



Christian Child Care & Preschool

Parents Handbook

August 2019

Introduction

The History of BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET:

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET Christian Childcare and Preschool opened in May of 1994. Robert Young is the on-site owner and operator of BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET and was excited to provide Ada with its first childcare and preschool facility. Robert Young worked with the top childcare and educational authorities in the Grand Rapids area to develop programs for BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET. The name BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET was inspired by a Christian children's song, "I am taking big steps with my little feet".

Robert and his wife, Annette, have resided in the Ada area since 1984. They have been blessed with six children of their own. Robert graduated from college with a business degree and a childcare emphasis.

From the opening date in May 1994, the building and business were designed to provide "wrap around childcare". This included a preschool curriculum in an environment where parents would feel comfortable and their child would be cared for as well as taught essential skills that would prepare them for their early elementary years.

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET has progressively grown and developed its programs into a reputable, reliable environment for providing childcare and preschool. In 2010, a decision was made to further our agenda by building an innovative and unique new facility. We continue to provide an emphasis on operational excellence, customer intimacy, and innovation. It is our on-going aspiration to fulfill these commitments daily. Our mission statement continues to come alive with the smiles of the children and the contentment that the parents display.

As we move forward, we are looking to continuing our adventure in nurturing the children here at BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET into the next generation.

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MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a safe and nurturing environment where care and learning become a stimulating adventure, as we partner with parents in developing positive character qualities for your children, our future generation.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that God created each child special and unique to grow and develop the skills and abilities that He has given him or her. Each child will be treated equally regardless of race, family background or religion. The programs and activities are based on Godly principles and sound, proven curriculum.

We believe that BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET is an extension of the home. Part of the center's instruction includes role-modeling techniques and other hands-on skills that can be used at home.

We believe employees are a big part of motivating the children to learn and grow. BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET employees are expected to enjoy working past the level of custodial care and demonstrating love and concern for each child.

GOALS

- To model Christian values and promote a caring environment
- To value each child's individuality while meeting his/her needs
- To uphold a nurturing environment where staff partners with parents in their child's care
- To build open relationships with parents for the betterment of the child
- To allow daily exploration in language, math, science, fine motor skills, and tactile stimulation
- To encourage daily activity in large/gross motor activities both inside and outside
- To promote the child's social and cognitive development through interactions with other children and guidance from teachers
- To maintain a highly qualified, experienced and dedicated staff
- To provide clean, safe and age-appropriate equipment and an environment conducive to learning
- To provide overall kindergarten readiness

HOURS OF OPERATION

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET is open from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday except for holidays.

The center is closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

1st Friday in June ½ Day

4th of July

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve

Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Day

Tuition is still required to be paid for the holidays that the center is closed. In the case of part-time enrollment, parents will only pay for the holidays that fall on the days their child is scheduled to attend.

If the calendar date of the holiday falls on a Saturday, then the Friday before will be observed. If the calendar date falls on a Sunday, then the following Monday will be observed as the holiday. Parents will be reminded of these closing in a written posting and/or email prior to the holiday.

LATE PICK UPS

A fee of \$5.00 per minute, per child will be applied when your child or children are picked up after 6 pm. Parents should arrive with enough time to gather and pack the child's things so that they are ready to leave by 6 pm. If staff must remain after 6 pm to care for a child who has not been picked up, the late charge will apply. For children enrolled in ½ day programs, a full day fee will be charged for late pick up. The late fee amount will be applied the following day to your weekly tuition rate and must be paid in full by the time your next tuition payment is due.

In the case of an emergency, late fees will be waived. Parents should make arrangements for someone else to pick up the child as soon as possible and notify staff of the situation immediately.

If you are late more than three (3) times in a one-year period, BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET may determine withdrawal from the center is necessary.

ADMISSION PROCEDURE

The family (child and parents) will meet with the center director. The family will tour the center and discuss with the director which room is appropriate and if services will be provided.

An enrollment packet must be completed with the following information:

- Child Information Card
- Health Appraisal signed by a physician, including shot records. (Updated every two years for children older than 2 ½ years and updated every year for children younger than 2 ½ years.)
- Contracts – read and signed, stating an understanding of handbook policies
- Authorization Forms
- Parental Agreement
- Name Release
- Liability Release
- Enrollment Papers – child's information
- Transportation Form
- Sack Lunch Form

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT FEES

A \$75.00 registration fee per child is due at the time of enrollment. Each May, a \$25.00 re-registration fee (per child) is due. These fees go towards processing of state and company paperwork.

A two-week nonrefundable deposit is required at the time of enrollment. This fee will be used toward the last two weeks of tuition.

Payment is due on the first day of the week that a child is normally scheduled. If payment is not received when due, a \$25.00 late fee will be applied for each late payment.

Payments by check or money order should be placed in the payment box in the front lobby of the main building. Balances and payment records are available at the sign-in screen or a printed version will be available upon your request. If you have additional questions, you may send an email and the director will respond as soon as possible.

If a child is absent for any reason (vacation, illness, etc.) your regular tuition payment is still required. Credit days, if available, may be applied to your tuition for absences (see Absences on page 8).

Monthly or bimonthly payments can be set up with the director, but payments must be made in advance.

There is a \$50 returned check fee, which must be paid along with the amount of the NSF check immediately upon notification.

If tuition obligations cannot be met, a meeting will be set up with the director to attempt to work out a solution. If no solution is reached, dismissal may be considered. In the case of a necessary withdrawal, a two-week written notice is required; in which case, the deposit received at registration will be used as payment for the two weeks.

TUITION & TRANSPORTATION

Tuition rates as listed in the BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET information packet are subject to annual increases.

Beginning August 19, 2019, siblings will receive a discount at BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET. If you have two (2) children enrolled full-time, a five percent (5%) discount will be applied to the second child's weekly tuition rate and each additional child, up to four children. The first child's tuition will be at full price. Families enrolled prior to July 2019 who receive a sibling discount will be grandfathered in at their current discounted rate until June 2020. Beginning June 1, 2020, all enrolled families with siblings will be charged the current tuition rate and corresponding sibling discount. There is no sibling discount for part-time enrolled children or families with more than one child enrolled part-time.

Parents must notify the center in writing at least two weeks prior to the need for additional care days. Requests for additional day(s) of care or change of days will be accommodated based on availability, and parents will be notified if their care request can be accommodated. Switching

or trading days of care is not permitted. With prior approval, families may add additional days of care which will incur a charge according to the current tuition rates. This amount will be added to the weekly tuition amount and must be paid in full with the next tuition payment.

If space is available, childcare for school age children may be available on snow days and planned school closings. Daily tuition rates will be applied and requests will be approved on a first come, first serve basis.

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET provides bus transportation to a select amount of area preschools and elementary schools. This is determined by proximity, efficiency of routes, curriculum differences, staff availability, and school release times. Parents will specify at the beginning of the school year the per week number of needed transportation trips. The bus rate is \$4.00 per trip, per child and will be added weekly to your child's tuition account, regardless of use. This amount must be paid following the same requirements as weekly tuition. Discounts or credits will not be given if a child is absent or other transportation is provided. Notification to discontinue transportation services must be made in writing to the Center Director two weeks in advance.

ABSENCES

In order to maintain a high quality center and staff, schedules are based on enrollment. For this reason BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET cannot refund or reduce tuition due to days missed for illness, vacation, holidays, bad weather or planned summer leave.

For unplanned absences, parents must notify the center by 10 am if the child will not be attending. This is imperative due to proper staffing needs. In case of illness, refer to the illness policy on page 8.

Credit days are allotted at the rate of one day per the number of days per week the child is enrolled. For example; a child enrolled Monday through Friday will receive 5 credits to use for days that he or she is absent for either sickness or vacation. Credit days do not accumulate year to year and must be used within the calendar year or they will expire.

- Credit days may only be used for a day that the child is not at BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET.
- In the case of vacation, a one week written notice must be given to the director for credit days to be used.
- In the case of sick days, credit may be used the week following the sick day(s) only, and a written note stating the intent to use a credit day is required.
- Once credit days are used, payment is expected for all remaining enrolled/attended days.
- Credit days may not be used toward a two week withdrawal notice.
- Credit days may not be used for holidays.

Planned extended absences are permitted, with prior communication with the Center Director. All available credit days will be applied first and any remaining tuition obligations must then be paid. For full time enrolled children, a minimum of 3 days per week tuition must be paid to hold your childcare spot. For part time enrolled children, a minimum of two days per week tuition must be paid to hold your childcare spot. Planned leave cannot be longer than four consecutive weeks.

For families who participate in Summer withdrawal and return in the Fall, tuition payments are not required to hold your spot through Summer, but the annual \$25 enrollment and paperwork

fee will apply. Summer withdrawal will be honored for the months of June, July and the first three weeks of August. Summer enrollment and/or withdrawal plans will be determined in early Spring to allow Big Steps Little Feet time to accommodate Summer care requests.

WITHDRAWAL

If parents choose to discontinue center services, they must give a two-week written notice. The deposit will be applied toward the two weeks' tuition. Credit days may not be used for this notice. Parents should check their account for an adjusted balance. In the case of immediate withdrawal, the two-week deposit is nonrefundable.

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET reserves the right to dis-enroll a family at any time for the best interest of the center. If BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET management believes they cannot provide care for the child because of discipline reasons, safety issues or other concerns, they may ask for withdrawal within two weeks.

Failure to pay tuition regularly or excessive absenteeism could result in requested withdrawal.

If the center management requests a child's immediate withdrawal, the deposit will be refunded.

CHILD CHECK IN/OUT

The person dropping off and picking up the child must sign into the main lobby computer every day. They must walk the child in, help them put their things in their cubby, and walk them to their class, notifying staff the child is present. When picking up, the person should get the child from their class, pack up things from the cubby, and sign out. If a child is not signed in/out six (6) or more times during a one-month period, the parent will be charged \$5.00 fee each time they fail to sign in/out.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Children will only be released to their parents and other people specified on the child's emergency card.

If the staff has not met the person picking up the child previously, it is the BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET policy to ask for a picture ID for the child's safety.

If you know that someone other than those listed on the child's card will pick up your child, see the director ahead of time to add them so the child can be released.

In cases of divorce and/or parental control, BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET requires a copy of court papers to determine which parents are allowed visitation.

ILLNESS POLICY

In order to keep everyone as healthy as possible, if a child is sick, he or she may not attend BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET. By staying home, children will not expose the other children and they will have time to regain full strength to stay healthier in the future.

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET enforces the same policy for its staff and does extensive cleaning throughout the day and at closing time in hopes of preventing the spread of all contagious germs.

Please plan ahead and make other care arrangements when your child does become ill. If a child becomes ill while at the center, staff will notify the parents first by work phone and cell phone. The second attempt will be to the second parent listed by work phone and cell phone. We expect the child to be picked up within one hour of contact. If the parent cannot be reached, the person listed on the emergency card will be notified. Someone is expected to pick up the child within one hour of being notified.

The following are examples of reasons to keep/send a child home:

Fever over 100.5 degrees – If your child was running a fever and Tylenol or Aspirin were given to keep the temperature down, he or she should not attend until the temperature has remained normal for 24 hours without medication.

Cough or sore throat – A persistent deep, hoarse or raspy cough should be examined by a doctor. A sore throat may be detected by a lack of interest in eating, drinking lots of water or complaints from the child.

Vomiting and/or diarrhea – Children may not return to the center until the vomiting or diarrhea has stopped for a complete 24-hour period. If the child vomited in the night but not again, he or she should remain home for 24 hours regardless if they "seem fine".

Runny nose – Drainage from the nose that is thick, yellowish or greenish should be checked out by a doctor and may be reason enough to receive a call to come pick up your child.

Rash – Some rashes are highly contagious. Staff is not trained to know which are, so the child with a rash should be examined by a doctor to decide on a treatment or identify the cause. In the case of chickenpox, the child must remain home until the spots have scabbed over completely.

Head lice – In the case of suspected head lice or itching, the center will do head checks on each child in the center. Children with lice should have it treated and parents should follow professional guidelines to rid the home of lice. Staff will wash or bag everything in the center to prevent further spread. Each child will be required to take everything home to be washed that day. Children with lice will be checked to verify that they are lice-free before they may return to the classroom.

Eye drainage – If eyes are draining, red or itchy, they may be infected and contagious and will be sent home.

Contagious diseases – Anything which is easily spread until treated is reason to keep a child home.

Viruses – Although viruses cannot be treated by antibiotics, they are contagious and the child should stay home.

One-on-One Care – If the child is very fussy and needs one-on-one care, he or she should remain home as it is impossible for the staff to provide that level of care.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS ANY OF THE ILLNESSES LISTED THEY MUST STAY HOME UNTIL THE SYMPTOMS ARE NON-APPARENT FOR 24 HOURS OR THEY HAVE BEEN ON ANTIBIOTICS FOR A 24-HOUR PERIOD.

If the child is seen by a doctor and has a signed note stating they are healthy and not contagious, the director will decide if they may return in less than 24 hours.

Please help us stay ahead of the rapid spread of infections by keeping your child home when he or she is contagious. Notify the center as soon as possible so we can alert other parents to watch for early signs in their children.

Teething – Teething may cause a low-grade fever, loose stools, and crankiness. If other symptoms are present, the child should be examined to rule out any other illnesses.

Ear Infections – These are not contagious although the cold that usually precedes them is. If the child is fussy to the point of needing one-on-one care, parents will be notified to pick up the child.

Allergies – Parents should keep the center up-to-date on a child's allergies. If a rash is thought to be caused by an allergy, staff may ask to have the child checked by a physician to be sure.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

If a child needs non-prescription medication while at the center, a permission form must be completed and signed by the parent. The name of the medicine, amount to be given, time to be given, and any additional instructions should be included on the form.

Medications such as Tylenol, sunscreen, or bug spray may be stored at the center to be administered on an as needed basis once the parental form is completed.

The medication **MUST** be in the **ORIGINAL** container and clearly labeled with the child's name. Staff will dispose of all medication when it expires.

If the child needs prescription medication, parents must complete and sign a form including the name of the medicine, reason for medicine, time to be given, amount to be given, and how many days it should be given.

All medications **MUST** be in the **ORIGINAL** container clearly labeled with the same information as written on the form authorizing the center to administer the medication. Staff will record the date, time and amount given.

OUTDOOR POLICY

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET provides outside play areas and includes age appropriate equipment for toddlers through school age. Staff may also take the children on supervised walks on the sidewalks along Bronson St. into Ada and back. The director will be informed of the times and route taken. A two-way radio and first aid kit are taken along.

The center is required by state law to take all enrolled children outside each day, including infants. Please consider the weather when preparing your children for the day. It is not possible to allow individual children to remain inside due to sickness; if a child is in class, he or she will be required to go outside. If your child is not properly dressed, BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET clothing will be given to your child to wear.

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET's outside guideline is as follows:

All children will go outside twice per day.

WINTER : If the wind chill is above 25 degrees, all children should go outside. If the wind chill is below 25 degrees, children age 2 ½ and under will not go outside. If the wind chill is below 20 degrees, children age 2 ½ and up will not go outside.

SUMMER : If the heat index is above 92 degrees, the children will NOT go outside.

MEALS AND SNACKS

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET is a Peanut-free facility. The center provides breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack for the children every day. An on-staff cook prepares hot and cold meals. Meals are balanced and served in child sized portions. A monthly menu is posted in each classroom and extra copies are available at the front desk. Feel free to bring your own lunch, but please make sure it is healthy, peanut-free and that you have signed and turned in a permission slip.

If your child has food allergies, please talk to the Center Director about alternatives.

QUIET TIME

A 30 minute quiet time is required by the state. There is a scheduled "Quiet Time" every day in every room, except the Lambs and Giraffes classrooms. These rooms operate on the needs of the children and do not fit this criteria for quiet time.

Parents may bring in a regular, non porta crib, crib sheet (these fit over center cots), a small blanket, a small pillow, and a stuffed animal to make their child feel more comfortable during quiet time. All of these items MUST be taken home on Fridays to be washed.

During quiet time the lights are turned off, the shades are pulled, and lullaby music is played. In situations where the child resists the staff, cries, screams and fights the quiet time, staff will try to work out a way that the child can go home during this time since it is very disruptive to the other children. BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET will not make exceptions to this policy for any family.

CLOTHING

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET staff makes every effort to make sure it uses washable materials; however please remember when dressing your child that during the day they will do a number of activities in which they may get dirty. Children are encouraged to feel involved in the activities, and although the center does provide paint shirts and bibs for messy activities, these are not child proof.

Comfortable and simple clothing should also be taken into consideration when dressing your child.

Each child should have a complete set of extra clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, and socks) at the center in case of an accident or spill. As the seasons change and your child grows, change the extra clothes accordingly. The extra clothes should be in a plastic bag with the child's name clearly written on it.

Parents should label coats, snow pants, boots, extra clothes with their child's name.

TOYS & FOOD FROM HOME

No food, toys or other items from home are allowed at BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET, except for days designated as "Show-n-Tell" in the preschool rooms when children are allowed to bring in one item to share.

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET is not responsible for damage or loss of any items brought from home.

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET provides meals and snacks for the children throughout the day. Parents are permitted to bring in treats, but must be store bought without peanut additives due to allergic reactions. Please speak with your child's teacher prior to bringing in food items.

BIRTHDAY TREATS/PARTIES

Parents are welcome to bring in a special peanut-free snack for their child's birthday, but are asked to give a few days notice so the staff does not plan or prepare additional snacks. Talk to the child's teacher or director about appropriate food items. These treats must be store-bought due to allergic reactions.

If you would like to have a birthday party for your child, BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET requests that you keep in mind the following: If you plan to invite everyone from your child's class you may pass out invitations at the center. If not, please be discreet and mail the invitations, or handle invites outside of the center, so the children who are not invited do not feel intentionally left out.

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS & VISITATIONS

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET policy is for parents to be as involved as possible in their child's care. For this reason, parents are encouraged to visit any time during business hours. However, if visits are more than a few minutes or on a consistent basis, they could disrupt classroom routine.

Parent teacher conferences are held twice a year to allow parents to speak with their child's teacher about his or her progress. These conferences will be held for all preschool classrooms. A 15 minute time frame is allotted. If either parent or the teacher feels a meeting is needed before that time, it can be arranged.

Special Events – The center hosts occasional special events, when a parent can get involved. Each room has a parent board where special room notes and plans are posted for the parents' review. Information will also be sent via email or posted by the sign-in computers. Please take time to read these and get involved.

Unauthorized people are not allowed into classrooms without director approval. However, the director may show prospective parents through the center from time to time.

On an annual basis, parents will be notified of the maintenance of premises via pesticide application. Parents will also be informed in advance of any pesticide applications that are completed on the premises. A service log is kept at the Center and is available for review at any time.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Staff will maintain positive interactions with all of the children for the purpose of building self-confidence and teaching each child to make good decisions when conflicts arise. Under no circumstances will any corporal punishment be allowed or used by staff. Children are taught how to control themselves as they experience different emotions and are shown constructive ways to share feelings.

Classes are set up in ways that encourage learning and acceptable play. In addition, the staff teaches the children by modeling appropriate behavior.

Teachers and caregivers often use positive redirection with children; for example, they may say, "Billy, please put your feet on the floor" instead of "Billy, don't climb on that."

Staff will attempt to help children in the problem solving process to work out disagreements.

Following a behavior incident with a child, the teacher will try to "catch" the child exhibiting positive behavior and will praise or affirm the child's appropriate behavior.

Parallel play is also frequently used; for example, if two children are fighting over the same toy, staff will give one child a similar toy and encourage them to play alongside of each other.

Distracting a child or redirecting a child and pulling interest to another toy can also help the child focus on another area of play.

In the older children's rooms, staff will facilitate communication and lead the children to make a decision as to what should happen. The staff will maintain overall awareness and do active listening to determine if there might be underlying causes for the inappropriate behavior.

In situations where repeated behavior problems occur, a child may be separated from the group for a very short time into an area away from the other children but still in the same room. Children will never be left alone in a separate room while they calm their body down.

When the time away from the group is over, the teacher will discuss with the child how they can behave differently next time. If the child needs one-on-one care and is repeatedly disrupting the class, staff will contact the parent to pick up the child. If the parent is unavailable and the emergency contact cannot be reached, BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET management reserves the right to ask that the child will not return to the center for his or her next scheduled day.

We strongly believe that consistency between the home and school is vital to resolving behavior problems and parent support and involvement is incredibly helpful to the staff; therefore, detailed notes will be sent home explaining what action was taken and meetings with parents will be set up if the need arises.

A childcare setting may not be the best environment for all children. If for this or any other reason the BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET staff believe the child is not benefitting from the environment or is concerned about the safety of a child, the center may ask for withdrawal.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All full time staff have infant and child CPR certification and first aid training.

In case of serious injury while at the center, staff will take the following steps:

- If a life/death situation occurs, call 911 and contact director and parents immediately
- Depending on severity of injury, permission from the parents will be received to take the child to the Metro Health University of Michigan Health Urgent Care, 4055 Cascade Rd. SE Grand Rapids 49546 (#616-252-4010), or the emergency room at one of the following hospitals according to signed emergency card on file:

- Helen Devos Children's Hospital
- St. Mary's - Mercy Health
- Metro Health
- Spectrum - Blodgett
- In cases of minor accidents, such as bumps, bruises or scratches, the supervising staff member will notify the center director before completing an incident report, stating what happened, when, where, and what treatment, if any, was given. A copy of the report will be sent home with the child upon pickup. Note: Because of confidentiality rules, names of other children will be omitted.
- In case of fire at the center, emergency exits are posted in each room and each class will quickly walk outside to designated areas. Staff will take attendance, and parents will be notified as soon as possible.
- In case of a tornado warning, each room has a designated area where they will meet and remain until an All Clear message is given.
- BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET has regular fire and severe weather drills, so children and staff will be familiar with the procedures.

INFANT ROOMS

Primary Caregiver – Each child has a primary caregiver who will comfort, feed and teach him or her. The secondary caregiver will be involved but not directly responsible for the child. All of our staff are required to earn 16 professional development hours per calendar year.

Record keeping – A daily record will be kept and sent home, including information such as how much the child ate, slept, medications, if any, that were given, diaper changes and special notes about the child's day.

Room – The room is set up to be stimulating and comfortable for the infants. Age appropriate equipment as well as toys and books are regularly rotated for brain stimulating development.

Each child will have his/her own crib. Cribs are maintained in a separate area in the room.

BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET provides wipes, bibs, sippy cups, spoons, bowls, and washcloths. It also has strollers, which are used to take infants on walks when weather allows. (See Outdoor Weather policy, page 10)

A phone will be available in the infant room, so parents may communicate with caregiver at any time.

Feeding – Parents must provide bottles and any baby food for their child. Bottles must be premade and labeled with the child's name and date. Nipples must be covered. Bottle should be placed in the refrigerator. An extra can of formula and an extra bottle may be kept in the child's cubby. However, staff is not allowed to prepare bottles or sterilize bottles to reuse for any reason.

After a bottle is warmed, it is good for one hour. After one hour, whatever portion the child has not consumed will be disposed. Staff will rinse bottles and nipples, but it is the parents' responsibility to sterilize them at home.

Baby food should be labeled with the child's name and date. An open jar of food is good for 24 hours, and if it is not finished by the second day, the parent should take it home or the staff will dispose of it.

A child will be offered food that is served at the center when parents feel that he or she is ready. A mother who is breastfeeding her baby may do so at anytime during open business hours.

Diapers – Parents are responsible for providing diapers for their child. These may be brought in packages if desired and staff will store them and notify the parent when their supply is getting low. Please promptly bring in more. If a child runs out of diapers and staff has to use center diapers, the parent will be charged \$0.75 per diaper. The center provides baby wipes, but any creams or powders the parent wants to be used on the child must be provided, labeled and in its original container and a nonprescription form must be on file. Cloth diapers are welcome, and a wet bag must be labeled and provided for them.

Personal items – If a child has a pacifier, special blanket, bib, or other personal item, they must be labeled to avoid loss. Personal toys should be left at home. s

Transition – At ages 10 – 12 months the child will begin to transition to the next age-appropriate room. The transition will take approximately one to two weeks. Another transition happens between 14 – 18 months. All moves are based upon age, and developmental readiness.

TODDLER ROOMS

Staff – All of our staff are required to earn 16 professional development hours per calendar year.

Primary Caregivers – Each child has a primary caregiver who will comfort, feed and teach him or her. The secondary caregiver will be involved but not directly responsible for the child.

Record keeping – A daily record will be kept and sent home, including information such as how much the child ate, slept, medications, if any, that were given, diaper changes and special notes about the child's day.

Rooms – The Toddler rooms are set up to encourage socialization as well as growth in all of the developmental areas including gross and fine motor skills, language, emotional and cognitive skills.

Rooms have four different areas: a book corner, a gross motor area, a dramatic play area and an area for manipulatives.

Activities – Teachers prepare weekly lessons, which include art projects, sensory activities, circle time and other special activities. Activity lists are posted in each room for parents' review. A short structured activity time is introduced in these rooms. Caregivers do a short circle time

where they read a short story, sing and do finger plays, etc. Art projects are also created in Toddler rooms.

Naptime – In the Toddler Rooms, children nap on cots and each child will have a cot assigned to him or her. Children who use pacifiers are encouraged to use them only during naptime.

Children will use sippy cups until they have mastered drinking from a cup without a cover. Parents are asked to refrain from bringing in bottles once their child is in the Toddler rooms.

Diapers - Parents are responsible for providing diapers for their child. These may be brought in packages if desired and staff will store them and notify the parent when their supply is getting low. Please promptly bring in more. If a child runs out of diapers and staff has to use center diapers, the parent will be charged \$0.75 per diaper. The center provides baby wipes, but any creams or powders the parent wants to be used on the child must be provided, labeled and in its original container and a nonprescription form must be on file. Cloth diapers are welcome and a wet bag must be labeled and provided for them.

Biting – Children, for many reasons, may bite themselves, others and/or toys. Staff will remind children that it is okay to bite food, but not okay to bite themselves or others. If biting becomes a consistent behavior, parents will be called to decide on a plan of action. For the safety of all the children, if all efforts to change the behavior are exhausted and staff sees no results, the family may be asked to withdraw. This is to ensure safety for all of the children in the room.

If you have questions or would like to talk to your child's caregiver, the best time to call or visit is between 12:30 and 2pm, when the children are resting and the teachers are available.

PRESCHOOL ROOMS

Staff – All of our staff are required to earn 16 professional development hours per calendar year. Part time assistants have previous experience working with children. The entire staff is devoted not only to educating young children but also to demonstrating a love for them. At BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET, we believe that it is important for the children to develop a relationship and bond with their caregiver and teacher; therefore, there will be one main teacher in the child's room for most of the day.

Rooms - BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET preschool programs and areas are set up to provide a stimulating environment where the children can comfortably play and learn during the day.

Activities – Activities such as dressing for outside, setting the table and shoe tying are all self-skills, which if taught with positive encouragement, will help each child develop a positive self-concept, which in turn will benefit him or her for life.

Children's interactions with each other are wonderful opportunities for growth in socialization. Staff will help teach children how to deal with disagreements as well as agreements by

encouraging them to interact with each other in many different and positive ways. Staff is trained to use language that is both positive and age appropriate.

Each preschool class has a daily schedule posted in the room. Although the times may differ between rooms, all classrooms will include the following activities:

- Circle time, related to the theme of the week
- Science and math skills are integrated within center activities
- Outside play, both in the morning and afternoon
- Bible stories
- One week themes during the year
- Prayers are said before each meal
- Zoo Phonics and Handwriting Without Tears

Kindergarten Readiness – Readiness skills are taught in the oldest preschool classrooms and the BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET staff will do evaluations for kindergarten placement.

Field Trips – Preschool rooms take some field trips. These trips can be wonderful learning experiences as well as lots of fun.

Transition – Children will transition from one preschool room to the next. The child will move into the next class based on a combination of factors, including age, development, readiness and space available.

Parents who wish to check on their child during the day may feel free to call. Teachers are available to talk during quiet time from 12:30 to 2 pm.

Mandated Reporters

All staff of Big Steps Little Feet are mandated reporters and obligated to follow the Child Protection Law. If a staff member suspects child abuse or neglect of any kind, we are required to report it immediately by phone, written report or reporting on line to Child Protective Services (CPS). CPS will then follow their requirements and proceed with the reported complaint. The identity of the staff person will be confidential and staff of Big Steps Little Feet will comply with all investigation requirements.

Thank you for choosing BIG STEPS LITTLE FEET to teach and care for your child. We hope that we are able to offer many years of learning and fun!