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# **Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School, LLC**

## **Employee Handbook**

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Updated January 2022

## **Center locations and contact numbers:**

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School  
132 Chester Road  
Springfield, VT 05156  
802-885-7899

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School II  
5075 Route 5  
Ascutney, VT 05030  
802-546-4499

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School Brookline  
624 Grassy Brook Road  
Brookline, VT 05345  
802-365-7552

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School Springfield II  
365 Summer Street  
Springfield, VT 05156  
802-885-5541

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School Bellows Falls  
20 Old Terrace  
Bellows Falls, 05101  
802-463-4795

## **Upper administration contact information:**

Executive Director and Owner - Susan Coutermarsh  
Phone: 802-591-0089  
Email: [suzyc98@gmail.com](mailto:suzyc98@gmail.com)

Human Resources - Justine Steele  
Phone: 802-281-2457  
Email: [just.m.steele@gmail.com](mailto:just.m.steele@gmail.com)

Program Operations Manager - Olivia Sandreuter  
Phone: 860-575-2451  
Email: [ostahl717@gmail.com](mailto:ostahl717@gmail.com)

Welcome!! We are pleased to have you on staff with Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School, and wish you every success in your new position. We strive to retain individuals who have a strong ethic of service and contribute to the growth and success of our organization. We hope that you will take pride in being a member of our team. We are a VT State Regulated, NAEYC accredited program, a 5 STAR facility, partner with local school districts and are pre-k qualified, and we offer the VT CACFP.

This handbook is designed to familiarize you with Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School, providing you with information about working conditions, employee expectations, and some of the policies affecting your employment. If you have questions or concerns about any of the material within this handbook, we urge you to discuss them with your Director.

No handbook can anticipate every situation or question about all of our policies and terms of employment. Your supervisor may tailor the policies set forth herein to specific situations. SLP reserves the right to add new policies and to change or cancel existing policies at any time. We will notify you of any changes to this handbook as they occur.

This handbook supersedes all previous handbooks and management memos that may have been issued on the subjects covered. References in this handbook to "us" and "company" include Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School and all affiliated entities.

Welcome to Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School! We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and fulfilling. We look forward to witnessing your growth within our program.

Sincerely,

Suzy Coutermarsh

# About Us

## **Our mission....**

Suzy's Little Peanuts strives to provide a safe, academically challenging social environment for children to thrive in.

## **Our vision...**

All children deserve a positive and quality early education experience that will prepare them to succeed both within the school system and within the community. In order to provide this quality education Suzy's Little Peanuts is dedicated to educating children through highly trained and qualified staff who stay up to date on early childhood development and standards. Our indoor and outdoor environments are designed to provide an enriching and challenging academic and social environment.

## **Our philosophy...**

Our philosophy at Suzy's Little Peanuts is to nurture and educate children using research based methods. We believe that children need a sense of security and consistency. They need to know that when everything else around them is changing- a provider will be there.

Our program is influenced by early childhood philosophers such as Erik Erikson, Piaget, and Vygotsky, as well as the Early Multi Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Responsive Classroom and Second Step. We believe, as Piaget did, that children go through stages in their development. Our job as providers is to support children in the stage that they are in, and supporting their growth throughout each stage.

Through all stages, social interaction is a key element in our facility, as children often learn best by following the example and peers and teaching staff. We use the Second Step program to teach children positive social skills such as fair ways to play, how to enter a group and problem solving skills.

We communicate our philosophy through both our indoor and outdoor environments. Our atmosphere is calm and cheerful, welcoming play and social interaction. We set up our classrooms according to a creative curriculum. This means that our classrooms are set up in centers. We have a home living area, dramatic play, block area, tabletop toys, music, discovery area, art area, technology and library. These centers encourage learning through a play based process. We believe that children learn many things from books, therefore we have books in all of the centers and often spend time reading to children. There are many opportunities to experience the outdoors on a daily basis. Our playground is used for recess and provides lots of space for running and playing. We garden with the children each year and take advantage of every opportunity to spend time enjoying nature.

We are always growing and changing as a center, as our children grow and change. We recognize that each family is diverse and we welcome you to influence the growth and change of our center. Our doors are always open and we encourage your family to feel at home here.

(In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.)

# Employment

**Equal Employment Opportunity Policy:** Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School is an equal opportunity employer and it is our policy that employees and applicants will not be subjected to unlawful discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other basis prohibited by applicable state, federal or local laws.

Accordingly, SLP will hire, train, and promote individuals in accordance with this Equal Employment Opportunity Policy; make decisions according to the principle of equal opportunity by imposing only bona fide occupational qualification requirements for employment opportunities; and administer all personnel practices and programs (including, but not limited to, compensation, benefits, transfers and training) in accordance with this Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and offers equal employment opportunities for qualified individuals who may have a physical or mental disability, but can still perform the essential functions of the job.

Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, SLP will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, as defined by the ADA, who has made SLP aware of his or her disability, in writing, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School.

**Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination:** Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School wants to provide all employees a work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Therefore, it shall be Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's policy to prohibit discrimination or harassment of employees based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other basis protected by state, federal or local laws.

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School expects that all relationships among persons in the workplace will be businesslike and free of bias, prejudice and harassment. Sexual harassment typically is serious offensive conduct directed towards an individual because of his/her gender and is unwelcome by the individual. Sexual harassment does not refer to casual conversation or compliments of a socially acceptable nature.

Federal Law defines sexual harassment as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (1) submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment; or
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as basis for employment decisions; or
- (3) such conduct interferes with an individual's work performance; or
- (4) conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

The following list provides some examples of conduct that *could be viewed as* sexual harassment. This list does not cover every type of behavior that could constitute sexual harassment. It is meant to provide employees with some idea of the type of conduct that is prohibited under this policy.

- Sex oriented verbal “kidding,” “teasing,” or jokes
- Foul or obscene language or gestures
- Physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another’s body
- Pressuring someone to go on a date
- Comments about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, body gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Inquiries into one’s sexual experience and discussion of one’s sexual activities.

Communication of any harassing material by social media, email, voice mail, organization bulletin boards or otherwise is a violation of SLP’s policy against harassment.

**Reporting Harassment:**

Suzy’s Little Peanuts Day School encourages employees to report any problems they experience or observe concerning harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation. Employees should report harassment before it becomes severe or pervasive. All harassment of any kind should be reported to the Director and/or HR as soon as possible.

- Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to objectionable conduct prohibited by this policy is encouraged (but not required) to let the offending person know immediately and firmly that the behavior is offensive.
- Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to objectionable conduct prohibited by this policy must report it to their immediate supervisor or a member of management if the supervisor is the offending individual.
- Every reported incident of unlawful harassment or discrimination will be investigated.
- Individuals reporting complaints or providing information in good faith in connection with an investigation will not be retaliated against for their participation in this procedure.

**Investigation:** Suzy’s Little Peanuts Day School will promptly undertake an investigation of all complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint, and with witnesses if applicable. The person alleged to have engaged in harassment will also be interviewed.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with an adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

**Responsive Action:** Employees found to have engaged in conduct in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

No employee will be disciplined or otherwise retaliated against for filing a complaint or participating in the investigation of a bona fide complaint. However an individual who brings a false or frivolous complaint is subject to discipline up to and including termination.

## Ethics Policy

Ethics are integral to the successful achievement of our mission at Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School. Employees are expected to comply with this policy and to hold to the highest ethical standards. By understanding this policy, employees will recognize the situations and activities that must be strictly avoided and those that require disclosure or prior approval. Employees must treat all co-workers, clients, and external parties with honesty, integrity, and fairness in all regards. This Ethics policy extends to workplace gossip.

Talking to ANYONE at work other than admin about issues with coworkers including their work behavior, personal life, choices outside of work, or any other issues is considered gossip and is not allowed at Suzy's Little Peanuts.

SLP is a NAEYC accredited program and we adhere to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. You will receive a copy of this document during the orientation process.

**Confidential Information:** "Confidential Information" is defined to mean confidential information of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School, including, but not limited to, Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's existing and contemplated products and services; procedures of distributing, pricing, selling and marketing products and services; confidential and proprietary information related to current, former, and prospective clients; confidential and proprietary information related to vendors and suppliers; trade secrets and proprietary information; treatments, applications, procedures, and testing methods; marketing, business and financial plans; proprietary literature and publications; and other confidential and proprietary information of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School, all of which are unavailable or not known to the general public or to individuals or entities working in the same or similar industry.

Rules pertaining to the use and disclosure of confidential information are listed below:

- Information entrusted to employees must be treated as confidential and privileged, and must not be disclosed to anyone, either inside or outside SLP, who does not have a legitimate need for the information.
- Confidential financial information about SLP must not be disclosed to outsiders.
- Using confidential information for personal gain is strictly prohibited.

The protection of confidential information and proprietary inventions is vital to the interest and the success of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Business Operations Information
- Employee data
- Family/Client information
- Financial information
- Research and development initiatives
- Pending projects and proposals

The disclosure of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's confidential, proprietary or other nonpublic information, whether intentional or unintentional, will be subject to disciplinary action (up to and including possible discharge), even if he or she does not actually benefit from the disclosed information. Please refer to Section 5: Employee Conduct, Electronic Communication for further explanation.

**Conflicts Of Interest:** Employees must manage their personal financial and business affairs to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises when an employee's personal interest in a transaction, or an obligation s/he owes to someone else, comes into conflict with the employee's obligation to Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School or its clients.

If an employee is confronted with a conflict of interest, s/he must disclose the conflict to her/his manager, describe the facts giving rise to the conflict, and excuse her/himself from any deliberation or decision with respect to the transaction.

Employees must not accept anything of value from clients, suppliers, or others in return for any business, service, or confidential information of SLP.

## Substance-Free Workplace

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 requires Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School, as a federal contractor and grant recipient, to certify that it will provide a drug-free workplace. As a result the following is prohibited:

- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or substances, including the illegal use of prescription drugs;
- The illegal use, sale, manufacture, distribution or possession of drugs while on organization business or premises and while operating vehicles on organization business;
- The use, sale, possession, transfer or purchase of alcoholic beverages on organization premises or while performing organization business, except in connection with organization-authorized events; and
- Working under the influence of prescription or nonprescription drugs that could impair judgment or motor functions and potentially place persons or property in jeopardy.



Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School will not condone criminal activity on its property, or on property under its direct control, and will take appropriate action up to and including terminating an employee or requiring him or her to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

As a condition of employment, employees must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction.

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School has the right to conduct a search of all property owned or controlled by us (desks, computers, cabinets, etc.) and employee property on the facilities, such as handbags and briefcases, if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a violation of the substance abuse control policy has occurred. Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School may, but is not required, to obtain the employee's consent when property belonging to or used by an employee is to be searched.

## Employment Classification

All employees are classified as either "exempt" or "non-exempt" from overtime compensation according to the overtime provisions of state and federal laws. Non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay. Exempt employees are not.

As a childcare facility, we are qualified as essential workers. During national pandemics, we will remain open according to state guidelines.

In addition, employees will be classified as the following:

**Full-time:** An employee who is normally scheduled to work a standard 40 hours work week.

**Part-time:** An employee who is normally scheduled to work fewer than 32 hours per week, and is not temporary.

**Regular:** An employee who has completed their probation period.

**Temporary:** An employee who is hired to temporarily supplement the work force or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment beyond the initial stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.

## At Will Employment

Employment with Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School is at-will, meaning that either you or Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School may terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without a reason or notice.

Statements or promises, information in this Employee Handbook, or in any other publications cannot modify this at-will employment relationship.

## **Probationary Period**

The first 90 days are considered the Probationary Period. Either the employee or the employer may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after this period, with or without cause or advance notice.

The Probationary Period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a level of performance acceptable to Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. Similarly, Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School uses this period to evaluate the employee's capabilities, work habits, and overall suitability for the job.

During the probationary period, employees must not request time off, or call in sick due to illness unless exclusion from the workplace is required by VT Licensing standards. Please make the admin aware of any previously scheduled appointments that are during work hours. In the event that the employee is permitted time off or calls out, their probation will be extended by 1 week for each change in schedule.

The probationary period will consist of a full on-boarding process. The employee will learn about VT Licensing Regulations, SLP policies and procedures and more through the orientation process. There will be a combination of on the floor and off the floor training. A series of observations will be conducted to ensure the employee is operating at SLP standards and within state regulations.

The completion of the Probationary Period does not represent a guarantee of continued employment, as employment is always at-will. Receiving disciplinary actions or taking scheduled or unscheduled time off during their probationary period may result in the extension of the probationary period or other corrective action.

## **Personal Data Changes**

To help keep record and benefits program information accurate, please notify Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School of any changes to your personal information, such as: mailing address, emergency contacts, and other possible relevant information. If you are enrolled in benefits plans, please keep the provider or us informed of relevant changes in marital status, dependents' information, beneficiaries, and the like. Updating your personal data info is your responsibility.

## **Open Communication**

Employees should share their concerns, provide input, seek information, and resolve work-related issues by professionally discussing them with their supervisors. The simplest, quickest and most satisfactory solution is often reached at this level.

If discussion with the employee's supervisor is not able to resolve the matter, the concern then may be presented to the next level of management.

## **Social Media Policy**

Employees of Suzy's Little Peanuts who choose to have public profiles, link SLP to their profile (private or public) or add parents to their social media account are expected to maintain the same level of professional ethics and confidentiality as is required while at work. Vulgar, explicit or otherwise inappropriate content is not professional and can affect your employment at SLP. Please be sure to share all concerns with the administration, and do not post to social media. Posting items to social media regarding SLP or information retrieved because you work for SLP is strictly prohibited, and would be a breach of confidentiality!

## **Performance Evaluation**

Supervisors and employees are encouraged to discuss job performance and goals informally, as needed. Observations will be conducted periodically, with a minimum of one per month. A formal written performance evaluation will be conducted at the end of an employee's introductory period and yearly.

Yearly evaluations include performance based review to determine raise amounts.

## **Professional Development and Required Events**

Each staff member must agree and adhere to an education plan based on their positions requirements. All classroom staff must complete a minimum of 16 hours of professional development per calendar year. All education documentation should be uploaded to staff members BFIS accounts. It is staff responsibility to ensure their education is uploaded.

All employees of Suzy's Little Peanuts are required to attend all trainings provided or paid for by Suzy's Little Peanuts including but not limited to in-service days, staff meetings, conferences and after hours workshops.

Additionally, there are SLP sponsored events throughout the year that all Suzy's Little Peanuts employees may be required to attend. These events are paid.

SLP will provide specific yearly trainings during inservice days, including but not limited to an annual Food Program Training, the Civil Rights training, etc. In addition, throughout the year we encourage (and sometimes require) staff to sign up for training within their specific classrooms/fields, we print off relevant training through Northern lights and post them in the staff room. We also may require staff to take specific trainings in relation to things going on with a specific child/family or within the field/center/classroom.

We have Winning Ways Professional Development Training books at all centers and require staff to complete the training. These trainings include information regarding communication, professionalism and creating a positive work environment.

Informal training/mentoring will also be conducted with new staff or staff who need extra training in specific areas. This will include observations, meetings, improvement plans and more.

## Correction Action or Performance Improvement Plans

In the event where an employee's observation is found to be unsatisfactory, a PIP (performance improvement plan) may be put in place to ensure the employee's performance improves.

If an employee is in violation of a major licensing regulation or violation of company policy SLP administrators may take corrective action in the form of:

1. Verbal Written Warning
2. Written Warning
3. Return to probationary period
4. Unpaid suspension
5. Termination

## Termination/Resignation

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment. Upon notice of resignation, the employee's final day will be immediate. An employee can be terminated by the Director OR any member of admin. Employees who are terminated must leave the Suzy's Little Peanuts campus immediately and may not come back on the campus or attend any Suzy's Little Peanuts events. Employees who are terminated will receive their last paycheck via mail to the address on file. The employee's last paycheck will include payment for 50% of unused paid time off hours that the employee has earned.

## Schedules, Compensation and Attendance

**Work Schedules:** Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School retains the right to vary work schedules according to its needs. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate amendments in start and end times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

Your supervisor will inform you of your expected work schedule in writing and when/if amendments are needed.

Several times per year we will have scheduled staff meetings and in-service days. As per usual, staff will be paid only for the hours they work. These meetings are mandatory.

Annually, we have a paid Wellness Day, typically at the end of August. Staff must work their scheduled shifts before and after Wellness Day and are required to stay at the event to receive their regular days pay. Please note that children or spouses are not allowed at Wellness Day or in-service days/staff meetings.

**Record Keeping:** All hourly employees are responsible to check in and out for their scheduled shifts via PROCARE. Your supervisor must always approve overtime work before it is performed.

You will use the procare computer system, please make sure to use ID numbers and a passcode that you will not forget, and to notify your director of any missed punches as soon as possible, as you will not be able to sign into the system if you miss a punch.

Altering, falsifying or tampering with pay records is strictly prohibited and shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Employee Break:** All hourly employees who work more than 6 consecutive hours will have at least a 30-minute unpaid break.

**Breastfeeding Employees:** SLP shall provide a reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk or nurse her child. These breaks shall not exceed three break times per 9.5 hours per work day, including a scheduled lunch break. SLP shall provide a place, other than the bathroom, that is shielded from view and is able to be free from intrusion from coworkers and the public. The employee shall place a privacy sign on the door and close the door to let people know the break room/private space is occupied. Nursing mothers shall make sure that their infant has access to a backup food source that can be given to them if a break time is not available due to staffing resources.

**Payroll:** SLP's normal business hours are Monday through Friday, 6:30 am – 5:30 pm. The payroll period is Sunday to Saturday. Payday is every other Thursday. In the event a regularly scheduled payday falls on a holiday, employees will receive pay on the business day prior.

Deductions: SLP is required by law to deduct from your paycheck, federal, state and local withholding taxes, social security taxes and any court-ordered withholding such as garnishments or child support payments. These amounts, which are designated on your paycheck stub, are forwarded directly to the appropriate entity.

SLP will also make other deductions that have been authorized by you, such as your childcare payments, elected insurances or other benefits.

You must maintain a current, valid IRS W-4 form designating the number of exemptions for federal tax withholding. We cannot honor oral or email requests to “stop withholding” or “just use 99 exemptions this week.”

**Overtime:** In the event that items cannot be completed during work hours, employees may be asked to volunteer for overtime hours. However, in instances where an insufficient number of employees volunteer, a supervisor may require employees to work overtime.

Please note, in the event that there is not sufficient staffing to cover classroom ratios, you cannot leave until covered and ratios remain intact.

**All overtime work must receive the supervisor's prior authorization.**

Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay. Overtime compensation is paid to all non-exempt employees in accordance with prevailing federal and state laws. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time off on sick leave, vacation leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations.

Working overtime without prior authorization from your supervisor may result in disciplinary action.

Overtime work cannot be “traded” for time off.

**Expense Reimbursement:** Employees must maintain accurate documentation of any business-related expenses incurred on behalf of SLP that need to be reimbursed. Prior to purchasing any items for the center, you must request funds and have the items approved by your supervisor.

**Errors in pay:** If you become aware of an error in your pay or deductions, bring it to the attention of Justine so that it can be corrected as soon as possible. You must bring your pay stub in, and use your procare account to try and find the mistake before addressing it with the admin.

**Absences:** Regular attendance is a condition of employment.

If you are ill or injured and need to miss work, you must contact your supervisor as soon as possible, no less than 1 hour before your scheduled shift. You may use electronic communication, but if you do not get a response within 20 minutes, you are required to call your director either at home or at the center depending on the time of day. In an emergency, let your supervisor know as soon as possible the reason for your absence and when you expect to return.

You must submit a time off request of any anticipated absence to your supervisor a minimum of 2 weeks in advance. Please note these are requests, and will not be considered approved until your site Director and HR sign off approving them. While we try to accommodate everyone’s needs and believe time off is important, not all requests can be approved. If you have been denied a time off request and call out for the time requested, you will be subject for corrective counseling.

In the event that you are absent 3 days or more due to an illness/injury, you must provide medical documentation clearing you to return. Medical documentation can be requested by administration for any unplanned absences from work. Unexcused absences are subject to immediate discipline up to and including termination.

If you are absent for 1 working day and do not notify your supervisor, you will be considered to have abandoned your job and you will be terminated.

**Workers Compensation:** Suzy’s Little Peanuts Day School provides a workers' compensation program to our employees. The program reimburses certain out-of-pocket costs and may provide

reimbursement for lost wages sustained as the result of injuries or illnesses sustained in the course of employment.

If you are injured or think you have been injured while working, no matter how slightly, you must report the injury immediately to your supervisor to protect your eligibility for compensation and alert Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School to any potential workplace hazards. If you are seeking medical attention, you and your supervisor must report injury HR.

Workers' compensation is intended to cover only work-related injuries and illnesses. Because of this, neither Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School nor the program will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that might occur outside of work or during employees' voluntary participation in off-duty recreational, social, athletic or community-based activities, even if sponsored by Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School.

**Bereavement Leave:** At the discretion of management, full-time employees may be allowed Bereavement Leave in the event of a death of a member of the immediate family of an employee of SLP. This time will be unpaid unless you have Vacation or Sick time. Please notify your supervisor as soon as possible if you need to take bereavement leave.

For the purposes of this policy, immediate family is defined as husband, wife, child, grandchild, parent, brother, sister, grandparent, and those same relatives of your spouse, and members of your immediate household.

Additional time off without pay may be granted at the discretion of your supervisor to attend the funeral of other relatives or friends.

**Jury Duty/Court:** If you are called for jury duty or subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness, you may participate in this duty without it affecting your job. You will not be paid for missed time.

Other court obligations must be requested and approved as any other time off request.

**Military Leave:** Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School will grant military leave of absence in accordance with applicable law.

**Personal Leave:** Under limited circumstances, employees may be granted a leave of absence for emergency circumstances (where the employee does not have available other leave, such as sick leave, vacation leave, etc.). Generally, this leave is only for extraordinary circumstances, and the decision about whether an employee will be granted such a leave is at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. All personal leave is unpaid.

**Voting:** Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by participating in elections. Generally, employees are able to find time to vote either before or after their regular work schedule. Flexibility in the work hours may be allowed to

accommodate your right to vote. Notify your supervisor prior to Election Day, if you require any such accommodation.

## Emergencies/Safety

**Emergency Conditions:** Emergency conditions, such as severe weather, power outages, or fire can disrupt operations and interfere with work schedules, as well as endanger employees. These extreme circumstances may require the closing of the work facility.

When operations are closed due to an emergency, the time off from scheduled work will not be paid for regular full-time and regular part-time employees. In the event of an emergency or severe weather your supervisor will notify you of any schedule changes or closures.

Employees who come in late, leave early, or are absent because of an emergency or severe weather situation must notify their supervisor immediately.

Help keep our workplace safe. It is Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's policy to provide a workplace free of safety or health hazards. Observe all posted safety rules, adhere to all safety instructions and use safety equipment where required. You must report all observed unsafe equipment, unsafe or unhealthy working conditions, processes or procedures to the immediate attention of your supervisor. Any deliberate or ongoing safety violation or creation of a hazard by an employee will be dealt with through disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Don't engage in horseplay or pranks that may create unsafe conditions.

If you encounter another employee who is having a medical or safety emergency, contact your supervisor immediately. When in doubt, call 911. Do not attempt to assist or move another employee who is having a medical problem unless you are qualified to do. Get professional help.

**Mandated Reporting:** As a childcareworker you are a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse and neglect. You must complete the Mandated Reporter training during your first week of employment. If you reasonably suspect child abuse or neglect, you are legally required to make a report to our Department of Children and Families (DCF) — within 24 hours of the time you first received or observed information about the suspected abuse/neglect. There are forms in the center and that can be found online (these forms will help you have all of the information you need ready when reporting). Please notify your Director when you are making or have made a report. Any information received/witnessed at SLP reported by you to DCF is an SLP report, so please include the center in any of your decision makings to report. Please remember it is YOUR decision when to report. The center may also make the decision that a report is required. However, you must make your own choice as well!

To make a report: Call **1-800-649-5285** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

**If a child is in immediate danger, dial 911 or call your local police first.**

Then, call DCF to make a report. Calling law enforcement is not the same as reporting to DCF. Vermont law provides you with immunity from civil or criminal liability if your report was made in good faith. However failing to report as required by law can result in criminal prosecution with



a fine of up to \$500. Failing to report as required by law with the intent to conceal the abuse or neglect can result in imprisonment for up to six months and a fine of up to \$1,000

**Emergency Preparedness:** Our emergency response plan, “Linus has lost his blanket” will be given to you at the time of employment and is also available in the forms binder in each classroom. Please familiarize yourself with this plan for your respective center. Please make sure that children have shoes or slippers on at all times, that you have your classroom’s emergency contacts, attendance and phone nearby at all times, and that your classroom is free of dangerous hazards such as spilled liquid or small toys on the floor in walkways.

Also, please always keep with you your attendance clip board (with children signed in/out accurately and all updated emergency contact information), your classroom phone and first aid kit.

## Benefits

**Incentives:** SLP rewards our staff for longevity, attendance

3 months	\$ Raise (per contract) Three PTO days SLP T-Shirt Eligible for employer contribution to Health Insurance Eligible for Aflac Eligible for paid holidays
6 months	One day of PTO
1 year	SLP Jacket Four Sick Days 1 hour of PTO for every 40 hours worked during regular employment (non-probationary periods) Review and Performance based raise

**Yearly Education Bonuses** (paid out yearly in December):

Northern Lights Career Ladder: Bonus Schedule

(All applicable documents must be added to the BFIS account in order to qualify for bonuses.)

Level 1: Obtaining Certificate:	\$50.00
Years after:	\$25.00
Level 2: Obtaining Certificate:	\$75.00
Years after:	\$50.00
Level 3: Obtaining Certificate:	\$100.00
Years after:	\$75.00
Level 4: Obtaining Certificate:	\$125.00
Years after:	\$100.00
Level 5: Obtaining Certificate:	\$150.00
Years after:	\$125.00

College Course: \$25.00 per 3 credit college course  
(unofficial transcript must be handed in to Directors prior to December of current year and official transcript sent into BFIS)

**Holidays:** According to applicable restrictions, Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School will grant paid holiday time off to all full time employees once their probationary period is successfully completed. Holiday pay will be calculated based on the employee's straight-time pay rate (as of the date of the holiday) times the number of hours the employee would have worked on that day.

Please see the current SLP calendar for days we are closed and staff are off. Please note, we pay for all holidays we close. To be eligible for holiday pay you must have worked your scheduled hours the entire week of the holiday. If the holiday falls on a Monday/Friday, then the staff must work the previous and following business day that we are open.

**Emergency Closures:** In the event your center must close for the day due to an emergency, staff will be paid. Please note if this occurs more than two days within our calendar year then the follow dates will be unpaid.

**Sick Time:** SLP provides a minimum of 4 sick days per employee's anniversary for regular full-time employees, which is accessible after 1 year of employment. Year 2, 5 days accrue. Year 3 and beyond, 6 days accrue. Temporary employees do not accrue paid sick leave. Sick time is provided for the purpose of allowing employees to take time off for medical reasons. Acceptable medical reasons include the employee's own illness or injury, and that of a child, parent, or spouse who is ill or injured.

- All employees are responsible for recording sick time used.
- Sick time is required to be used for call outs, appointments, etc.
- Sick leave does not carry over year to year.
- Employees who separate from Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School will forfeit any unused sick time, unless state or local law requires otherwise.
- Must be used in 2 hour increments
- Call outs or time off taken in accordance with sick policy will automatically have sick time or PTO added when available.
- Be sure to request all time off for appointments a minimum of 2 weeks prior and document sick time being applied.

All time off taken **will always** be compensated with paid time off when available - please be sure to complete time off forms completely and in a timely manner.

**Paid Time Off (PTO):** SLP provides vacation time to all regular, in good standing, full-time employees. Vacation hours are available after one year of working at the company and are given all at once on your anniversary date. PTO Hours are accrued per every 40 hours worked, according to length of time with the company. In the event an employee is on probation all time off benefits cannot be accessed, nor will PTO continue to be accrued.

Vacation pay will be calculated based on the employee's straight-time pay rate (in effect when vacation benefits are used) times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on the day(s) of absence. You must use vacation time in 2 hour increments

Vacation pay does not include shift differentials, incentive pay, bonuses, or other special forms of compensation.

Vacation leave requests should be submitted to your supervisor a minimum of 2 weeks in advance and are subject to approval. Requests will be evaluated based upon various factors, including anticipated operating requirements and staffing considerations during the proposed absence. Vacation is granted on a first come first serve basis

Unused vacation time can be rolled over until it reaches 160 hours or 4 weeks.

Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for half of their vacation benefits which have accrued through the last day of work or as required by state law. Please note that unused benefits will be applied to employee accounts before being issued, including past due child care accounts, money owed to the company for training, outstanding loans or any other advances of pay.

Vacation benefits will be awarded to eligible employees according to the following schedules: (time can be used on a first come/first serve basis and cannot be used on days of staff meetings or center events, as these are mandatory.

All time off taken **will always** be compensated with paid time off when available - please be sure to complete time off forms completely and in a timely manner.

**Full-time employees PTO chart:**

<b>Length of Service</b>	<b>Number of days</b>
90 Days	3
6 months	1
90 days-1 year accessible after year 1 anniversary	1 PTO hour earned per 40 hours worked
Year 1 - Year 2 accessible after year 2 anniversary	1.5 PTO hours earned per 40 hours worked
Year 2 - Year 3 accessible after year 3 anniversary	2 PTO hours earned per 40 hours worked
Year 3 - Year 4 accessible after year 4 anniversary	2 PTO hours earned per 40 hours worked

Year 4 - Year 5 accessible after year 5 anniversary	2 PTO hours earned per 40 hours worked
After year 5 accessible at each anniversary	2.5 PTO hours earned per 40 hours worked
After year 10 accessible at each anniversary	3 PTO hours earned per 40 hours worked

## Employee Conduct

**Computer Use:** Use of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's computer and telecommunication resources and other organization equipment by a person who is not properly authorized is not permitted. All employees have the responsibility to use their assigned computer and telecommunication resources in an efficient, effective, ethical, and lawful manner.

Employees may not install software onto their individual computers or the network without management authorization to do so. Any duplication of copyrighted software, except for backup and archival purposes, is a violation of organization policy and federal law. Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School may delete unlicensed and personal documents/software without notice.

**Electronic Communication:** All communications transmitted by, received from, or stored in Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's computer systems are considered to be the property of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School. The following apply to use of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's computer and telecommunication resources and services:

- Employees must comply with all software licenses, copyrights, and all other state and federal laws governing intellectual property.
- Employees should not alter or copy files belonging to others without first obtaining permission from the owner of the file.
- No personal right of privacy exists in any file contained within or transmitted by Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's computers. Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School reserves the right to monitor the operation of these systems, to access all records within them, and to retain or dispose of those records as it deems necessary.
- Electronic communication (e-mail, voice mail, Internet, etc.) should not be used in any way that is disruptive, offensive to others, harmful to morale, fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, indecent, profane, obscene, intimidating or unlawful. Specifically prohibited are sexually explicit materials, ethnic or racial slurs, or anything that may be construed as disparaging of others based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other basis prohibited by applicable state, federal or local laws. This also applies to downloading, displaying or storing of such materials in Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's computers.
- The computer and telecommunication resources and services of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School may not be used for the transmission or storage of commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive programs (viruses and self-replicating code), religious, or political material.

- While Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School understands that employees occasionally use their computer and the Internet for personal use, such use should be kept to a minimum and should not interfere with the performance and completion of their job responsibilities.
- The rules in this Employee Handbook on confidentiality and electronic communication extend to social media to the extent it is used on our equipment or with identification of us as your employer. Please be mindful and careful when engaging in exchanges of social media with other employees, and our families, vendors, sponsors, customers, and the like, so that you do not disclose our confidential information to outsiders or the general public, and so that you represent us in a positive light. Even seemingly harmless posts on social media sites (including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter & Instagram) can violate the privacy of children and families. Social media comments that are playful or teasing in a personal setting may be out of place when identified with us. If you identified yourself as an employee of ours in social media, you may be subject to the applicable portions of this Employee Handbook with respect to that conduct.
- Staff shall NOT post or share pictures retrieved from SLP (this includes any and all photographs taken of children, classrooms, etc). In the event you want to share something let us know and we will post it, then you can share our original post!

**Outside Employment:** Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School expects that all of its employees will be professionally committed to their position and responsibilities. Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School also supports employees who wish to engage in outside employment or community related activities, as long as such efforts do not create a conflict of interest or interfere with the regular and punctual fulfillment of your work with Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School. Employees who have questions regarding possible conflicts of interest should seek advice from the admin.

**Personal Appearance:** Employees have a direct impact on the image of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School and should appear neat, clean, and dressed appropriately. Any tattoos that are not appropriate to children must be covered. Also, please do not wear perfume or heavily scented lotions or creams as this can bother children who have sensitive skin. Bending, reaching, and spending time on the floor is a big part of your job when working with children. Pants and shirts must keep you covered at all times.

- Pants must be clean, and have no holes or rips.
- Pants must fit so that your bottom stays covered when bending and reaching.
- Shirts must fit loosely and be clean and stain free.
- No halter, crop tops, spaghetti straps or low cut tops.
- Tank-tops may be worn if the strap is 1 inch or thicker in width and can cover all undergarments.
- T-shirts should not have slogans, brand logos, advertising or inappropriate graphics. No words.
- If shorts or skirts are worn they must be no shorter than your fingertips when your arms are fully extended.
- Clean indoor shoes are required at all times when working in the center in case of a fire drill.
- Closed toe shoes must be worn at all times.
- Shoes with back/back straps must be worn at all times.

- Leggings, athletic or yoga style pants must be worn with a long shirt to cover your bottom. During your time at the center, you may be involved in such activities such as painting, water and sand play, cleaning, outdoor play, and other somewhat messy activities. Your clothes should allow you to participate in these activities while still appearing professional; art supplies and activities are washable.

Your clothes should also reflect the weather. The children play outside in all kinds of weather, and you will be asked to go out as well. In the winter, boots, mittens, caps, and coats are required. You may also want to bring snow pants, we get a lot of snow and your pants may get wet while outside in deep snow.

**Personal Relationships:** While Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School has no prohibition against hiring relatives of other employees, close family members such as parents, children, spouses, siblings, significant others, or in-laws will not be hired into, or transferred from, positions where they directly or indirectly supervise or are supervised by another close family member or significant other. Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School reserves the right to determine in all cases if a close relationship exists to prohibit a supervisory relationship. In addition, these relationships cannot pose as a distraction, or prohibit work related activities.

**Phone Usage/ Cell Phone Policy:** Personal calls should be kept to a minimum and should not interfere with the employee's work. Excessive use of the phones during work time will result in discipline.

In order to maintain a safe and professional workplace, cell phone use for personal phone calls, answering personal email, texting, taking photographs or surfing the web is not permitted. However, there may be times when either a cell phone or walkie-talkie will be required for safety when off-site during walks or trips outside of the premises. These instances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**It is a major licensing violation if an employee is looking at a cell phone instead of supervising the children.** If an employee is seen with a cell phone during work time without the pre-approval of their director, disciplinary action will be taken. In addition, smart watches can be used for fitness reasons only. If you are seen excessively checking your smart watches, then you will no longer be able to wear it while in the classroom.

All cell phones or other means of personal communication during the work day should be kept in the staff room, office or in the employee's personal vehicle. During breaks you, of course, are permitted use of your personal devices. However, the devices must still remain out of the classroom. At no point, on the clock or off the clock are you allowed to use your device in the classroom or in the presence of children.

**Political Activity:** You can participate in political activities as long as it does not conflict with your work performance, or federal or state law and you make it clear in your interactions that you are acting as a private citizen, not representing Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School.

In the effort to keep SLP a safe space for all, while you are on our property your personal items should in no way be affiliated with specific political activities.

**Smoking Policy:** As required by law, all facilities and vehicles owned, operated or leased by Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School are smoke-free.

## Child Medications/Injuries/Illness/Accidents

### Allergies:

- For each child with special health care needs or food allergies or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider must provide documentation of the need for food accommodations.
- An allergy awareness/special nutrition needs sheet is posted in the cooking area, food serving area and in each classroom. **All staff is expected to be familiar with all of the content on the allergy awareness/special nutrition sheet.**
- SLP protects children with food allergies from contact with the problem food. The program asks families of a child with food allergies to give consent so that we can post information about the child's food allergy (name and allergy). If consent is not given a photo will not be posted.
- Staff need to maintain areas used by staff and children who have allergies or any other special environmental health needs in accordance with the recommendations of the individual's health professional.

**Medications:** Child Care Regulations prohibit us from giving a child medication of any kind unless we have filled out and signed a "Permission to Administer Medication Form". All medication must be in the original, labeled container. We can only administer medication as directed by the package or prescription information.

The first dose of any new medication must be administered at home to make sure the child does not have any adverse reactions. Only staff that have completed the Medication Administration training can administer medication to children.

If a child is on antibiotics he/she continues to be contagious for 24 hours after the first dose of medication and cannot return to childcare until this time period has passed.

**Prescription Medication:** Suzy's Little Peanuts does not keep medication on site unless a medical plan specifies that certain medication (generally asthma or allergy medication) be kept on site in case of an emergency.

If a child needs to have medication administered to them either from a doctor or over the counter we must have the parent fill out a medication sheet (located in the office).

The following procedure must be followed in the event that a parent would like their child to have a non-prescription/ prescription oral medication administered at Suzy's Little Peanuts:

- The medication form must be completed in its entirety. Medicine stored in a locked medicine bag.
- A teacher who has completed the medication administration training can only give medication.
- Medication form should be completed accurately and in its entirety.
- When administering medication, the medication administration log should be completed in its entirety. In addition, the amount given, when and who gave it, should be written on the child's daily sheet and be recorded in the classroom communication log.
- At the end of the week, the medicine should be sent home and the medication sheet should be filed into the child's file.

The following procedures must be followed for non-oral prescription medications.

- The medication form must be completed in its entirety. Medicine stored in a locked medicine bag.
- A teacher who has completed the medication administration training can only give medication.
- Medication form should be completed accurately and in its entirety.
- When administering medication, the medication administration log should be completed in its entirety. In addition, the amount given, when and who gave it, should be written on the child's daily sheet and be recorded in the classroom communication log.
- At the end of the week, the medicine should be sent home and the medication sheet should be filed into the child's file.

**Non Prescription Medication:** Non-prescription medication is to be kept locked in a medicine box (these medications are generally pain medications, seasonal allergy medications, etc.).

Items that do not need to be kept in the locked medicine bag, but still need to be kept out of reach are as follows...

- Sunscreen
- Tick and insect repellent
- Ointments and Creams
- Lotions

The following procedures must be followed for non-oral non-prescription medications.

- Written general permission kept in the classroom forms binder prior to administration.
- Support staff and assistant teachers may administer Non-oral non-prescription medications upon request of the lead teacher. This is to avoid administration of medication.

**Injuries:** Children are active and busy, therefore, it is normal for them to receive scrapes, bumps, cuts, and bruises. As a caregiver, you must be prepared to handle all injuries with a calm demeanor. Once care is provided, please document the accident. If applicable, you should contact the parent. You must always call the families if there is a head injury that occurs, no matter how minor.



Remember the following points:

- Your behavior will affect the reaction of the children present. Accept the child's tears, crying not only expresses pain but also fear, tension and sometimes even relief. Avoid statements such as, "Big kids don't cry" or "That doesn't hurt."
- React to the child by accepting their feelings by hugging them (with their permission), holding their hand, patting their back. Often all a child needs is to have their feelings validated and mirrored back with statements such as "Oh you look sad" followed by a frown.
- Be honest with the injured child, explain what you are doing.
- Make the treatment a learning situation, if possible. Explain why you are washing the cut or why the pad on the bandage should not be touched.
- Be aware of the reactions of the other children and be prepared to help deal with their concerns also.

**Please note if a child hurt their head, please be sure to contact the guardians to let them know of the injury.**

**Fully stocked first aid kits are located in each classroom and should always be taken out to the playground.**

**You are expected to keep your CPR and First Aid up to date at all times. These cards must be kept in your staff file in the office.**

### **Documenting Accidents and Incidents:**

Incident reports should be written for incidents when the child intentionally puts themselves or another person in physical danger. Notify the director of all reports files.

- Examples: biting, pushing a child so far that they have the potential to get a bruise/broken bone etc., kicking a child so hard that they are propelled to the ground or onto an object with force, punching someone with a closed fist.

### **All reports must have the following things:**

Full name of the child, DOB, Date, Time, Description and Action taken:

The description must be detailed and include if the incident was provoked, and exactly what happened.

- Example: Description of Incident: Susan was making a sand castle in the sandbox, when a friend walked over and hit her with an open hand on the end. Susan immediately cried and ran to the teacher.

Actions Taken: Susan was given lots of hugs and comforts. Susan was offered an ice pack, but refused to take one.

The incident needs to be objective meaning that you do not impose what you “think” the child is thinking or feeling.

Example of an observation that is not objective:

- Emily bit the child sitting next to her because she felt angry that the child took her spoon.

Example of an observation that is objective:

- Emily was sitting next to a child at the table. The child took Emily’s spoon. Emily bit the child on the hand.

**If on site medical treatment is necessary:**

- Notify the director or teacher in charge immediately so that all of the children in your care can be attended to while you attend to the child.
- If the child has a treatment plan follow that above all else.
- Move the child to an environment that can contain body fluid. **A child should not be moved if there is any possibility that doing so could result in injury.** The areas that should be used are the bathrooms.
- Wear gloves when there is a possibility of coming in contact with body fluids such as blood, spit, vomit, etc.
- Document the accident, injury or illness and steps taken.
- The lead teacher or director shall make the parent aware of any on site medical treatment or accidents and injury that cause blood, pain other than a quick “ow!”, or a situation that may need to result in a doctor’s appointment (complaining of ear pain, head pain, etc.).
- Clean up after the treatment and make the director aware of any supplies that will need replenishing

If a child’s on site injury resulted in a doctor or dentist visit the director must report it to licensing within 48 hours.

**If off site medical attention is necessary for children:**

- Stay with or arrange for trained staff members to stay with the child and perform necessary medical treatment (CPR, First Aid ect.).
- Reassure the child. Explain what is happening in simple clear language if they are conscious.
- Notify the director or teacher in charge immediately.
- Contact the parents or guardians, if possible, so they can take the child to their own physician.
- If the child is transported by ambulance, the child must be accompanied by his/her teacher or the director if the parent cannot be reached. The adult must have the child’s parent consent form found in the child’s file containing the medical release form before a doctor will give treatment.
- Delegate the injury report form or fill it out yourself. The person who fills out the injury report must be the person with the most information about the incident. This form must be

filed with the state by the director within 24 hours.

**In a serious medical emergency do not hesitate to call 911.**

**Illness:** If a child becomes ill and cannot comfortably participate in daily activities or is possibly contagious and meets the guidelines listed in the Suzy's Little Peanuts Health Policy, please follow the following:

- The lead teacher or director can make the judgment call on whether or not the child should stay at the center. If a teacher calls a child's guardian to send a child home sick, or to inform a guardian of an illness, the director or admin in charge must be notified as well.
- The lead teacher or director should make all attempts necessary to reach the parents or guardians; if parents and guardians cannot be reached the emergency contacts should be reached. Emergency contacts may pick up children when necessary but must transport them safely using appropriate child seats. (**Don't forget to check the ID of emergency contact or other persons sent by the parents to pick-up a sick or injured child**).
- If a child could be contagious they should be made comfortable in an area away from other children while they are waiting to be picked up. At no time shall a child be left alone.
- Documentation of illness must be filled out. A copy should be sent home with the sick child and a copy should be filled.

**When contacting a parent or guardian to report on site or off site medical treatment or illness:**

- Identify yourself "Hi this is \_\_\_\_\_ from Suzy's Little Peanuts"
- Give the important information first " \_\_\_\_\_ got injured and is being transported by ambulance to Springfield Hospital." " \_\_\_\_\_ fell down and has a two inch cut on her elbow, I cleaned and bandaged it and she seems to be fine now, she doesn't have to be picked up but I wanted to make you aware of it." " \_\_\_\_\_ threw up, he doesn't have a fever but he does need to be picked up"
- Give the parent the full story (do not name other children remember to keep confidentiality) if they ask for it.
- Tell the parent if you think the child should be seen by the doctor " \_\_\_\_\_ keeps complaining that his left ear hurts, I just wanted you to know in case you wanted to make a doctor's appointment."
- Remain calm and polite it is scary for parents to get this information.

Emergency contact sheets are located on/in the clipboard in each classroom and in the office as well. If needed to access the office copy, please ask the Director

**Please see our illness/exclusion policies below:**

**The following are reasons a child may be sent home due to illness/symptoms...**

**COVID/Cold/Flu-like Symptoms** - headache, runny nose, cough, fever etc. (see COVID below)

**Fever** (100.4 degrees or higher) - child must be fever and symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication to attend (and have no additional symptoms or be suspected of COVID).

**Diarrhea** - That cannot be contained in the toilet or diaper, happens 2 or more times in a 24 hours period or combined with any other symptoms.

**Vomiting** - 2 or more times in 24 hours or combined with other symptoms.

**Conjunctivitis** - Watery, red eyes or continuing yellow/green eye discharge.

**Lice** - child needs to be treated and all nits removed before returning.

**Pain or excessive Fatigue** - of which the child complains and interferes with activities.

**Severe coughing** - of which a child is having coughing fits or trouble breathing normally.

**Open or moist cold sore**- that cannot be covered or is not being treated.

**Skin rash that has not been identified by a physician** - a note must remain on file for recurring non - contagious rashes.

**If your child is unable to participate in our program's activities or they have multiple smaller symptoms, they will be sent home.**

**Children who have been out due to illness may return when...**

They are free of **COVID symptoms** for over 24 hours AND have received two rapid negative test results OR have received a negative PCR.

**COVID positive**- They are free of symptoms, AND... 1 of the following 3 are complete:

They have received two rapid negative test results taken on day 4 & day 5,

OR have received a negative PCR result taken on day 5 and wear a mask.

OR they have been symptom free for 10 days or have received a Doctors note clearing them.

**Fever, Diarrhea, Vomiting**-They have been free of illness for over 24 hours without any aid of medication, pain, etc..

**Conjunctivitis**- They have been treated with the first dose of an antibiotic medication.

**Pain or excessive Fatigue** - They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.

If the child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care.

**Open or moist cold sore**-They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling, unless:

- The child's physician signs a note stating the child's condition is not contagious, and;
- The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.

\*\*\*All of the above illness policies apply to staff as well.

\*\*\*All of the above are a result of or in consideration of VT CDD regulations.

\*\*\*Please note the above is subject to change according to CDC, VT Dept of Health, and CDD.

**Please remember to DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT!**

**Accident Reports:** Accident reports should be written for the child who gets injured. The entire form must be filled out with details about the accident and the care provided.

**Incident Reports:** Incident reports should be written for the child who caused the injury, or whose behaviors need to be notified to the families.

**Information Reports:** Information reports should be completed when an incident occurs that we think the family should be notified about but is not necessarily an accident or behavioral concern.

**Confidentiality:** You may only write the child's name on the report if that report is for the child. You may not ever share the name of the child involved in the incident or accident.

**What to do with a completed form:**

1. Have the guardian of the child sign the form and offer the family a copy of the form.
2. Return the signed form to the office to be filed.

## **Staff Illness and Injury**

**IF MEDICAL SUPPORT IS NECESSARY FOR STAFF:**

- Notify the director or teacher in charge immediately.
- If necessary notify an emergency contact person.
- Complete illness or injury report.

**\*\*For less severe injuries contact the director or teacher in charge immediately.**

### **Illness**

Staff shall not attend work if they have any of the below symptoms:

(Please use your discretion)

- Any indication of childhood illnesses-chicken pox, mumps, etc.
- Diarrhea or active vomiting
- Significant respiratory distress
- Fever within the past 24 hours.

A doctor's note is required if you are going to miss more than 3 days or if you are out because of a diagnosed contagious disease (Chicken pox, mumps, infection, etc.).

You must contact your director as soon as you are diagnosed with a contagious disease or know that you are going to miss work because of sickness. We must keep appropriate child to staff ratios to remain within licensing regulations.

Excessive sick days without a doctor's note can lead to dismissal.

**Staff Medication:** If staff are required to take medication while at work it must be kept locked in the office or in the employee's vehicle. No medication is to be kept in the classroom unless with a

doctor's note. In the case that a medication must be kept in the classroom, it should be kept in the classroom's locked medication bag with a proper prescription label and container.

**Staff Allergies:** If you have an allergy it is your responsibility to make that allergy known to the director so that the necessary precautions can be taken by the center. All allergies are listed on the allergy report hanging in each classroom.

### **General Health Standards**

- See hand washing section.
- Drinking water shall be available upon request and offered often to all children. Water bottles/jugs/cups must be taken outside during recess in warm weather.
- **There shall be no smoking on Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School's property or in view of the children.**
- All surfaces shall be cleaned according to the ECERS table washing procedures posted near all tables before and after food is served and after becoming messy.
- Toys mouthed by children shall be placed in the dirty bucket then disinfected before re-entering play.
- Indoor toys shall be sprayed with disinfecting solution at the end of each day
- Sanitizing and disinfection solutions shall be refilled as needed (check every day at close and be kept near diapering areas, in cooking areas and food service areas and in each classroom.
- Diaper changing mats must be sanitized and wiped dry, then disinfected and left for a minimum of two minutes between children, and at the end of the day.
- Bathrooms, diapering areas, table tops and door knobs shall be disinfected daily.
- Hard floors shall be swept/vacuumed and mopped daily.
- Carpets shall be vacuumed daily.
- Carpets shall be shampooed a minimum of every 3 months.
- Children shall have their clothes changed when necessary. Parents are responsible for providing children with a change of clothes. Other extras that children can borrow are sometimes available in the office or storage area.
- Nap mats and cribs must be disinfected after each use. Each child must use their own crib sheet. Cribs can be assigned to one child for the week but must only be used by that one child if the crib sheet is to stay on the crib.
- Nap sheets and blankets must be sent home with children on their last scheduled day of the week. Each room is responsible for sending home nap sheets and blankets for their children.
- Nap bins that store bedding should be emptied and sprayed with disinfectant and left to dry once bedding is sent home.
- Water tables must be sprayed with disinfecting solution and let dry before filling with water. Drain water after water play is complete and follow table washing procedures to clean and sanitize the water table.

We have visitors coming throughout the center at all times of the day. We need every staff member to help keep the rooms in order. Put away clutter, clean tables and counters, and clean sinks whenever you see the need, not only when your staff duties dictate that it is your responsibility.

Toys and equipment that are likely to be mouthed or you see mouthed must be separated from the other toys in a mouthed toy bucket and disinfected daily

Each staff member will be responsible for certain cleaning duties including monthly duties. Each classroom will have cleaning check lists that will need to be completed daily as well as opening and closing cleaning duties. There are three cleaning solutions through Cintas, red for daily use, blue for end of the day disinfecting, and green for floor and bathroom cleaning. These solutions can be refilled in the bottles, using one pump then filling the rest with water. Cintas also supplies our mops and mop heads, air fresheners, toilet paper, paper towels, soaps, sanitizing solution, and our outdoor/walkway mats. All of this helps to keep our centers clean and appearance nice.

## Mealtime

Mealtime should be a pleasant, sociable time for all concerned. You are required by licensing to sit with the children while they are eating their meal or snack. Encourage the children to try all foods but do not make an issue of it. Teach manners through example, as well as discussing them while using them.

We feed the children every 3 hours while they are in our care. Infants and toddler meal times are 8:30, 11:30 and 2:30. Preschool meal times are 9:00, 12:00 and 3:00.

**At SLP, we follow all of the CACFP guidelines when serving meals and snacks to children. Please familiarize yourself with these requirements, including but not limited to required serving sizes and components. You are also required to fill out a meal count form at the time of service to each meal served.**

## Behavior Guidance

**Behavior Guidance:** Discipline is not to be confused with punishment; it is considered to be behavior guidance. The purpose of behavior guidance is to teach children appropriate behaviors. It is also to promote positive social and emotional growth. Staff members are to provide a positive model of acceptable behavior at all times. Behavior guidance will be tailored to meet the individual child's developmental level. Our first attempt will always be to redirect children and groups away from problems and toward constructive activity in order to keep conflict to a minimum. The staff will use various positive guidance techniques including Second Step, Early MTSS and logical and natural consequences when there are no safety concerns. **Absolutely no form of verbal abuse or physical punishment will be tolerated.** Please use the following behavior policies for a guide on how to deal with unwanted behavior.

### BEHAVIOR POLICY

When communicating to a child...

- Crouch or kneel to be on their eye level
- Appropriate tone (no yelling/shouting)
- Do not talk to the child across the room, relocate to be on their level
- Discuss actions and how to resolve the situation/problem in the appropriate way

- Ignore negative behavior when possible
- Use positive reinforcement for positive behavior.

For hands on behavior, the child is to be removed immediately to take a body break with a teacher. Once calm, the teacher will discuss the behavior with the child and discuss what she/he can do next time they are frustrated/angry/sad etc. Then proceed to guide the child to “make it better” with a choice of theirs. Depending on the situation they may need to be redirected to a spot of their own interest.

For behaviors such as not listening, give the child at most two verbal warnings. If the behavior persists relocate yourself next to the child on their level and discuss a positive way to resolve the behavior. If the child still continues with negative actions remove them from the area and take a body break with them until they are ready to discuss the issue and find a positive way to amend the situation.

For behaviors that persist and children are unable to gain self-control, alone time with the child is recommended. Go to a calm area in the classroom, just you and the child and find an activity to get their mind off the negativity he/she is feeling. Have the activity be something they can do alone and have an interest in, such as: read a book, use legos, a puzzle etc. Then once calm, figure out what triggers the feeling and make a positive plan to avoid it and/or what the child can do if that situation occurs again.

In a situation where the child is escalating with violence remove the children from the room if possible, as quickly as possible. We want all children to feel safe at our center. Acting quickly in a situation could save a child from feeling unsafe or threatened.

## **Sleep and Rest Accommodations:**

**Naptime:** Mats should be set up so that there is the least amount of interaction between children and that all children are visible. Mats need to be covered by a crib sheet or blanket; children may not lie directly on a mat. Mats should be 2 feet apart or a barrier must be set up in between the children. Quiet time varies slightly based on classroom routines, but generally from 12 or 12:30 – 2:30. The shades are to be closed, lights dimmed and you may play quiet, relaxing music of your choice as long as the lyrics are appropriate for children. Please do not allow children older than 2 to sleep longer than 2:30.

Children that do not fall asleep should be allowed to participate in a quiet activity while the other children nap. Your classroom may have a specific routine for children who do not nap, so make sure to talk with your co-teacher about this. Children need at least a sheet for the nap mat/cot and may bring a blanket and small comfort item from home for naptime. Please make sure to send children’s nap bedding home on their last scheduled day of the week to be washed.

**Sleep time for Infants:** Infants must be allowed to sleep as needed. Infants under 12 months old cannot have anything other than a fitted crib sheet, and pacifier in their cribs. All children above 2 months old can have an additional blanket and small comfort item. All infants should be physically observed while sleeping, at least every 15 minutes in addition to maintaining proper supervision.

## **Classroom/ Care Procedures**

**Physical Needs of Children:** Parents and caregivers are often concerned with the physical needs of their children when they are in care. They want to pick up a child who is visibly clean and who



has not soiled multiple changes of clothing unnecessarily. For this reason and to keep children comfortable please use the below as a guide:

- When going outside children must be dressed suitably. In winter they must wear snow pants, coats (sweatshirts over short sleeves), boots, mittens and hats that cover the ears of the child. **To promote self-help skills children who are developmentally ready (most toddlers can do this) should be encouraged to get themselves ready for outdoor play using a visual chart.**
- Children should always wear closed toe shoes, and be dressed appropriately for outdoor weather/ play.
- If a child's clothing becomes messy from either a toileting accident or from messy play, please make sure to change the child's clothing and use a plastic bag to contain the messy clothing. All dirty clothing in bags needs to be labeled with the child's name and left in their cubby. Please notify the person picking up the child of why they are changed and remind them to take the soiled items home.

**Center/Classroom Safety:** All staff are responsible for the safety of the center and the classroom in which they work. Adults are responsible for keeping sharp or otherwise dangerous items out of reach of children at all times. This includes scissors, staplers, pencil sharpeners, staples, push pins, etc. We use these items frequently and we all need to be aware of where they are kept. The classroom must be inspected by the teacher who first arrives, at the end of free play, after naptime and whenever a threat of safety is present in the classroom (example, after a teacher staples projects). The following shall be checked during a safety inspection:

- Electrical cords that are being used are wound up to leave less exposed cord and taped down.
- All outlets should have outlet covers if empty.
- Paths for walking are clear and floors are free of debris including toys not being used. Things to look for (small wads of paper, rocks, balloons, marbles, buttons, etc.)
- Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of children's reach.
- Floor spills are wiped up immediately
- Trashes are emptied as soon as they are full and trash can lids are kept clean.
- All toys are in good repair and do not pose any threats of safety (pinching fingers, choking hazard etc.)
- Cleaning supplies are kept out of reach of children at all times.
- Large buckets of liquid are not present
  
- Emergency contact information for all children kept by the classroom phone includes, parents work and home numbers, emergency contacts, health care providers and dentists. As well as in/on the clipboards.
- The following numbers must be posted by each phone- Fire, Police, Ambulance, Poison Center, 911 Address and directions to the facility, Number for reporting suspected abuse or neglect, Child Care Services Division, all staff and subs phone numbers.
- Fire evacuation plans and steps must be clearly posted in all rooms and hallways.
- Staff must read and become familiar with the evacuation and emergency plans.
- Teachers are encouraged to teach safety lessons to the children in areas such as fire safety, poison, pets, etc. throughout the year.

- If the children are being transported as part of the program they must all ride in approved safety seats (provided by the parent) that are secured by a safety belt. The guidelines for safety seat approval can be found in the licensing regulation book.
- **Do not allow a child to leave the center with anyone other than those people listed on the emergency contact information sheet, please ID anyone who have never seen before.**
- If a teacher requires emergency first aid, his/her emergency medical information is kept in their file in the office.
- All first aid kits will be kept filled according to the first aid checklists.
- When walking with children (this includes walking to the playground).
  - Staff should count children, at each enter/exit.
  - The children must walk in a line
  - A teacher must be at the front and back of the line
  - Children are never to be lead through the parking lot

## **Outdoor Safety:**

### **Staff Supervision Rules**

1. First aid kit on playground at all times
2. Emergency contacts for each child with staff
3. Clipboards with sign-in/out for each classroom on playground
4. Zoning method of supervision must be used (1 staff in each different area of playground no standing together)
5. Follow weather chart - Green indicates safe weather to play. Yellow indicatesto proceed with caution -lessen your time outside. Red indicates it is unsafe to go outside.
6. Be sure children are dressed according to season/color. Windchill chart: Green (children need coats, hats, mittens, boots,
7. Staff must be interacting with children.
8. Follow maximum playground time based on age of children
9. Diaper and bottle on time
10. Staff must go with children who are entering the building from playground (using bathroom)
11. Center phone must be on playground

### **Playground Rules for Children**

1. Sand in the sandbox and on the ground- digging should be done in sand box, not under swings/geodome etc.
2. Bikes on the cement/or designated area
3. Leave woodchips on the ground
4. Garden boxes, stairs, gate or fence are not for climbing
5. Standing on or twisting on the swings is not permitted
6. Adults only push swings

### **Playground Inspection (must be done daily)**

Performed by first staff on playground

1. Check safety of swings-seats, chain cover, wear and tear on metal to wood connectors

2. Inspect sand and ground for broken toys, unsafe things, trash, etc.
3. Inspect toys for safety
4. Inspect equipment for rough edges, splinter pieces, wear and tear, etc.
5. Rake wood chips under the swings to a minimum of 9 inches
6. Sweep cement bike areas

If anything is questionable it must be removed from the playground for inspection by the director. Winter hours-all children need to be inside by 4:15pm. The director will inform employees when the winter hours start.

### **Hand washing**

Staff must wash hands upon entering or reentering the building, after coming in contact with messy or toxic substances, before handling food, before and after diapering a child, when moving from one classroom to the next and after using the bathroom.

Children must wash hands:

1. Before entering the classroom at arrival
2. Before coming in contact with food
3. After eating
4. Before playing with sensory table items (sand, water etc.) and before using community items such as clay and play dough.
5. After playing with sensory table items (sand, water etc.) and after using community items such as clay and play dough.
6. After messy play (examples painting, stamps, play-dough)
7. After handling any animal
8. After recess
9. After coming in contact with germs (examples blowing nose, hands in pants, etc.)

**The use of hand sanitizer does not replace washing hands. Children shall never be allowed to use alcohol based hand sanitizers.**

### **Diapering**

Children using diapers or pull-ups shall be checked frequently for urine or feces, at least every 2 hours and changed when needed. Diapering shall take place on a diaper table, diaper mat or in the bathroom.

1. Prepare for diapering

To minimize contamination outside of the diapering area, prepare for a diaper change before bringing the child to diapering area, for example, by having ready:

- The changing table or pad shall be dry from the previous sanitation.
- Enough wipes for the diaper change (including wiping the bottom and hands after taking the soiled diaper away from the child's skin).
- A clean diaper, plastic bag for soiled clothes, and clean clothes if soiled clothing is anticipated. These shall all be kept within arm's reach of the changing table.

- Non-porous gloves, a dab of diaper cream on a disposable piece of paper or tissue of cream is being used.

Supplies should have been removed from their containers and placed near, but not directly on, the diapering surface before starting the diaper change.

## 2. Diapering Procedure

- Prepare for diapering as indicated above.
- Place the child on the diapering surface. Always have one hand remaining on the child. Remove clothing to access the diaper. If soiled, place clothes into a plastic bag.
- Remove soiled diaper and place it into lined, hands-free trash containers. To limit odor, seal in a plastic bag before placing it into the trash container.
- Use wipes to clean child's bottom from front to back
- Use a wipe to remove soil from adult's hands
- Use a wipe to remove soil from child's hands
- Throw soiled wipes into lined, hands free trash container
- Put on clean diaper and redress child
- Place child in the sink and wash hands following the "hand washing procedure" Found by each sink.
- Spray diapering surface with sanitizing solution and wipe. Spray diapering surface with disinfection solution and wait more than 10 seconds before wiping with a disposable towel or allow it to air dry. It should be noted the recommended practice is to wait for 2 minutes to allow the solution to kill germs. However, if there is a delay for at least 10 seconds before the solution is wiped from the surface, this will be considered adequate. The surface cannot be sprayed and immediately wiped.
- Adult washes hands using the "hand washing procedure," without contaminating any other surface.
- Toys that are played with or objects that are touched, while child's diapers are changed, must be put aside to be sanitized.

**Car Seat Policy & Transportation:** Suzy's Little Peanuts employees are prohibited from installing car seats into non-SLP owned vehicles and buckling or strapping children into car seats in non-SLP owned vehicles, unless they are doing so in preparation for a field trip. During a field trip, an SLP employee will install all car seats into the SLP Van and staff vehicles. In the event that individuals are transporting children in non-SLP owned vehicles for field trip or SLP events, they must have completed a background check and filled out the statement of safety. Current insurance information must be included with the statement of safety, vehicle must be smoke free, be in good physical shape and be inspected and insured. **Car seats are removed immediately upon returning to the center.**

**Parent Volunteers:** Any parent or family members wishing to volunteer at a family event or chaperone a field trip must have completed a background check form. We cannot allow anyone with a felonious criminal background or anyone who has committed any crimes against children to actively chaperone a field trip or volunteer at a family event, however all families are welcome to join us during events or trips and take part in them regardless of their background.

**Field Trips:** Throughout the school year toddler and preschool aged classroom teachers can schedule field trips. You will use the field trip planning packet to plan and schedule field trips. We use the SLP van and staff vehicles to transport children. All vehicles used must be on file, and the drivers must fill out a statement of safety for their vehicle. One admin shall accompany each field trip. Attendance of children is taken throughout the field trip and upon return to the center. All car seats are taken out of the vehicle upon immediate return to the center.

Thank you for taking the time to read our handbook. Please continue to refer to the employee handbook, state regulations and NAEYC policies and procedures to always provide the most qualified care and best practices.

# Acknowledgment and Release Form

(Employee's Copy—to Remain in Handbook)

I understand that I am an at-will employee, and I therefore understand that my employment may be terminated at any time, with or without prior notice, and with or without cause or reason by Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School. Likewise, I understand that I am free to resign at any time, for any reason. No employee, agent, or representative of Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School other than its executive officers has authority to enter into any agreement guaranteeing employment for any specified period of time, or to make any representations, promises or agreements contrary to the foregoing. I further understand that any such agreement authorized by executive officers shall not be enforceable unless it is in writing and signed by both an executive officer and myself.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policies. As Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School changes, the need may arise to change policies described in this handbook. Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portions of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate in its sole and absolute discretion. As soon as practical, Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School will notify all team members of such changes, and they will be applicable even if I have not signed a new Acknowledgment and Release Form for them. This Handbook supersedes any previous Employee Handbook.

I understand and acknowledge that violation of the Employee Handbook or any other workplace rule may result in immediate disciplinary action against me, up to and including termination of employment.

My signature below indicates that I have read and understood this statement and have received a copy of the Employee Handbook. My signature further acknowledges and agrees that I will read and familiarize myself with its contents and follow the policies and rules indicated.

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Employee Full Name

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Employee Signature

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Date