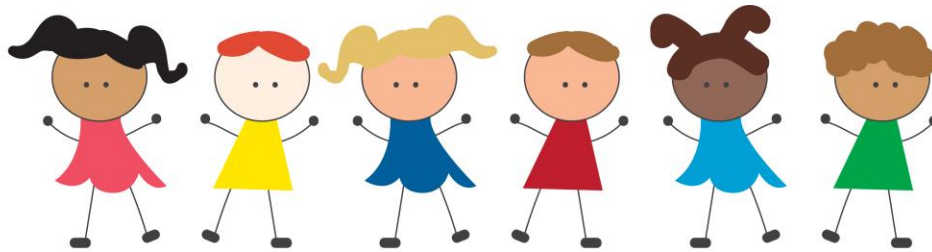


# Parent Handbook of Policies & Procedures

## 2018-2019



# LITTLE BLESSINGS PARENTS' DAY OUT

A Ministry of First United Methodist Church of Castle Rock

1200 South Street

Castle Rock, CO 80104

303-660-2170

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# The First United Methodist Church of Castle Rock

*1200 South Street, Castle Rock, Colorado 80104*

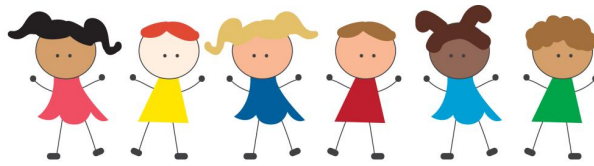
Greetings from the First United Methodist Church of Castle Rock, Colorado, the home of Little Blessings Parents' Day Out Program. What a year we have in store together! There will be fun activities with the kids, meaningful time with parents, children, teachers, and aides, as well as opportunities for growth and involvement.

This is a precious time. Early childhood is tremendously exciting and something which passes quickly. We hope to have the opportunity to become acquainted with each of you as the year goes by.

We hope that together we will aid the children in their development as they prepare for the next stages in their lives. We hope this will be a meaningful time for children and parents.

Welcome!

Rev. Rob White  
Senior Pastor  
First United Methodist Church  
Castle Rock, Colorado



# LITTLE BLESSINGS

## PARENTS' DAY OUT

A Ministry of First United Methodist Church of Castle Rock

Welcome to Little Blessings and to the 2018-2019 school year.

We are all very excited to be a part of Little Blessings and all it has to offer. Our full dedication and love is given to all children in our care with a guarantee of trust and satisfaction from the parents and also hope to bring a peace of mind and support to all the parents and families by providing a safe, warm and loving environment. This is truly the place you want your child to be!

We personally want to say "Thank You," for choosing Little Blessings PDO. There are many preschool options in Castle Rock, and we are so glad you chose us! We take that seriously and consider it a privilege.

Our door is always open, and we encourage you to visit anytime if you have any questions or concerns about your child's school year.

Sincerely,

*Little Blessing PDO Staff*

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## Philosophy

Little Blessings Parents' Day Out is a ministry of the First United Methodist Church of Castle Rock. We reflect the vision of the First United Methodist Church: *Touching people and changing lives through the love of Jesus Christ.*

Little Blessings Parents' Day Out is licensed by the State of Colorado, License #1598390, for a toddler/preschool program.

Little Blessings Parents' Day Out and its staff subscribe to the following statements of philosophy:

**Mission Statement:** Our mission is to provide a positive, loving, Christian environment for children. At Little Blessings, children will develop the academic, social, and motor skills necessary to be successful in elementary school and beyond.

**Vision Statement:** The philosophy of Little Blessings is to recognize each child as an individual and teach to each individual's needs in all areas of development. The environment is one that fosters the excitement, joy, and challenge of learning. The program also strives to create a partnership with families, maintaining open communication. Little Blessings fosters respect, thoughtfulness, and empathy for others.

**Colorado Shines:** Little Blessings is excited to participate in Colorado Shines, Colorado's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). Colorado Shines helps early learning centers offer high-quality care by offering support and resources to programs to better support each child's learning and development.

Research shows this kind of assistance helps providers improve the quality of their programs:

- Colorado Shines rates the quality of programs on a scale of 1 to 5.
- At level 1, licensed childcare programs must meet Colorado's licensing requirements for health and safety.
- Programs with higher ratings have strong classroom instruction, training for staff and family engagement to support children's success.
- Participants who are working on or who have been rated Level 2 are recognized as "Participating in Quality Improvement."
- Programs rated at Levels 3, 4, or 5 are recognized as having achieved "High Quality."
- Little Blessings is currently a Level 3 rating.

## Admission & Placement Policies

**Eligibility:** Children between the ages of 12-months (and walking) and six years old are eligible to attend Little Blessings Parents' Day Out.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** Little Blessings Parents' Day Out does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender or national origin in the administration of educational policies or of admission policies. Admission of children with special needs is in compliance with the ADA. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate each child's needs and to integrate each child with other children. Conferences will be offered with the PDO office staff, teacher, and parents as needed.

### **Session Days & Times:**

The Little Blessings PDO school year runs from August to May following most of the Douglas County High School schedule for holidays and snow days (see attached calendar). Classes are from 9:00 am – 2:30 pm, Monday through Friday. One through five-day, flexible day programs are available for your child to fit the needs of your family.

**Before Care:** Little Blessings is happy to accommodate families looking to extend their preschool day or days of attendance. Preschoolers must be enrolled in Little Blessings in order to participate in before care. Before Care is offered Monday thru Friday from 8:30am -9:00am. We prefer a 24 hour notice but will gladly accommodate last minute requests whenever possible if your child plans to attend before care as well as if your child is signed up and will not be attending. Monthly sign-up calendars are available outside the Little Blessings office so you are able to sign up each month. If you know that you will need before care throughout the entire year, sign-ups for the whole year can also be accommodated.

### **Drop-In Days:**

Children enrolled at Little Blessings PDO are able to “drop-in” to their classrooms on days that they do not normally attend, depending on availability. However, we do not substitute days if absent. There is an additional fee. Please fill out the “drop-in” form located in the office and return it to the PDO Office. You must receive confirmation from the PDO office that there is space for your child to drop-in prior to doing so. **24 hour notice is required for all drop-in requests.**

### **Student/Teacher Ratio:**

Little Blessings PDO adheres to classroom ratios mandated by the Colorado Department of Human Services as listed below:

Classroom	Ages	Child to Teacher Ratio	Classroom Capacity
God's Garden	1-2 years	5: 1	5
S.A.M's Firehouse	1-2 years	5: 1	7
Noah's Pet Shop	2-3 years	7: 1	9
Creation Park	2.5-3 years	8: 1	14
Do Good Disciples	3-4 years	10: 1	10
Starlight Theater	3-4 years	10: 1	16
Jericho's Gym	3-4 years	10: 1	16
Heavenly Delights	4+	12:1	16
Promise Land Toys	4+	12:1	15

### **Dis-Enrolled Child Policy:**

The program reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

- Non-payment or excessive late payment fees over 2 months
- Not observing the policies and procedures of Little Blessings as outlined in the handbook
- Child has special needs which we cannot adequately meet with our current staff
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child
- Biting or continually hurting another child
- A child is aggressive toward other children or the staff and causes harm to others or self.

### **Behavioral Policy:**

Our staff is well trained and works hard to identify the social, emotional and developmental needs of each child. However, there are times when children may need additional care that our staff is not able to provide. If we feel that your child's behavior endangers the safety of the other children, we will notify the parent and begin with a parent/teacher conference.



To better accommodate your child we would like to work with the family to develop a plan of action. During that time, if the child is a danger to themselves or other children, we may choose to suspend your child for a discussed upon period of time. Once the child returns to our program, if the child is still a danger then we will discuss if we are the best persons to be caring for your child. Please refer to our detailed discipline policy for more information regarding the steps that are taken by our staff to work with children who are displaying challenging behavior. It is only as a very last resort that we would ask you to remove your child from care. In that case, a two week notice may be given before termination of services in order to allow parents to find alternate childcare.

At Little Blessings, we continuously strive to strengthen relationships with our children and their family. Through continuous specialized trainings, teachers are able to identify the individual needs of your child(ren). While working with families, we are able to provide each child with the specialized care that he/she may need within the classroom. When a situation occurs that make a child's needs difficult for staff and parents to adequately address the family will be given information on how to access an Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist to support their child in all environments.

## Financial Obligations & Policies

**Registration Fee:** Registration in the Little Blessings PDO program begins in February for the following school year and is open to everyone with consideration given in the following order:

- Returning Little Blessings Families
- Members of the First United Methodist Church of Castle Rock
- Waitlisted Children
- Children of the Community

All areas are on a "First come, First serve" basis, with classes decided by lottery when classes become full. Applications are accepted for the waitlist throughout the school year in the event of any classroom or student changes.

A **non-refundable** registration fee is due at the time of registration:

- \$95 – Families new to Little Blessings
- \$75 – Families returning to Little Blessings

**Tuition:** Tuition for the Little Blessings PDO program is based on an annual fee divided into ten monthly payments for your convenience.

**Tuition Fees 2018-2019\***

- Full Day - \$135/month
  - Half Day - \$95/month
- \*Scholarships are available. Please ask the PDO office for application information.*

**Drop-In Fees**

- Half-Day (until 12:30pm) - \$30
- Full Day - \$45

**Before Care Fees:**

- Before Care - \$5.00 per child, per day

**Please note:**

- Tuition for the first month of the school year is due at time of enrollment. Tuition for the last month of the school year is due in August. This payment is *not* reimbursed and is non-transferable in the event the child leaves the program before the end of the school year.
- If your child increases the number of days they attend during the year, the increased May tuition is due at that time.
- Full monthly payments (cash, check, or credit cards) are due on the first day of the month. Checks should be made out to "Little Blessings Parents' Day Out."
- Payments are accepted in the office in person or you may place your tuition payment in the tuition box located outside the PDO Office. You may also set up recurring credit card payments or pay online at <https://frontrange360.com/pdo/>.

**Late Charges:** A \$40 late fee will be added if the tuition payment is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. If payment arrangements have not been made after ten days, the student will not be allowed to attend the Little Blessings PDO program until payment is received. For the month of May, students will not be able to attend after the 10<sup>th</sup> if not paid in full.

**Withdrawal from Little Blessings:** If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child before the end of the school year, written notice to the PDO office staff is required of at **least 2 weeks**. Reimbursement is not given for the pre-paid May tuition. There are cancellation forms available in the PDO Office for your convenience. There are also times when a child is not adjusting well to our program. In the event that our care is not a good fit for your child and your family, we may request that you withdraw your child from our program; however, we will give you a 2 week notice to find alternative care.

**Absences & Holidays:** Tuition is based on annual tuition fees. **No credit is given for illness, holidays, or vacations.**

## **Parent Communication**

**Information Boards:** Inside each Classroom, teachers will post sign-in/sign-out sheets, weekly/monthly lesson plans, a sign-up sheet for various activities and events, and any other important information.

**Parent Resource Center:** Located in the south hallway, this contains books, magazines, and other resources for parents of preschoolers.

**Peek@theWeek:** Weekly emails will be sent out to every family to keep you informed of what is going on in Little Blessings throughout the year.

**Parent Observations & Conferences:** Two annual parent/teacher conferences will be offered during the school year. The conferences will be offered for each classroom according to the calendar (attached).

**Change of Student/Family Information:** Please keep your important family contact information up-to-date with the PDO Office. Please contact the PDO office to make any changes of address, phone number, e-mail address, or emergency contacts.

**Special Events:** Special gatherings such as the pancake breakfast, donuts with dad, goodies with grandparents, and mother's day tea are held for the parents and/or family members. These gatherings are important and we ask that you make every effort to have at least one member of your family attend. Special events are an opportunity for families to get to know one another and work together for the benefit of the children in the program. Please refer to the school calendar (attached) for specific dates of these special events.

**Parent Classes:** Depending on parental interest, special classes and fellowship times will be offered during school time or evening, on subjects ranging from discipline and child-rearing skills to social-emotional skills.

**Translators:** Little Blessings PDO will request the assistance of translators when a child or child's family member is in need of an interpreter due to a language barrier between our facility and the family.

## **Operational Policies & Procedures**

**Arrival & Departure Policy:** Classroom doors open at 8:57 am. Upon arrival, take your child directly to his/her classroom and fill out the sign-in/sign-out sheets. If you are early, please wait with your child until the doors are open.

The State of Colorado requires that all children be signed in and signed out of school each day. ***Please sign your name, (not initials),*** and wait until the teacher receives your child into the classroom before you leave.

PDO families may enter the building through the main entrance of First United Methodist Church or through the entrance on the back of the building. Please note that the main entrance of the church is closed on Fridays and may also be unavailable to Little Blessings families if the church sanctuary is being used (E.G. funeral, wedding, etc.)

**School ends promptly at 2:30 pm.** Please be on time!! Children can become anxious and unsettled if you are not there on time. If you are detained and cannot pick up your child on time, please make arrangements for one of your *authorized people* to pick him/her up for you. You must keep the student file in the PDO office up-to-date with any/all emergency contacts and/or pick-up authorizations.

For each child enrolled, Little Blessings requires written authorization from a parent or legal guardian regarding persons who each child can be released to. Persons picking up children will be verified through identification of a valid state driver's license or identification card to ensure they are an authorized pick up person. Little Blessings will not release children without verifying that the person picking up the child is authorized to do so. If you send someone who is not on your pick-up list, written authorization via email is sufficient for that day only and the office will notify your child's teacher. It is our policy that no one under the age of 18 is allowed to pick up a child from Little Blessings.

The Little Blessings school day ends at 2:30pm daily and all staff begin their daily clean up routine including checking every classroom and classroom attendance verification log to ensure all children have been picked up for the day. Staff also double check each classroom, as well as outdoor play areas to ensure that there are no children unaccounted for. If a child has not been picked up by our closing time, that child will continue to be cared for by one of our qualified staff and the parents will be called to ensure pick up. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contacts listed on the child's enrollment forms will be called. If a child remains in our care for more than an hour after Little Blessings has closed and we have been unable to reach a parent, legal guardian or emergency contact person, the Little Blessings office staff will contact local child protective services and/or law enforcement.

**Fees for Late Pick Up:** A late pick-up fee may be assessed if your child has not been picked up within five minutes after the close of his/her class. The charge is \$1.00 for every minute beyond the 5-minute grace period.

**Transitions:** Transitions in and out of the classroom happen throughout the day at Little Blessings. Our face-to-name log ensures that each child is always accounted for before & after a transition is made. We organize transitions around the needs of each individual child. We understand that staff has a duty to ensure continuity for children during periods of transition. We believe that smooth transition encourages learning and supports the personal, social and emotional development, as well as the future success of every child. With this in mind we want children to feel secure and safe with staff. We also want parents to have confidence that they are active partners in the well-being and education of their child. To aid in this process we encourage continuity of care so children remain in their classroom for the duration of our ten month program moving to a new classroom in the fall.

Transitions are supported through teacher training and family education. For additional information and articles on transitions, please visit [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).

**Diapering/Diaper Cream Policy:**

Diapers will be changed every two hours or as needed. Diaper ointment/creme can only be applied with written permission from both the parent and doctor. The parent/guardian must provide the ointment/Cream in the original over the counter container labeled with my child's name. Ointment/Cream will not be applied to any broken skin or if a skin reaction has been observed. Any skin reaction observed by staff will be reported promptly to the parent/guardian. Gloves and all sanitary standards required by the Department of Human Services and Tri-County Health Department are followed when diapering children.

**Toilet Training Policy:** Teachers are happy to work with your child during toilet training. However, no attempt to toilet train under the age of 24 months will be made. Please speak with your child's teacher directly. Remember that the child will have to be able to tell the teacher when he/she needs to go to the bathroom.

**Sunscreen Policy:** The State of Colorado requires that sunscreen be applied to children prior to going outdoors. Little Blessings has sunscreen available or you may also provide your own sunscreen to be applied each day. If you prefer that your child does NOT have sunscreen applied each day, it is required that you have a brimmed hat, long-sleeve shirt, and long pants available for your child every day. Permission forms will be distributed with these three options upon registration with Little Blessings so you may decide what is best for your child.

**Moisturizing Lotion, Cream, Balm:** Staff are able to assist with applying skin lotion/cream to a child if written authorization is given. As the parent/guardian, you must provide the lotion/cream/balm in the original over the counter container labeled with your child's name. It is your responsibility to check the ingredients of this product to ensure your child is not allergic to it. Skin lotion/cream/balm will not be applied to any broken skin or if a skin reaction has been observed. Any skin reaction observed by staff will be reported promptly to the parent/guardian.

**Clothing Policy:** Please have your child wear play clothes! Keep in mind that your child will be climbing, painting, digging, sitting in sand, playing with water, and helping himself/herself with toilet needs. We emphasize having a good experience rather than keeping special clothes spotless. Clothing with many buttons, buckles, belts, and straps are hard for little hands to maneuver. You help your child toward independence in dressing by selecting clothing he/she can manage easily on his/her own. In case of a clothing accident, please keep an extra change of clothing, in a zip-lock bag with your child's name on it, in the bottom of your child's school bag. If it becomes necessary for your child to change clothing, privacy will be provided.

For the children's safety, boots, sandals, "flip-flops," and "CROCS" are not recommended. Tennis shoes or rubber-soled, closed-toe shoes are suggested. Be sure to mark all removable clothing with your child's name.

**Snacks & Nutrition Guidelines:** Your child's nutrition is important to his/her overall health. Proper nutrition can prevent many future medical problems. It will also ensure that your child physically grows to his/her full potential. Parents are responsible for providing your child's daily snack and lunch. Please send healthy, nutritious selections with them daily (Little Blessings will offer healthy options when USDA guidelines are not met). Both snack and lunch should consist of finger foods that the child can eat independently. The state does not allow us to serve sugary drinks and 100% juice may be served no more than twice per week.

**Nut-Free School:** Little Blessings is committed to being a nut-free school. We do our best to ensure that nuts are not brought into the program; however we cannot guarantee that packaged foods are not manufactured in a nut-free facility. **No items containing or made with tree-nuts (almonds, pecans, cashews, pistachios, walnuts) or peanuts are allowed at Little Blessings PDO.**

**Shared Items & Toys:** Little Blessings ensures that all classrooms are equipped with a variety of equipment and toys for each child to play with individually and with friends. Because our storage space is limited, we encourage children to keep valuable personal items at home. At first, some children may feel the need to bring something from home. This is acceptable, as it may give needed security. Because of this, we do allow for children to bring a toy, blanket or stuffed animal that will remain in a storage bag individually labeled when not in use.

**Accidents & Injury Procedures:** In case of a minor injury, an “Incident Report” will be sent home with your child noting the injury and treatment or care given. All non-emergency or minor accidents and injuries will be treated with first aid and TLC by a trained staff member, then the accident or injury is documented and parents are notified upon picking up their child at the end of the day. In case of a more serious accident, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent, in addition to contacting 911, if necessary. If we cannot reach the parent, we will then call the emergency contact. If we are unable to reach either the parent or emergency contact, we will then call the child’s physician. It is extremely important that you keep the PDO office informed of all phone numbers where you can be reached (home, work, cell, etc.) and any changes that occur throughout the year.

**Birthdays:** We encourage you to celebrate your child’s birthday with us at school. Your teacher will arrange a date with you to celebrate your child’s special day in the classroom. If you would like to bring in store-bought, peanut-free birthday treats, please notify your teacher for approval prior to doing so. Please also ask for assistance from the teacher when planning to hand out birthday party invitations to other children in the class as we want to keep in mind the feelings of others.

**Field Trip Policy:** Generally we bring the field trips to Little Blessings! In the event that a trip is taken to another area of the building, a permission form will be provided and will need to be signed annually. Occasionally, your child’s class may take a nature walk around the facility. In the event that children will leave the facility, parents/guardians will be notified and a parent permission form will be signed for every trip taken. Field trips will always be within walking distance as we do not transport children at Little Blessings. Parent volunteers may be asked to accompany the class on these trips. All children will participate in special events and activities unless written notification is given to the PDO office.

If a special event or activity occurs on a day that your child does not attend, you are always welcome to bring your child and stay with them during the event. In the event your child arrives late and their class is away from the building, your child will be placed in the care of a qualified adult staff member until his/her class returns.



**Television Viewing:** Little Blessings will occasionally show educational G Rated videos for children over 2 years of age within your child's class that will require permission from the parent or legal guardian.

**Lost & Found:** "Lost & Found" items are kept in a bin located at the Parent Resource Center in the south hallway. The staff will collect any found and/or unclaimed items and place them in the "Lost & Found." After a reasonable time has passed, if no one has claimed these items, they will be donated to a charitable organization.

**Visitors to Little Blessings:** All visitors must stop by the Little Blessings office to sign in on the visitor log book. We have an "Open Door Policy" for parents of children who are currently enrolled to come and visit Little Blessings and your child's class anytime during the school year. We want you to be well informed of your child's progress throughout the school year.

**Emergency Preparedness:** The Emergency Response Protocol for Little Blessings follows the Douglas County School District. Our evacuation shelter is South Ridge Elementary School right next door to the church. The following responses are the standard responses that we will use in any given situation. On a monthly basis, we conduct practice fire drills and several times a year, we conduct tornado, lockdown, and lockout drills to ensure that all staff and children are familiar with the drill procedures in case of a real emergency.

- **LOCKOUT – "Secure the Perimeter"**

- If there is a threat outside the building, bring everyone in and lock the outside doors. Lockout is called by the office staff. Lockout can be called when a staff member or child notice something strange or unusual. A lockout could be the response to a violent person or incident in the community near the church. Teachers, aides, or office staff will get children back into the building. Teachers will take roll and notify the office of any missing or extra children. Lockout means an increased situational awareness, but class will be conducted as usual.
  - **Informing the Families** – All families via email, text message and/or phone call dependent upon the unique situation and our ability to communicate. A follow up message will be sent after the situation has been resolved.

- **Reuniting Families** – Regular pick up policy will be followed. If lockout is in effect during pick up hours, parents will be allowed to pick up once the lockout alert has been lifted.
- **LOCKDOWN & ACTIVE SHOOTING – “Lock, Lights, Out of Sight”**
  - Lockdown is the protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep children quiet and in place. Teachers will lock classroom doors and turn lights out. In addition, teachers and children will move away from hallway line of sight and maintain silence. The teacher will take roll and account for all children. Occupants of rooms will not unlock their rooms for anything or anyone. When the incident is over, a responsible person capable of unlocking the room from out in the hall (office staff, law enforcement, etc) will unlock the door and brief the occupants.
    - **Informing the Families** – All families via email, text message and/or phone call dependent upon the unique situation and our ability to communicate. A follow up message will be sent after the situation has been resolved.
    - **Reuniting Families** – Once the threat has been eliminated, we will release children to their families after confirmation has been received from law enforcement informing us it is safe to do so. Regular pick up policy will procedures will then be followed.
- **EVACUATE – “Follow the Directions”**
  - Evacuate means moving children in an orderly fashion from point A to point B. A fire drill is really: “Evacuate Out of the Building.” The order to evacuate is always followed by a location. Teachers, aides, and office staff all need to work together quickly, quietly, and safely evacuate children to the evacuation point. Children and staff will leave personal belongings behind. Instructions detailing specific actions during the evacuation may take place such as holding hands, covering heads, and/or crawling. Teachers will ensure they bring a roll sheet. Immediately upon reaching the evacuation point, teachers should take roll.
    - **Informing the Families** – All families via email, text message and/or phone call dependent upon the unique situation and our ability to communicate. A follow up message will be sent after the situation has been resolved.

- **Reuniting Families** – Regular pick up policy will be followed at our evacuation location of South Ridge Elementary School.

*1100 South Street, Castle Rock, CO 80104*

*Phone: (303) 387-5075*

- **FIRE**

- All classrooms will meet at their designated evacuation location in the event of a fire. Individual evacuation maps are located in each of the classrooms.

- **TORNADO**

- All classes will report to their designated “Tornado Safe Place” (located in each classroom) in a calm, quick, orderly manner. After getting to the room, everyone should crouch low, head face down, protecting the back of the head with the arms. Stay as close to the middle of the room as possible and remain there until you are alerted that it is safe to come out. No person will leave the building, even if the school day is over, until it has been deemed safe to do so.

**School Closures:** Little Blessings PDO will follow the Douglas County High School schedule in the event of inclement weather (snow, extreme cold, extreme heat, etc.).

- If DC High School is closed, then Little Blessings PDO will also be closed.
- If DC High School has a late start, Little Blessings PDO will open at 10:30 am. If there is a late start, we do not offer before care.
- If DC High School has an early release, Little Blessings parents are expected to pick up children immediately after the closure has been announced.
- Little Blessings PDO reserves the right to close early due to inclement weather. Parents will be notified via email/phone/text.
  - To determine if DC High School is closed, you may:
    - Call the school weather hotline: 303-387-7669
    - Log on to [www.dcsdk12.org](http://www.dcsdk12.org)

**Inclement Weather:** We will have time outdoors daily for all children, however we do ensure the safety of the children at all times. During times of inclement weather including excessively hot or cold weather, we will not have outdoor playtime but will have scheduled time indoors for large gross motor activities.

**Student Safety:** Little Blessings staff will take special care to keep children safe. Each classroom will have qualified staff members that will verify attendance within their classroom to identify where children are at all times. Children will have a name to face head count taken after each transition. The classroom teachers will ensure that each parent or legal guardian signs in their child upon arrival and signs out their child upon leaving the Classroom daily.

Should a child become missing while at the program, the following protocol will be followed:

- A count of the children in the classroom will be conducted to determine who is missing.
- The teacher will contact any available PDO office staff via radio to inform them of a potential situation.
- A thorough search of the facility will be conducted including all classrooms, the playground, and the parking lot.
- If the child is not found, the police will be called.
- The parents/guardians will then be called.
- If the parents/guardians cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called.
- The security system-recording device will be reviewed.

**Security System:** Little Blessings is a secure facility. Doors remain locked during school hours, except during a short period of time to allow for drop off and pick up. There are security cameras around the perimeter of the building and at the main entrances. The security cameras have a 24-hour recording device that is stored for 30 days at a time.

**Quality Improvement Plan:** Little Blessings has a quality improvement plan in place. If you are interested in viewing this plan, please request this in the Little Blessings office.

## **Student Health**

**Nurse Consultant:** Little Blessings PDO does not have a nurse on staff. Our nurse consultant, Mande Jacobson (license #0194253) will visit our facility once a month and on an *as-needed* basis. If you have special needs or concerns that you would like to discuss with the nurse, please contact the Little Blessings office staff to set an appointment.

**Immunization Requirements:** Little Blessings PDO requires all students to be up-to-date and current with their immunizations. In the case your child is receiving immunizations on a plan from their physician, a note must be on file with the current immunization schedule in writing signed by the physician on company letterhead.

Little Blessings does not accept personal or religious exemptions. Those claiming exemption for medical reasons, must complete an exemption form with their pediatrician's signature or provide a medical release in writing from your physician.

**Insurance:** If you do not currently have insurance and are in need of a referral, please visit [www.connectforhealthco.com](http://www.connectforhealthco.com) to help.

**Allergies:** Please make sure the PDO Office is notified of any type of allergies that your child is susceptible to, **especially any type of food allergy!** We do our best to monitor food allergies and make a conscientious effort to make sure that your child is not exposed to anything that would cause an allergic reaction.

**Medications:** All medications such as an inhaler, EPI pen, Benadryl, diaper rash ointment, Pedialyte, etc., given to Little Blessings to administer to children will need to have annual parental permission and doctor's orders for each medication prescribed. All medication will be administered by a trained staff member delegated by the nurse consultant and in accordance with the prescribed directions and will be documented in our medication log book. All medications will be stored in areas inaccessible to children at all times. If a medication is expired or is left over, those medications will be given back to the parents, if the parents are not able to be reached, the left over medication will be properly disposed of. Emergency medications will be stored in an area that is easily accessed by staff, but inaccessible to children.

**Illnesses:** Little Blessings will immediately notify parent/guardian if a child becomes ill while at school and will be asked to pick up the child within one hour. This could include a child acting lethargic, vomiting, or registering a fever of over 100.5 degrees.

We also ask that you call the Little Blessings office if your child is too sick to attend on any given day. In order to maintain the health of everyone at Little Blessings, we will not accept children if:

- Just began taking antibiotics for a contagious illness in the past 24 hours
- Has a temperature of over 100.5 in the past 24 hours
- Has had more than one episode of vomiting in the past 24 hours
- Has acute diarrhea

**Communicable Diseases:** Keeping our children healthy is very important to us! Please do not send your child to school if he/she is ill or has any abnormal symptoms. If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, it is very important to **notify the PDO Office ASAP**. If there is any possibility that a child was exposed while at Little Blessings, we will send a confidential notification to parents with the date of the possible exposure and the condition, along with a list of general symptoms to look for in your child. **Before returning to Little Blessings the child needs to have been free of symptoms and/or fever for at least 24 hours. Some illnesses and/or lingering symptoms may require a release note from your physician.**

## **Developmental Goals for Children at Little Blessings**

### **Spiritual:**

Chapel time includes Bible stories, drama, and music:

- Christian role modeling by teachers and staff, (i.e. displaying love and understanding).
- Teaching and developing character traits within the child, (i.e. acceptance, kindness, etc).

### **Social: Relating to Others**

Teachers and assistant teachers will encourage the development of interpersonal skills by modeling:

- Cooperation with others
- Using basic manners
- Learning with and from others
- Interfacing with teachers and peers
- Learning to help others and work as part of a group
- Learning to care and cooperate with others, i.e. *taking turns*
- Problem solving with others, i.e. *"How can we move all these blocks?"*
- Developing social knowledge, i.e. *dramatic play*

## Emotional: Child's Sense of Self and Security

Develop the child's confidence by understanding self, family, and culture. We will:

- Promote self-help skills, i.e. *pouring a drink, setting a snack table, and performing a daily class job.*
- Promote health skills, i.e. *hand washing, toilet skills, and proper disposal of tissues.*
- Provide opportunities in which the child can experience success and competence without the fear of failure, i.e. *cooking, sharing a story.*
- Share family photos, vacations, career, or holiday observations.
- Provide classrooms with toys and dolls that have an ethnic mix.
- Encourage learning the names of body parts, their location and function, i.e. *ears for hearing, tongue for tasting, touch your elbow, etc.*
- Bring in family members for sharing or special events.

## Cognitive: Child's Intellectual Development

Children develop within a predictable range of age-related human characteristics. The activities, materials, and experiences should fall within a broad range. Each individual has his/her own strengths and needs.

- Teacher adapts materials and activities to respond to the changing and expanding needs of the developmental age ranges within her class, i.e. *puzzle table with different skill levels.*
- Provide experiences that help children understand good nutritional habits.
- Develop emergent literacy skills (reading, speaking, listening), i.e. *dictate a story, share a favorite book, etc.*
- Develop vocabulary with circle time, finger plays, songs, nursery rhymes, dramatic play, and rhyming words.
- Facilitate children recognizing printed language, i.e. *first and last names, labeled class items, spelling simple words requested by the child.*
- Give the children opportunities to respond to questions, i.e. *recall portions of a story.*
- Provide emergent math activities, i.e. *sorting, counting, and measuring.*

## **Physical: Gross and Fine Motor**

Develop gross motor skills (the maturing of large muscles, i.e. legs, arms) by:

- Providing opportunities daily for student to exercise large muscles.
- Providing an outdoor playground with equipment that promotes large muscle growth, such as jungle gym and balance beam.

Development of fine motor skills (the maturing of small muscles, i.e. fingers) by:

- Providing play-dough, puzzles, manipulatives, painting, scissors, and a low writing table with paper, Crayons, markers, and stamps.

Children actively involved in these physical activities strengthen neurological pathways in the brain. These pathways must be established before the child can proceed to the higher levels of formal education.

**Resources:** Little Blessings would like to connect our families to community resources. We partner with parents to find resources to accommodate their child's specific needs. An ASQ-3 Ages & Stages assessment will be conducted in the fall and again in the spring. If staff believes further assessment is needed, the parents will receive information for a referral agency.

Parents may choose (and are encouraged) to contact outside agencies/organizations for programs or services. Parents can receive resources from the Little Blessings office. Little Blessings staff is willing to work with parents and their community providers to design learning activities that aid in meet outcomes, goals of individual family services, Individual Education Plans, School Readiness Plans, Individual Learning Plans, and/or other individual plans. Little Blessings welcomes your child's treatment team to work with us at any time to ensure the best care for your child.

## **Discipline**

Discipline is handled as each unique situation requires and will be provided in a loving and gentle manner. It is our desire to promote and secure the development of a positive, healthy self-esteem. The teachers demonstrate kind, loving, positive-reinforcement techniques, as we strive to reinforce and stimulate positive attitudes and behavior.

Unacceptable behavior is handled in low-key discussions between the teacher and child. The child may then be redirected to another activity. If an unacceptable behavior continues to be repeated, and especially if the well-being of the child or his/her classmates is at risk, then the child will be removed from the activity in progress.



## Curriculum & Programs

**Curriculum Philosophy:** Little Blessings philosophy focuses on the developmental aspect of growth. Lesson plans are individually designed by the teacher. Little Blessings teachers create learning experiences for children based on developmental guidelines.

### **Daily Schedule:**

Inside and outside schedules are rotated among classes to allow more room for playing on the playground. Variations to the schedule will be made by teachers according to the needs and ages of each class. In addition, inside and outside times may change due to weather and/or special events.

- **Inside Time:** Free play, music, creative arts/crafts, blocks, books/quiet time, dramatic play, science/nature, stories, cognitive learning through games, etc.
- **Outside Time:** Free play, nature walks, water play, crafts, sidewalk chalk and painting, bike riding, etc.
- **Snack/Lunch:** Families provide nutritious snack and lunch each day.
- **Circle Time:** Calendar, weather, daily themes, story time, class jobs, music, etc.
- **Nap/Rest Time:** Younger classes nap, Pre-K classes rest & relax. If you are here for rest/nap time, please provide a crib sheet & blanket.
- **Specials:** Music, Exercise, Spanish, Science, Healthy Habits
- **Before Care:** Extended care for those with pre-reservations.

### **Staff:**

A loving & dedicated teaching staff has been trained to promote the best development for your child. We are very fortunate to have such a well-qualified staff, many whom have B.A. Degrees or A.A. Degrees in Early Childhood, or an Early Childhood Certificate. All of our staff have specialized training in Early Childhood Education, as well as being CPR/First Aid certified. In addition, we have a very low staff turnover, which ensures the quality and consistency of our program.

### The Staff of Little Blessings PDO will:

- Relate to children in a loving and caring manner, stimulate and encourage play, and provide “child-chosen” activities.
- Extend thinking by posing problems, making suggestions, adding complex tasks, and asking questions.
- Offer discipline in a firm and loving manner, using redirection, and modeling to give the child an opportunity to think about the choice made and the consequence of that choice.
- Prepare an environment that encourages children to learn by providing areas of interest within the classroom, provide a variety of centers for large and small group activity, provide a quiet area for the solitary child, provide a range of interesting materials, have organized and proper storage space, and maintain a classroom that is safe and clean.
- Have a strong code of ethics, maintain a high standard of professional conduct, show respect for students, parents and colleagues, be open to new ideas, and be willing to learn from others.

Reports and Complaints: Please report any concerns or questions you have to the office staff of Little Blessings PDO. To file an official complaint about the facility, contact:

The Colorado Department of Human Services  
Division of Child Care  
1575 Sherman Street, Denver, Colorado 80203-1714  
303-866-5958 or 1-800-799-5876

### To report suspected child abuse, contact:

Douglas County Health & Human Services  
101 Third Street, Castle Rock, Colorado 80104  
303-688-4825