



Seedlings
EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Family Handbook

Epping, NH 03042
(603) 679-3381

www.seedlingelc.com

Seedlings Early Learning Center

Welcome!!

Seedlings Early Learning Center, LLC (SELC) welcomes you and your family to our school! We look forward to providing your family with a loving, and nurturing environment in which your child can develop physically, emotionally, cognitively and socially.

This handbook was developed to help answer questions and clarify policies. Please note that these policies are subject to change.

About Us

We are a family owned company and strive to provide every child in our care with a uniquely rewarding and beneficial early childhood experience.

Mission Statement

Seedlings Early Learning Center, LLC, aims to provide unique and innovative childcare services in a creative, engaging and nurturing early learning environment for children 6 weeks to 12 years.

Disclaimer

Seedlings Early Learning Center, LLC retains the right to enforce these policies at will. Lack of enforcement of a certain policy at any time does not indicate that the policy is no longer in effect.

Admission & Enrollment

Admission and Enrollment

Every child is considered equal and will not be denied admission on the basis of family beliefs, background or special needs. If we are unable to immediately accommodate your family's scheduling needs, your child will be placed on a wait list.

Enrollment Procedures

We encourage families to tour our facility prior to registering their child. This will afford you the chance to meet the Seedlings staff, experience part of a day at our center and allow us to get to know you as well. We understand that the transition to a new center can be hard, so we encourage you to bring your child with you when you come for a tour. You can also make an appointment for your child to spend a few hours prior to his or her first day.

Initial enrollment requires the appropriate paperwork, and a deposit. Spaces are available on a "first come first serve basis." A tour does not confirm your child's enrollment.

Required Paperwork

Upon enrollment, you will receive many documents from Seedlings, and will need to return these forms before your child can begin care.

- Childcare Registration and Emergency Form
- Child Health Form (including Updated Immunization Records) Other needed documents:
 - Emergency Card
 - Enrollment Agreement Form
 - All About my Child Form
- Authorization to Administer Non-Prescription Medication (as needed)
- Policy Agreement Form
- Infant Sleep Safe Policy
- Tuition agreement Form

Any additional forms in the Registration packet

Part Time/ Full Time Enrollment

We offer full time and part time enrollment. We will attempt to accommodate your family needs as much as possible.

Waiting List

Families who wish to place their children on a wait list may do so by providing a 1 week non-refundable deposit. This will serve as the last week's deposit.

Termination of Service

If it becomes necessary for us to resort to legal action to collect fees, the parent(s) or guardians will be responsible for any legal fees incurred by Seedlings. If you choose to terminate care from Seedlings Early Learning Center, please provide a 2-week written notice. Failure to provide this written notice will result in the forfeit of your deposit. All personal property left behind i.e. spare clothing, medication, art work, etc. will be held for 30 days. After 30 days, all materials will be discarded and Seedlings Early Learning Center will not be held responsible for any leftover items.

Summer Withdrawal

In the interest of consistency for your child, if you would like to suspend care for your child over the summer, you will be required to pay for 50% of your child's regular tuition. There is also the option of reducing your child's schedule to a minimum of two days per week to hold your child's spot for their return to full time at the end of the summer.

Seedlings Early Learning Center

Hours of Operation

Seedlings opens our doors promptly at 6:30 a.m. and remains open until 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Attendance

Full tuition is due regardless of actual days attended for each week. As our tuition rates are pro-rated taking all instances into account, tuition must be paid regardless of absence, sickness or holiday closings. Fees will be charged on a weekly basis, including missed days due to illness, snow days or holidays and vacations listed.

Please notify Seedlings as soon as possible, if your child will not be attending for the day or will be late. If you will not be able to be reached at your normal telephone numbers listed on your registration form, please let us know and give us an alternate phone number so that you may be contacted promptly in the event of an emergency.

Parents are required to immediately inform Seedlings of any change in address, telephone numbers, and other pertinent information.

Tuition & Fees

There will be a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$35 plus the determined weekly tuition rate to hold your new child's enrollment. Tuition will be based upon your child's classroom. Please refer to the tuition fee schedule for your family's specific rate. Rates are subject to change, we will try to provide as much notice as possible. Please pay tuition for the following week by dropping your payment off by Friday. We urge you to make payments in a timely manner as we must add a charge to any delinquent accounts. If your tuition payment is late we will charge:

- **\$10.00 on day 1**
- **\$20.00 on day 2**

After day 2, your child will not be allowed to attend Seedlings until the payment has been processed.

Seedlings Early Learning Center accepts payment in the form of personal check, money order, credit card or direct debit from your checking or savings account weekly. We process all our payments electronically through billing software, we **do not accept cash** as a form of payment. If a family chooses to pay by credit card, there will be a surcharge for cc fees.

In the event of non-sufficient funds notification parents will be responsible for a \$ 35.00 returned check fee, as well as any other fees incurred due to the returned check. Receipts are available by request.

At times, children may need to transition to the next classroom before the year's end. If this should occur, the tuition rate set for that classroom shall become in effect for your child's first week.

The rates have been carefully considered by our leadership team, factoring in the cost of quality teachers, offering an inclusive program, running a clean, spacious, state licensed facility and providing a stimulating learning environment through books, toys, art materials, etc. for our children.

Shared Payments

If more than one person is responsible for paying your child's tuition, (this does not include married parents) Seedlings requires a written contract signed by all parties, stating:

1. All persons responsible for payment
2. When payments will be made by each person
3. Amount due

This helps all parties understand clearly how much is due, when it is due and who is responsible, to mitigate confusion about outstanding balances.

Discounts

We offer a 10% discount on the oldest child's tuition for families that are enrolled full time (5 days a week). We also offer a 5% military discount for full time families. Please see the director for more information.

Late Pick-Up Fees

Please make every attempt to pick up your child in a timely fashion. If your child is not picked up by 6:00pm, your account will be charged \$1.00 per minute per child, with a minimum charge of \$10.00. If your child has not been picked up by 6:30, and the family's whereabouts are unknown, we reserve the right to call the proper authorities to pick up the child.

Holidays/Vacations

Seedlings is open year-round, Monday- Friday, with the exception of major holidays. These days are New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, , Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. The center will close at 3:00 PM on Christmas Eve and New

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Year's Eve. Should the holiday fall on a Saturday, we will be closed the Friday prior to the holiday. If the holiday should occur on a Sunday, we will be closed the Monday following the holiday.

We will also be closed for one (1) full day per year (typically in fall) for staff development. These dates change every year, but we will announce the closing well ahead of time to allow our families to arrange for alternative care.

Severe Weather

We will make every attempt to remain open and staff accordingly during these times. For the safety of our families and staff, we may, at times, find it necessary to close due to inclement weather, localized disaster or state of emergency. Information on delayed openings, early closings or full day school closings can be found on our Facebook page, Class Dojo and, on WMUR or on their website at www.WMUR.com. If a situation forces a closure while children are still in our care, we will call you immediately. Please be sure that we always have updated emergency contact information on an emergency card.

Social Media & Photography

Time permitting, we will post pictures on our center's Facebook page and Class Dojo. Staff will take pictures of individuals and groups for curriculum activities and on-site use. By filling out the Policy Agreement Form with registration paperwork, you are authorizing the release of photos and allowing Seedlings to post pictures of your child on Facebook, Class Dojo and our website, and to be used for curriculum and advertising/media purposes. Children's full names will not be used for public posting. If you would NOT like your child's picture to appear on any of these mediums, please check the box that indicates this on the proper form.

Curriculum

Although each age group has varying activities, the teachers build their curriculum around the core of Early Childhood Education. Below is a very brief overview of skills that your child will be exposed to and encouraged to participate in:

Gross Motor: activities that develop body movement, healthy living and coordination.

Fine Motor: activities that develop hand-eye coordination and pre-writing skills.

Language & Communication: reading, verbal, nonverbal, pictures, signs, making choices, listening, following directions and so much more!!

Self-Help: activities such as toileting, washing hands, self-serving of food, dressing and cleaning up their toys.

Cognition: development through teacher directed educational activities, child initiated play, art, music, cooking, memory, relationships, cooperation, etc.

Social: Activities that develop manners, relating to others, or learning to work with others.

Emotional: recognition and labeling of various emotional states including happiness, sadness, anger, frustration, pride, etc.

Sensory: activities that allow for brain stimulation, tactile and texture as well as messy play.

Math & Science: activities that build on shape or number relationships, one-to-one correspondence and scientific concepts such as weather, colors, nature and simple experiments.

Technology: exposure to modern technology and use of materials in realistic or pretend play.

Day-to-Day

Daily Schedule

Each classroom maintains a structured daily schedule, with the exception of infants, whose daily schedules are highly individualized. The teachers post a daily schedule in their respective classrooms. Schedules may occasionally vary due to special activities or inclement weather.

Rest/Nap Time

As mandated by NH Child Care Licensing, each child must be given the opportunity for one hour of rest each day. Most children will use this time to nap; however children who do not fall asleep or who awaken early will be guided to quiet activities that will not disturb other sleeping children. For age groups 2 and up, there is a reduction of ratio of teacher to student during rest time for our faculty to step out for lunch. There is not reduction of ratio for our infant and 1 year old classrooms.

Please talk to your child's teacher if you have any concerns about your child's sleeping patterns. A signed letter is needed for teachers to alter the natural sleeping or waking methods of the children

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in our care. Seedlings Early Learning Center will provide a safe, warm quiet place for your child to rest. Children one and older will sleep on nap mats with a center-supplied sheet. Sheets will be washed at the end of every week, or more often if soiled.

Parents are asked to provide a blanket labeled with your child's name. Please take your child's nap items home weekly to be laundered, and bringing the items back on the first day that your child attends.

Infants will sleep in their cribs, with sheets provided by Seedlings. Sleep Sacks and pacifiers should be brought from home; please label.

Infants will be allowed to follow their own patterns of sleeping and waking. All infants enrolled will need to have a signed copy of our Infant Sleep Safe policy in their file. This policy is important as it assists us in guarding against the risk of SIDS. It highlights the safety practices that are specific to caring for infants while meeting their individualized needs. Please see the Infant Sleep Safe Policy for further details, or speak with the director.

Proper Dress

Please do not send your child to childcare wearing anything that must stay clean. Sometimes our activities get a little messy. Please be sure to pack one at minimum full set of extra clothing to keep at school. This includes weather appropriate tops and bottoms, socks and underwear, and shoes if potty training. Teachers will help to remind you, but please be aware of seasons and the growth of your child, to replace these clothes when necessary. During the spring and fall the children often get wet and muddy! It is especially important to have plenty of extra clothes for changing as well as sturdy, waterproof boots. For the safety and general ease of your child's day at school, we ask that your child come to school wearing sneakers or closed-toed sandals. **Please do not send your child in flip flops as they are not appropriate for our playground and classrooms.**

Communication

Daily Reports: Each classroom has a family information board to inform families of the daily activities and events. Center wide communication of events and news can be found posted in the entry way, newsletters, Class Dojo, Procure and Facebook. Please be sure to take a minute to read notices and special bulletins as they may be important to you or your child. Very young children have specialized daily care, and therefore will have

an individual daily note. These pages are laminated to help us reduce waste.

Conferences: We offer family/teacher conferences twice during the year to discuss your child's progress. In addition, families, teachers or the director may request a conference at any time.

Birthdays and Celebrations

At Seedlings Early Learning Center, we are happy to observe special days with activities and treats. The last Friday of each month we will celebrate all birthdays in that month with special cupcakes or treat made in our kitchen. Please note we do not allow outside food.

Potty Training

Toilet training can be an exciting, frustrating and trying time for both parents and children. If your child is showing signs of readiness for potty training, staff will assist in helping to identify this. Signs of readiness include the ability to indicate the need to use the bathroom, she is interested in staying dry, and she is dry for long periods during the day, etc. It can be best for the parents to initiate the process at home first, either over a weekend or during a vacation. Please keep in mind that the activity level here can distract your child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at your home.

Potty charts and stickers are all encouraged at the center, however they will need to be brought from home. We ask that all candy be left at home. Part of successful potty training is the confidence children feel in being able to "do it myself." Please have them wear pants that will be easy to pull down and up. Overalls, pants with belts and extra buttons are not suitable choices. This is to help them with their efforts while potty training. Please be aware that your child may dirty more clothing than typically kept at Seedlings, and you are encouraged to bring in more spare clothing, and extra shoes.

Note: *In order for a child to move up to the Blossom's preschool class, we do not require that they be completely toilet trained. Please note, diapers are not provided by the center after a child turns three years old and are placed in our Blossoms class.*

Supplies & Personal Belongings

Please have all your supplies labeled, including water bottles, clothes, jackets and nap items such as blankets and comfort items. Please also bring in sunscreen & insect repellent

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Toys from home can present many problems including choking hazards, fights over toys, broken toys and lost personal items. We respectfully ask that you refrain from bringing these toys to school unless your child's teacher has allowed them for a special activity, show and share, etc.

Behavior Goals

At Seedlings we try to stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for people and respect for property. As a result we do not allow children to hurt themselves or others, or destroy materials. Obscene language is not allowed. We stress that children treat materials and items -both Seedlings and their own, with respect. . We attempt to help children gain the confidence and knowledge to make great choices and develop self-control.

A Note about Biting:

Child care experts agree that biting among young children is normal and common, especially for those children who lack some communication skills, such as toddlers. Sometimes working through this time can take months. We ask that you be as supportive as possible for your little one and we will help guide the family with appropriate ways to work through this stage.

Please see your child's teacher or the director if you have specific concerns with your child's biting habits. Due to the fact that biting is such a common stage of development for toddlers, we will work closely with your family to discuss ways to correct this behavior which may include a tracking sheet to help figure out the trigger for the behavior.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's experiences at Seedlings Early Learning Center. . We have an open-door policy; therefore, please visit at any time during the day.

Field Trips & Special Events:

To enrich and enhance the day-to-day learning experiences in the classroom, we occasionally will have special visitors to school.

Safety

Confidentiality

Seedlings Early Learning Center values confidentiality. It is imperative that incidences concerning a child or children are kept between the parent(s) and staff members. Teaching staff and administration may not share any personal information with adults other than parents, and those permitted to pick the child up. Under no

circumstances are Seedlings Early Learning Center employees permitted to provide any information.

This includes any personal information and contact information, whether a child is enrolled or in attendance for the day, medical information, and even how a child's day has gone.

If a family member is denied custody of a child, visitation rights for a child or if those rights are limited in any way by a court order, please provide a copy of the legal documents to be stored confidentially in your child's file. If we do not receive all of the relevant paperwork, we may not be able to follow the wishes requested by the family member. Please contact the director of Seedlings directly at (603) 679-3381 if you have the need to discuss anything with the staff or administration.

Security Precautions

Seedlings Early Learning Center finds it necessary for the safety and concern of all children that our facility maintains secure. The system operates with a key tag. Each family will be assigned a key tag an issued on the first day. **Please do not share your key tag with anyone. Please do not open the door for those you do not know,** as it reduces the security of our building, and could compromise the safety of our children.

There is a deposit fee of \$10.00 per tag charged to your account. Each family can choose to have as many key tags as needed. Upon leaving the center and return of the tags, your deposit will be returned to your account.

*****Note: As the tags are costly, if they are lost, your original deposit is forfeited and there will be an additional charge of \$10 dollars.***

For the safety of your child, please walk your child to their classroom and inform the teacher of your child's arrival or departure. This ensures that the teacher may be aware of all of the children in their care at all times.

Seedlings has security cameras installed in every classroom, the playground and our parking lot. The cameras are closed-circuit and any information recorded is regarded as strictly confidential, and therefore not shared. These cameras are for the safety of the children and staff.

Child-Release Authorization

Please inform classroom teachers or school administration if someone different may be picking up your child. For the safety of your child, our teachers will ask for a driver's license or other form of ID. We can only release a child to authorized persons.

Impairment

If the parent or other authorized person arrives intoxicated or under the influence of drugs in the opinion of the provider, all reasonable steps will be taken to avoid releasing the child to that person, including offering to call an emergency contact. While we cannot legally withhold a child from a legal guardian, if we feel the child is in jeopardy, will call the authorities.

If you have specific concerns to discuss, please schedule a conference with your child's teacher or see an administrator.

Arrival and Departure Times

When you arrive in the morning, please bring your child to their classroom (or the main opening classroom if your drop off is before 8:00 am).

For infant drop offs, please be aware that these children are regularly on the floor. You are asked to take shoes off for the health of the infants crawling. This assists in avoiding an issue of them picking up dirt and debris carried in from our shoes. There is a car seat drop off area in the main entry hallway for families to leave their child's car seat if more than one person drops off or picks up. Please make sure the car seat is clearly labeled with your child or family name to avoid confusion- many car seats look alike.

For the safety of the children, please do not allow your child to wander in other classrooms.

Seedlings is very concerned about safety.

Therefore, when leaving, please DO NOT ALLOW CHILDREN TO RUN OUT TO YOUR CAR WHILE YOU ARE STILL INSIDE. Children are not allowed outside without a parent (or guardian) with them.

There are other cars that may be coming and going in the driveway and a serious incident could occur.

Our staff is here to assist you during drop off and will take their cues from you as far as how to proceed during drop off if your child is having a difficult time. Please know that if your child is truly inconsolable we will never hesitate to call and inform you. You may decide to call to check on your child after a particularly difficult drop off

Medical and Other Emergencies

It is not uncommon for children to receive bumps or bruises on occasion. Minor cuts and abrasions suffered while at the childcare will receive proper care, specifically; they will be washed with soap and warm water and properly bandaged while the child receives TLC from the caregiver. Injury and

treatment will be logged and we will tell you how and when the injury occurred.

Should a medical emergency arise we will try to contact a parent first, unless doing so endangers the child further. In that case we will take necessary steps, putting the child first (calling 911, doctor, poison control, etc.). If need be, your child will be transported to Exeter Hospital and we will contact you from there. Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment. Seedlings Early Learning Center maintains a current Emergency Preparedness Plan. In the event of a fire or other emergency, we would evacuate the premises immediately and gather in our evacuation area.

Seedlings requires you to keep us informed of current phone numbers and contact information in the case of an emergency.

Health & Nutrition

Illness

Please do not bring your child to care if he/she is ill and if they have a contagious illness, masking your child's symptoms with over the counter medication (IE: Tylenol) before care may be grounds for dismissal from Seedlings Early Learning Center. The Health department discourages the admittance of any child into a home daycare or center who exhibits any of the following symptoms. Therefore, it is the policy Seedlings to not accept for care, any child who exhibits the following:

- ❖ Unusual rash
- ❖ Fever over 101 (armpit) - child needs to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to care. (Example: if your child has a fever and leaves childcare sick, they may not return the following day. The fever must be gone for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.)
- ❖ Runny nose with colored discharge
- ❖ Excessive coughing (causing vomiting or choking)
- ❖ Diarrhea within last 24 hours (2 episodes or more)
- ❖ Discharge from eyes or ears (conjunctivitis or "pink eye")
- ❖ Vomiting - DO NOT bring your child if he/she has vomited within past 24 hours
- ❖ Lice - Cases of lice must be treated and child must be lice and nit free before returning to care.

Communicable diseases

All cases of communicable diseases require notification of parents of all children in our care. Children with a mild cold can attend care if they can participate in normal activities

Note: if your child is too sick to go outside, he/she is too sick to be at childcare.

They will be monitored and if the cold reaches the point that the child will not play, has a continuous cough, or the nose secretions are not clear, then the parent will be required to pick the child up and keep the child home until they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

If your child becomes ill while at Seedlings Early Learning Center they will be isolated from the other children, still within sight or sound of provider, and given special attention and comfort. You will be notified immediately and we ask that you make every effort to pick your child up within one hour. If parent(s) cannot be contacted, emergency contacts will be notified and they will be required to pick up child. This policy is for the health and safety of all concerned.

Before returning to care your child must be medication free and free of ALL symptoms for 24 hours, or be accompanied by a doctor's note

Medications

Prescription medications cannot and will not be administered unless ALL the following conditions are met:

- Prescription is current.
- Medication must be in original container.
- Container must be labeled with child's name, doctor's name, and when to be administered.
- As mandated by NH Licensing, a signed medication consent form is on file for each medication to be administered (including Epi-pens).
- NH Licensing does not allow Seedlings to administer the first dose of any medication to a child
- Non-prescription medications must be in original container and labeled with child's name, name of medication and dosage. As mandated by NH Licensing, a signed consent form must also be on file for each non-prescription medication including 'Tylenol' or any other medication.

****Please give all medications directly to the director or teacher upon arrival. Do not leave them in the diaper bag, cubby or school bag. The medication left in a child's reach could be very dangerous to the children in our care****

All oral medication whether prescription or non-prescription will be administered by Seedlings management or staff trained in Medication Authorization, with a classroom teacher as a witness.

A written log of all medication administered will be kept on file by Seedlings.

Child Abuse and Neglect

As childcare providers, we are obligated by the State of New Hampshire to report all known or suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect. As your child's well-being is our first and foremost concern, we can assure you that we will not turn our heads the other way if we see, hear of, or suspect your child is being abused and/or neglected.

Meals and Snacks

Seedlings will provide breakfast, morning snack, lunch and afternoon snacks at specific times according to your child's classroom. If a child requires special food or drink items the parents must provide these. All meals provided meet the USDA guidelines and are balanced and nutritious. While we realize that each family has certain foods, brands, etc. that they prefer, all children will use the center's food and supplies **unless a doctor's note or religious purpose is provided for exemption**. Children are encouraged to try everything, but never forced to do so. The teachers gladly assist all children in meal times, and encourage self-serving as well as family style dining. Seedlings Early Learning Center maintains a **NUT FREE center**

Infant Feedings:

Infants will always be fed according to their own schedule.

Parents will be asked to provide premixed bottles to keep in the refrigerator at the center.

All bottles must be labeled with the child's name, dated and refrigerated as needed. Any leftover breastmilk will not be discarded and will instead be sent home.

Infant cereal and baby food can be started at school only after they have been introduced at home. Please speak with the infant teacher about how to prepare these feedings and fit them into your child's schedule. When your child is ready to be introduced to table foods, we will provide appropriate snacks and lunches. Please communicate with teaching staff what your child may or may not have. For the safety and health of

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your baby, foods must be introduced at home first, and not at school.

Breastfeeding

If you are breastfeeding, please bring your own bottles labeled with your child's name and date; we will need a fresh bottle for every feeding. Due to possible bacterial contamination, breast-milk can only be offered for 1 hour after the initial heating. We can store extra pumped milk in our freezer as long as it's labeled. Breastfeeding moms are welcome to come in to feed your child at any time.

No Smoking

For the health and safety of all those who attend, Seedlings Early Learning Center maintains a smoke free environment. No smoking is allowed on the premises. Please do not leave cigarette butts in the driveway, yard, or walkways.

Outdoor Play

We do our best to go outside for play every day, weather permitting. If your child has a medical condition and is unable to participate in outdoor play, please provide a doctor's note specifying instructions for how to best care for your child. Infants can play outside based on their individual schedules and others in their classrooms. In times of inclement weather, children will be provided with movement activities in their classrooms

In Closing

Our Commitment to you

The staff at Seedlings Early Learning Center is committed to the very best for your child. Seedlings considers it a privilege to have been entrusted with the care of your child, and will always treat your child with care and respect. We appreciate your prompt tuition payment, adherence to pick up and drop off times, consideration for your sick child and consideration for other children and staff members

CONTACT INFORMATION

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