilege activities (never meals or outside play time), time out (not to exceed in minutes the child's age in years), and as a last resort, phone call to the parents.
- Methods of discipline **WILL NOT** be used, even with permission from the parent including humiliating or frightening the child, any physical punishment, verbal abuse or negative remarks about the child or their family, restriction of movement, punishment for potty accidents, withholding or forcing naps or meals, and use of substances such as soap. You will always be notified of any incidents during the day. Please, if you have any questions or concerns discuss them with site managers.
- Extreme verbal or physical violence or dangerous behavior will result in an action plan to be signed by the parents and site manager and possible classroom assessment by Early Childhood Connections. Such violence that is a serious threat to other students or staff may result in immediate dismissal via written notice from our advisory board.

### **Discrimination**

No child, parent, or staff member will be discriminated against due to race, sex, sexual orientation, or financial status. However, Little Nest Child Care does receive the right to forbid anyone from the business who proves to be a danger to themselves or others.

### **Drop In Care**

- \$40 per day, paid online in advance to care. Deposit not required.
- Online enrollment and immunization records are required.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

Federal laws mandate emergency preparedness plans for all licensed childcare centers. These include

tornado, fire, lockdown and evacuation drills

In the incident that Little Nest Child Care needs to be evacuated you need to know the following:

317 East St Patrick Street Near evacuation site: Calvary Chapel Community Church, 320 East St Patrick Street

Far evacuation site: Little Nest Preschool (Rapid Valley), 3459 Jet Drive

In the event of an evacuation, if possible children will be evacuated to Calvary Chapel Community Church. If Calvary Chapel Community Church is in disrepair, children will be evacuated to our far evacuation site, Little Nest Preschool.

Families will be notified via social media, the Remind app, and calling tree. Students must be picked up within one hour of parent notification.

### Evaluations

- Each Fall and Spring
- Based on the Early Learning Guidelines for the state of South Dakota.
- Include benchmarks for intellectual, physical, and social emotional development.
- Families receive the results as well as learning goals.
- Learning goals are based on experiences which encourage self-esteem and positive self-image, social interaction, self-help skills, communication skills, creative expression, large/small muscle development, as well as intellectual growth.

### Expulsion

- **Safe, fun, quality learning experiences and professionalism are at the center of what we do.**

**Little Nest Child Care reserves the right to cancel care to protect the safety of our staff and students and maintain a professional and fun learning environment.** Reasons your family might be referred to another facility:

1. If they are repeatedly physically, emotionally, or otherwise harming other children or staff.
2. If they are developmentally not ready unable to participate in our childcare environment.
3. If the parents are unable to comply with policies as stated in the handbook.
4. If they repeatedly pose a serious risk to themselves or others through dangerous actions.
5. If a parent behaves inappropriately on preschool property (threatening anyone on the premises, yelling, physical violence)
6. Nonpayment of tuition.

- **If these behaviors arise at any time during enrollment we will communicate expectations with families. Every effort will be made to continue enrollment, but if behavioral issues persist either by a student or a parent that present a threat to safety of students and staff, hinder the fun and professional environment, or if there are issues of non-payment, students will be unenrolled via written notice. This ensures safety for all in our building, and also helps us operate our finances judiciously.**

### Extra Clothes

- Learning can be messy!
- We will be doing a lot of science experiments, outdoor play, and art activities. Students should wear clothes they can “learn in!” 😊
- Send an extra set of clothes, just in case!

### Fees (non refundable)

Fee	Cost	Due Date
Annual Field Trip Fee	\$35	3/1
Supply Fee	\$30	9/1

### Field Trips/Outings

- Children ages two and up take frequent field trips!
- Signed permission slip required

- Review field trip safety with your child! (Stay together, listen to teachers, hold hands, keep seatbelts fastened)

## Holidays

- **The following days Little Nest Preschool will be CLOSED (normal tuition will still be due)**

Spring Break (Good Friday and the Monday after Easter)

Memorial Day

The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of July

Labor Day

Native American/Columbus Day

Thanksgiving and Black Friday

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

New Years Eve and New Year's Day

Please note, we ARE OPEN Veteran's Day, Martin Luther King Day, and President's Day, in addition to all other days that RCAS are closed (including their numerous training days). Closing on certain holidays (and sometimes the day after) provides our hardworking teachers with breaks and family time, as well as some days are used for training/deep cleaning hours. We love our staff and want them happy, healthy, with great family lives, continuing education and clean facilities to work in, don't you?

**\*If any of these falls over a weekend Little Nest will observe the same closed business days as US banks**

## Hours of Operation

- 6:30 am-6:30 pm daily
- **A late pick up fee/early drop off fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed. Please arrive on time to pick up your child each day.**

## Illness

- South Dakota state law that if your child has had a temperature of 100° or more that they must wait 24 hours before returning to childcare without the use of Tylenol.
- If your child becomes ill during the day they will be separated from the other children and a parent will be notified and required to pick up their child **within the hour**, this helps to prevent the spread of illness to other students and staff.
- See the ["Exclusion from Child Care."](#) This is also posted in our buildings.
- Please let us know if your child has received a diagnosis of a contagious illness or disease

## Immunization Records

- Current immunization records are due **before** your child's first day of class

## Infant Care

- We love our littlest littles!
- Parents supply bottles of breast milk or premixed formula. Breast milk must be in a separate container (such as a small lunch box)
- Empty and used bottles will be rinsed and sent home upon request (otherwise they are washed and sanitized daily at the center).
- Parents may bring unopened labeled store-bought baby food for children eating solids.

- Parents may also provide freshly prepared homemade foods in labeled containers daily.
- All children's items, including bottles, foods, and clothing must be labeled with child's name.
- Per State licensing requirements, infants through eleven months may not nap with blankets in cribs. Parents may choose to send a sleep sack. Alternate sleeping requests must be made by using a specific form authorized from the child's physician.
- Infants will be placed on a schedule of regular feeding, play, and rest times.
- Diapers are checked on a regular basis and changed whenever reasonably necessary. After the diaper is changed, the diaper-changing area will be sterilized and the provider's hands washed.
- Parents should provide any special instructions regarding the use of diaper-changing products, such as powder or ointment.

### **Insect Repellant/Sunscreen**

We can apply insect repellant and sunscreen if you complete our waiver.

### **Labelling of Personal Items**

All items brought from home must be labeled (hats, mittens, gloves, blankets, back packs, toys, jackets etc). Please keep in mind that we have limited space, and only send necessities to school with your child. Every attempt will be made to keep personal items in cubbies, and this is a great opportunity to teach our students about tidying up and taking care of their belongings.

### **Materials Needed for Class Ages 2 and Up**

- Extra clothing
- One large oversized t-shirt for painting
- 2 Blankets and pillow for naptime
- Appropriate outdoor clothing in winter
- Water bottle

### **Meals**

- All meals and snacks served will follow federal guidelines for nutrition of children according to age including mandated serving sizes of protein, grain, fruit/vegetable, and dairy.
- Food can be brought from home, but it is expected that it will either meet nutritional guidelines, or it will be supplemented with missing components from the centers menu. **ALL FOOD BROUGHT FROM HOME MUST BE GIVEN TO A STAFF MEMBER FOR PROPER STORAGE IN THE KITCHEN. FOOD IS NOT TO BE LEFT IN CUBBIES OR BACK PACKS.**
- Menus will be posted a month in advance. All meals are included in your tuition price. Occasional substitutions will be made due to availability, but will always fall into the same food group category.
- Breakfast is served at 8:30
- AM Snack for infants and toddlers is served at 10:00
- Lunch is served at 12:00
- Snack is served at 2:45

- Please list any allergies on your enrollment form. This form includes an action plan for allergic reactions. We are happy to prepare foods for special dietary needs. **PLEASE NOTE OUR FACILITY IS A TREENUT/PEANUT FREE ZONE.** These items are prohibited in the facility.

### Medication

- Only given with the written consent of the parent or guardian
- Only given if the consent lists the name of the medication and the date or dates the medication is to be administered.
- Medications must be kept in their original container with the original label. The label must contain legible directions for use, the expiration date, the child's name, and the physician's name. A drug container without a label or with an illegible label is not permitted.
- **MEDICATIONS MUST BE STORED IN A PLACE WHICH IS INACCESSIBLE TO CHILDREN AND ARE NOT TO BE LEFT IN CUBBIES OR BACK PACKS.**
- Medication requiring refrigeration must be placed in another container which is not absorbent and labeled "medication."

### Nap/rest time

- 12:30-2:30
- Let us know what calms your child at home so we can help put them at ease 😊
- Children are not required to sleep. After fifteen minutes of quiet time, wakeful children will be allowed to engage in quiet play until naptime is over.
- Please send two blankets and pillow for your child to use and take them home to wash each Friday.
- Pick up/drop during nap can be very disruptive! Occasional pick up/ drop off during this time is allowed, but it's important that students get the rest they need.

### Outside Play

Weather permitting; we will attempt to take children outside at least twice a day. Please remember in winter months to send them with mittens, coats, hats, boots, and some days even snow pants.

### Parent Resources

- Check out our Facebook page for family friendly recipes, local kids events, family activities, and parenting articles

### Payment

- A deposit is required to hold your spot
- All payments are made online via ACH transfer or credit cards. Credit cards incur a 3.75% fee
- Payments are due on Mondays prior to care
- Payments can be bi-weekly or monthly, but are always due in advance
- Late payments assess a \$30 fee the first day, and a \$10 fee each additional day afterward
- NSF payments returned by your bank result in a \$30 charge
- Payments due in advance regardless of attendance



## Pick Up

- Families required to set up a sign in/out account on facility laptops
- Sign in/out required each day. This helps us keep kids safe! It's also a licensing law
- Only those on your approved pick-up list will be allowed to pick up your child
- If it's a relative/family friends first time they will be required to show ID
- We cannot release children to any adults appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol

## Potty Training

- We'll help tame potty-training blues! Children do not have to be potty trained prior to enrollment. We will assist the parents in this process using a plan agreed upon by both parties.

## Program Activities

- Planned according to developmental level of each group of children.
- Provides each child with experiences to develop creatively, socially, and emotionally, cognitively, and physically.
- Based on the South Dakota Early Learning Guidelines, [https://dss.sd.gov/docs/childcare/early\\_learning\\_guidelines.pdf](https://dss.sd.gov/docs/childcare/early_learning_guidelines.pdf)

## Program Schedule

6:30 am-8:30 am Opening and arrival, centers

8:30 am- 9:00 am Breakfast

9:00-11:30 Recess, Preschool Planned Projects

10:00 Infant/toddler AM Snack

11:30-12:00 Educational TV

12:00-12:30 Lunch

12:30-12:45 Potty break, set up naptime

12:45-2:45 Naptime/Quiet playtime

2:45-3:00 Potty break, handwashing

3:00-3:15 Snack time

3:15-6:30 Recess, secondary project time, centers

## Reporting Child Abuse

Childcare providers are mandated by law to report signs of abuse and neglect. Our policy is that staff will report initial suspicions to the director first. If we feel that the threat is real and that a child is at risk, then suspicions will be reported directly to the Department of Social Services at 605-394-2525. In the incident of reports of suspected in house child abuse or neglect Little Nest Preschool will remove the teacher from the classroom until the Department of Social Services has conducted their investigation and filed their official report.

## Reporting Changes or Circumstances

As a licensed facility, we are required to report changes in circumstances to the Dept of Social Services. These changes include change of location, new director, the felony conviction of any staff member or involvement with Child Protective Services or law enforcement concerning investigations of child abuse or neglect.

## Rules

Please review the following rules with your child. We will help guide and remind them in these areas as well.

- Use an inside voice
- Use listening ears
- Stay with our group and teacher at all times
- Use walking feet inside
- Use our words when we're upset
- Use furniture correctly (we sit at tables, not stand on them, we sit in chairs not stand on them)
- Use gentle hands with learning materials toys, we don't break them, bang them or throw them
- Feet first down slides

## Safe Handling and Storage of Hazardous Material and Disposal of Bio Contaminants

- Staff undergo orientation from the Department of Social Services addressing safe handling and storage of hazardous materials and disposal of bio contaminants. Staff are trained on what is a hazardous material, chemicals are kept in locked cabinets away from children, they remain in their original containers and labeled (except for bleach solutions, which are in labelled spray bottles). The number for poison control is kept onsite and there are first aid kits located in each room and on field trips. All staff understand hazardous items are to be stored after use. Staff are also trained on Standard Precautions which include handwashing after diapering, providing toileting help, personal contact with any bodily fluids, before and after administering first aid, or cleaning up a spill or object that has come in contact with bodily fluids. Staff are also trained on proper glove use, which includes proper removal, disposal, washing hands after they are used, and training on how to disinfect areas after they have come in contact with bodily fluids.

## Sanitizing and Cleaning Schedules

- We follow strict daily sanitizing and cleaning schedules.
- We are inspected annually by the Department of Health, the Department of Public Safety, and the Department of Social Services.
- We exceed sanitizing and cleaning guidelines by utilizing safe but strong disinfectants throughout our center during the peak of cold and flu season each weekend.

## School Age Program

Steps to success for the school age program

1. Review with your child the pickup procedure for afterschool care (what our vehicle looks like, where to meet us, and that they are to come straight to the pickup vehicle etc)
2. Make sure their teachers and school office know that we are providing pickup and the location of our vehicle.
3. If we won't be picking up your student, you must call in and notify us by 2:00 pm. It's important that we know who we'll be picking up each day to ensure the safety of all students. Please notify us if your out of town, your child is ill etc. **If we're waiting at the elementary school for your child and they are absent there will be a \$15 fee added to your tuition.** When we're waiting at schools for children who aren't there, it makes us

late to pick up at the next school, and is stressful for the instructor and students who are waiting.

4. School age students and families should follow all other guidelines outlined in the handbook and contract.
5. Please note school age tuition increases to the regular tuition rate of \$150 per week in the Summer months. It does not increase during “no school days” during the school year, but you will be asked to pack a lunch those days.

### **Show and Share Days**

- Show and Share will be held each Friday during the school year. This can be any special item your child wants to share with the class but must be labelled.
- If you wish to bring in a special pet please arrange to have it taken home after circle time.

### **Sign In/Out**

All students must be signed in/out daily on our computer system. **This is an important requirement from the Department of Social Services.**

### **Smoking**

Smoking on the premises of Little Nest Preschool is strictly prohibited.

### **Staff Requirements**

Primary staff must be at least 18 years of age. Secondary staff may be 14 as long as they are supervised by an adult. All programming is planned and overseen by the director and site managers who are all CDA certified. All staff undergo background checks and are CPR and first aid certified. Staff completes over 60 hours of training annually. We have a highly developed staff professionalism training program. All staff are placed on leadership career pathways that involve continuing education through SDSU and opportunities for advancement. We partner with the Rapid City Area School District to make sure all of our students are on track for kindergarten.

### **Termination of Care Requirements**

A two-week written notice is required when a family decides to terminate care. The deposit at enrollment will be applied toward the last week. Little Nest Childcare reserves the right to cancel care to protect the health and safety of students and staff and to protect our financial stability. (See Expulsion, above)

### **Toys**

Please only send one toy to preschool per day, and they must be small enough to fit in their cubby or backpack. Remember to label all toys brought to preschool. Please do not send items such as guns, belts, “grabbing” toys, nail polish, and let your child know that if they bring an item such as a ball, they will only be allowed to use it outside!

### **Transportation**

- Transport is always one of our 15-passenger preschool vans.
- We have enough booster and harnessed car seats, but we’re happy to use a family’s personal car seat if they prefer, provided it is in good working order.

### **Two Home Families**

Please let us know if your child has two households. This allows us to make sure copies of event schedules, parent letters, and special family crafts go home in duplicate.

### **Winter Weather and Snow Days**

- We want to keep students and staff safe during Winter weather!
- Normal tuition will still be due even if there are snow days, late starts, or early dismissal.
- If Rapid City schools are closed due to weather, Little Nest Preschool will also be closed.  
If Rapid City School are closed due to hot temperatures, we will remain open. Thank you for helping us protect everyone's safety while not penalizing staff financially for weather none of us can control!