

Parent

# Handbook



A SERVICE OF BUCKEYE HILLS CAREER CENTER

# **Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center of Rio Grande, Ohio**

**Dawn Hall, Facilitator**

**351 Buckeye Hills Road, Rio Grande, Ohio 45674**

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**(740) 245-5334 Ext. 318**

## **Parent Handbook**

Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center is located at 351 Buckeye Hills Road in Rio Grande, Ohio. The learning center is an educational program that serves children from 18 months through age 5. Children will not be denied benefits or otherwise discriminated against based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

The early learning center is a fully licensed childcare facility. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services issues the childcare license posted in the welcome center for review. All licensing inspection reports will be posted. The center is licensed for toddlers and preschoolers.

We are a work-based learning hours lab partnered with Buckeye Hills Career Center, which works with students in the Early Childhood Education Program to help them obtain hours for their CDA credential.

Representatives from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services visit the center annually to review and evaluate our program for compliance with regulations and rules. All inspection reports are available upon request from ODJFS and are located in the childcare center office.

At various times, we may take photos or videos of the children enrolled in our program. We reserve the right to take, display, or publicize these photos or videos with written permission from the parent/guardian beforehand for parent view, training purposes, and documentation of special occasions, events, or activities of the learning center.

## **Philosophy Statement**

We believe that in the right environment, a child's natural curiosity and creativity lead to endless opportunities to grow in knowledge and develop a love of learning. We provide that environment at Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center by making it a safe, nurturing place where your child will be encouraged to pretend and create their way to exciting discoveries about the world around them. We welcome children to join the Little Buckeyes Family from 18 months through their prekindergarten years. Each day with us will be a chance for your child to grow socially, cognitively, emotionally, and physically. As early as 18 months, your child will be provided with learning opportunities tailored to their age, developmental stage, Board Approved: June 25, 2026

and learning style. Full-day learning centers in one location make it possible for you to provide your child with the care and education that will help them become happy, healthy lifelong learners.

### **Mission Statement**

At Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center, we believe in the value and uniqueness of each child and family we serve. Our center experience is designed to promote each child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a safe, developmentally appropriate learning environment that fosters a child's natural instinct to explore, discover, create, and become a lifelong learner.

### **Goals**

- To ensure each child enjoys experiences in such a way that they will develop at the maximum rate socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.
- To help children learn and play independently, to be at ease about being away from home, and to learn to follow directions from adults.
- To learn to work together with other children and to build a sense of community and teamwork with their peers.
- To develop self- identity and view themselves as having self- worth'
- To value others' rights as well as their own.
- To build their language and hearing skills, both listening and speaking.
- To learn how to express their inner creativity and imagination through singing, movement, painting, dramatic play, and other artistic expressions.
- To develop and strengthen small and large muscles.
- To build community with parents through family engagement activities.
- To help each child grow and develop into a happy, independent individual.

### **Hours of Operation**

Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center is open 5 days a week from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm.

1st shift 7:00 am to 12:00 pm

2nd shift 12:00 to 5:00 pm

[5:00 pm – 5:30 pm - cleaning of classrooms]

Little Buckeyes ELC will follow its published calendar, which provides closure dates.

### **New Family Orientation**

Each family is required to schedule a time with the Facilitator to complete a "New Family Orientation." This orientation is a great opportunity for parents to drop off routine care items and become familiar with their child's routines at Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center. The

Facilitator reviews important policies and procedures, as well as the required enrollment paperwork.

### **Room Transitions**

Your child will transition to a new classroom when he/she has reached the developmental milestones for that classroom. As the time for a transition to a new room approaches, you will receive a letter with information about your child's transition into his/her new classroom. Both your child's current and future teachers will be available to address any questions or concerns you have during the transition process. Before the transition into a new classroom is completed, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new teacher to familiarize themselves with the new classroom, children, and curriculum. Space must be available in the new group, staff/child ratios must be maintained, and the transition agreement must be posted in the classrooms.

### **Parent Participation**

Here at Little Buckeyes ELC, parents may participate in family events, art shows, open houses, and parent-teacher conferences.

### **Programs and Group Ratios**

Supervision of Children: Children shall be supervised at all times by responsible staff members. Staff shall position themselves to observe, hear, direct, and respond to children. No child shall be left unattended. Staff maintain awareness of children's activities and whereabouts during indoor play, outdoor play, field trips, restroom use, transitions, and emergency situations.

The staff-to-child ratio will be maintained at all times. Childcare staff members shall not be counted in the staff/child ratio when engaged in duties or activities that interfere with the supervision of children. There shall be at least one other employee or childcare staff member at the center if there are seven or more children in the building. Children shall be organized and assigned to a permanent group in consultation with parents and in accordance with the maximum group size. If two or more age groups are combined, the staff/child ratio shall be maintained for the age of the youngest child in the group. This includes when children are visiting the next older age group for transitioning purposes. If no more than one child two and one-half years of age or older is permanently assigned to a group in which all the other children are in the next older group, the staff/child ratio and maximum group size shall be determined by the older children. All age groups may be combined when there are twelve or fewer children in the center. There are three programs offered at Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center. They are:

<b>Room</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Ratio</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
Young Toddler	Young Toddlers (at least 18 months and less than 2 1/2 years.	1:7 1 staff member for 7 toddlers 2:14 2 staff members for 14 toddlers	7:00 AM TO 5:00 PM
Older Toddlers	At least 2 1/2 years of age and less than 3 years of age.	1:8 1 staff member for 8 older toddlers. 2 staff members For 16 older toddlers	7:00 AM TO 5:00 PM
Young preschool	Young Preschoolers (at least 3 years and less than 4 years	1:12 1 staff member for 12 preschoolers 2 staff members for 24 young preschool.	7:00 AM TO 5:00 PM

### **Enrollment Records**

Immunization Exemptions: Children must have current immunization records on file as required by Ohio law. Children with documented medical or legal exemptions may be enrolled in accordance with state requirements. During an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, the Center may be required to exclude non-immunized children as directed by the local health department.

Every 6 months, Little Buckeyes ELC completes an audit of enrollment records. At the conclusion of this audit, families will be notified if anything needs to be updated. Some forms must be updated every year, including the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. Other records must be updated throughout the year, such as physical and immunization records. When visiting your child's physician for a yearly "well-child" appointment, please request copies of your child's physical and most recent immunization records. You may bring these items yourself. Any time a family's information changes, such as address, place of employment, or health insurance provider, a new Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form must be completed. All children must have a valid physical exam by a licensed physician or certified nurse practitioner within 30 days of enrollment and yearly thereafter. To remain enrolled, children's immunizations must be up to date.

**Requirements for Admission**

A required form, JFS01234, child enrollment and health information for childcare, will be given to parents at the time of enrollment to fill out.

<b>Item Checklist Needed Before Care Begins</b>
#01217 Request for Administration of medication for childcare form
Signed Parent Handbook Agreement
Child enrollment and Health Information form #1234
Health physical
Immunization Record
Medical, Dental and General Emergency Plan for Child Care #1424
Copy of Driver’s License
New family Intake Form
If Needed: Child Medical/Physical Care Plan for Child Care form
Emergency Medical Authorization Form

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is a top priority for Little Buckeyes ELC. Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason without the individual’s prior written consent. When discussing a child’s activities and friends in the classroom, only first names will be used. In situations involving behavior problems and/or Incident/Accident Reports, the names of children involved will never be given to families.

**Current Tuition Payment Plans**

Weekly Tuition Rates

<u>Program</u>	<u>Weekly Rate</u>
Full-Time (3–5 days per week)	\$175.00
Part-Time (1–2 days per week)	\$100.00

**Parents/guardians must select a tuition payment plan at the time of enrollment. All tuition is due and payable in advance of the week of care.**

### **Public Assistance Programs**

The Center accepts approved public assistance payments. Parents/guardians utilizing public assistance must provide all required approval documentation before benefits can be applied to their account.

Parents/guardians remain solely responsible for all tuition, co-payments, fees, and any unpaid balance not covered by a public assistance program. If a public assistance benefit is reduced, suspended, terminated, delayed, denied, or otherwise fails to cover the full cost of care for any reason, the parent/guardian shall remain responsible for timely payment of the outstanding balance.

### **Delinquent Accounts**

Tuition and all required co-payments must be paid in accordance with this policy. Failure to maintain a current account may result in suspension or termination of childcare services until the account is brought current, subject to applicable Ohio law and licensing requirements.

### **Right to Refuse Services**

The Center reserves the right to deny attendance or discontinue services for non-payment or failure to comply with the Center's financial policies.

### **Returned Payment, and Collection Policy**

#### **Returned Check / ACH Fee**

**A fee of \$35.00** will be charged for any check, electronic payment, ACH transaction, or other payment returned by a financial institution for insufficient funds, closed account, stop payment, or any other reason.

After two (2) returned payments, the Center may require all future payments to be made by cash, money order, cashier's check, or another approved guaranteed form of payment.

#### **Suspension of Services for Non-Payment**

If an account becomes delinquent, the Center will suspend childcare services until all outstanding balances, late fees, and other charges are paid in full. Suspension of services does not relieve the parent/guardian of responsibility for any amounts owed under this Agreement.

### Termination for Non-Payment

The Center reserves the right to terminate enrollment for failure to maintain a current account. Unless immediate termination is warranted due to a significant delinquency, the Center will generally provide written notice of termination.

Termination of enrollment does not release the parent/guardian from responsibility for any unpaid tuition, fees, or other charges accrued before the termination date.

### Collection of Unpaid Balances

The parent/guardian agrees to pay all tuition, fees, and charges incurred under this Agreement. Any account remaining unpaid after termination of services may be referred to a collection agency, attorney, or other lawful collection process.

To the extent permitted by Ohio law, the parent/guardian agrees to reimburse the Center for reasonable costs of collection, including court costs, filing fees, and reasonable attorney fees incurred in collecting unpaid amounts.

### No Offset or Withholding of Tuition

Parents/guardians may not withhold, offset, or reduce tuition payments due to absences, vacations, illness, temporary closures required by law, weather-related closures, holidays identified in the Parent Handbook, or dissatisfaction with services, unless otherwise required by applicable law or agreed to in writing by the Center.

### **Withdrawal Notice Requirement**

A parent/guardian wishing to withdraw a child from enrollment must provide at least two (2) weeks' written notice. Tuition remains due during the notice period regardless of attendance. Failure to provide the required notice may result in a charge equal to two (2) weeks of tuition.

### **Curriculum**

- Creative Curriculum Teaching Strategies Gold/Assessments
- Preschool and Infant /Toddler.

### **Daily Schedule and Activities**

Each program has a Daily Schedule tailored to each age group. Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center uses Creative Curriculum and teaches Positive Behavior Strategies with rules and expectations at the center. A daily schedule will be provided to you for your child's program.

**Toddler Schedule**

7:00 -8:00 am Drop off/bathroom/free play or table time  
 8:00 -8:30 am Hand washing, Breakfast  
 8:30- 9:00 am Cleanup/diaper check  
 9:00- 9:15 am Circle time/ Story time  
 9:15 – 10:00 am Bathroom / hand washing, /outside play (weather permitting)  
 10:00 -10:15 am bathroom, hand washing /diaper check  
 10:15 – 11:00 am Art/ music/yoga  
 11:00 – 11:30 am cleanup/bathroom/hand washing  
 11:30 – 12:00 Lunch  
 12:00 -12:10 Story time  
 12:10 – 2:00 pm Nap  
 2:00 – 2:30 pm Pick up cots, bathroom, hand washing /diaper check  
 2:30 – 3:00pm snacks  
 3:00 - 3:45pm Centers/directed play  
 3:45 -4:00 pm PBIS/Good Choices/ story time  
 4:00- 4:15 pm Diaper check /bathroom/hand washing  
 4:15 -5:00 pm outside play (weather permitting) /Table time/ Dismissal

**Preschool Schedule**

7:00 – 8:00am Drop-off/ table time /Bathroom, hand washing  
 8:00- 8:30am Breakfast  
 8:30 -8:45 am cleanup  
 8:45 – 9:15 am Music/yoga  
 9:15- 9:30 am Circle time/letters/ shapes/numbers/story time  
 9:30 -10:00 am Instructional activity and developmental experiences  
 10:00 – 11:00am outside play (Weather permitting) if not free choice of centers.  
 11:00 – 11:30 am Bathroom/ wash hands/ Heggerty Phonics  
 11:30 - 12:00 Lunch  
 12:00- 12:15 clean-up/ bathroom/wash hands  
 12:15- 1:30 pm quiet/naptime  
 1:30- 1:45 pm pick up cots/ bathroom, wash hands  
 1:45- 2:00 pm music/movement  
 2:00- 2:30 pm snack  
 2:30- 3:00pm Circle Time PBIS/ Good choices/story time  
 3:00- 3:30pm Free choice at centers  
 3:30- 4:00pm Outside time (Weather permitting) If not, developmental activities at the table. (Playdoh, table blocks puzzles)  
 4:00- 5:00 pm puppet show/ Dismissal

**Free play**

“Free-play” (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, and self-selection) is incorporated into the children’s schedules. During free-play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what they are doing, joining their pretend play, reading books when prompted, and encouraging them to try new activities or play with a new

toy. Free play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

### **Appropriate Dress**

Children should be dressed in comfortable, washable play clothes and appropriate play shoes. Outdoor play is required daily by licensing for toddlers and preschool children. When children play, they do not stay clean. Clothes may get soiled by food, markers, paint, dirt, and grass. Children should be dressed accordingly every day. We require extra clothing, including socks, underwear, and outerwear appropriate for the season. Please label your child's clothing and place it in a plastic bag. It is important for parents to send their children appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name. We have a few extra hats and mittens, but not enough for every child. If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, we will contact parents to provide the appropriate attire. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

### **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule for 45 to 60 minutes. Staff members actively participate in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play provides opportunities for children to run, jump, climb, and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom. In addition, a large amount of social interaction occurs when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children can choose their friends and whom to interact with. Children will go outside year-round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors. (Not below 25 degrees and not higher than 90 degrees, as required by rule 5101:2-12-17)

### **Nap/Rest time**

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Service, as required by rule 5101:2-12-20, requires that all children be provided with a regularly scheduled nap or resting time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a while. The length of time a child should remain resting varies by child. There is no rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should remain resting. Children should be provided with alternative quiet activities if they are unable to rest. Children are encouraged to bring a familiar item from home to use during nap/rest time, such as a small blanket or stuffed animal. These items will be stored in your child's backpack or cubby; there is limited space for such items. Please consider this when deciding which items to bring. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's name, as all class laundry is sent home weekly to be washed.

### **Multimedia**

The use of multimedia in our program extends the teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms. Teachers may select movie, television, and computer game titles based on weekly themes. Children are not required to view any part of a video or television show or to play computer games. Instead, the activity is offered as one of several centers. All multimedia must have a rating of “PG” or “E” and must have an educational theme. Children are limited to 30 minutes per week.

### **Weapons/Violent Play**

Redirection should be used when a child engages in weapon-related or violent play. If a child brings a weapon to Little Buckeyes ELC, it should be placed out of sight and sent home with the parent the same day. Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Bullying is not acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others.

### **Pets & Visiting Animals**

Staff may introduce a class pet to the classroom. Please ensure you are aware of all your students' pet allergies. Pets and visiting animals brought into the classroom must be carefully evaluated for temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center without first notifying and receiving permission from the Superintendent. Once approved by the Facilitator, pets and visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter confirming that the animal(s) is fully immunized and suitable for contact with children. Pets and animals shall be permitted if they present no apparent threat to the safety or health of the children.

(1) All pets shall be properly housed, cared for, licensed, and inoculated. All local and state ordinances governing the keeping of animals (exotic or domesticated) shall be followed and updated as required. Verification of license and compliance with local and state requirements and inoculations for each pet that requires a license or inoculations, or is regulated by local or state government, shall be on file at the center.

(2) Children shall not be directly exposed to animal urine or feces within the program or in the outdoor play area.

### **Assessments**

Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center uses ASQ/Teaching Strategies Gold to assess students' levels upon entry to the program and every 6 months thereafter. Parents are encouraged to work with their child's teacher to assess and meet their child's needs. The Early Childcare Associate is responsible for these assessments, with support from the Early Childcare

Assistant. These assessments are required for SUTQ and require permission from the parent or guardian. All child-level data will be reported to ODJFS.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences/ Assessment Portfolios**

Early Childcare Associates are expected to conduct 1 parent-teacher conference and must make every effort to meet with each family. A copy of the parent-teacher conference form and child development summary must be placed in the child's permanent file after conferences. The Early Childcare Associate should discuss suitable times to hold conferences with the family. These parent-teacher conferences are needed for SUTQ purposes, and parents can request them at any time.

### **Field Trips**

As a participant in our childcare program, your child may participate in short, unannounced field trips including walks as a class around the building's perimeter. Teacher-child ratios are maintained. As required by rule JFS 01232. All field trips and walking trips on campus will require a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian.

### **Meals and Snacks**

Meals and snacks provided by the Center meet USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program requirements and contribute toward each child's daily nutritional needs.

The classroom daily schedule will include designated times for breakfast each morning, lunch around midday, and an afternoon snack. If lunch is not provided by the parent or guardian, or if it does not include the required food groups, a supplemental lunch will be provided by the Learning center. All lunches will be labeled with the child's name and placed in the Learning center's refrigerator by the classroom.

At Little Buckeyes ELC, parents must provide a nutritious packed lunch for their child. A pre-packaged breakfast and snack will be provided by Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center. We follow the nutritional guidelines established by the Child and Adult Food Program. A menu for breakfast and snacks will be provided for parents and guardians. Please inform your child's teacher if your child cannot eat certain foods or has different dietary needs (e.g., vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant) so a substitution can be made. For certain dietary restrictions, you may be asked to provide food from home for your child. This requirement is in accordance with rule 5101:2-12-22 ODJFS, Appendix 5101:2-12-22.

### **Food from Home**

Children are welcome to bring in treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we recommend supplying store-bought snacks, still in the original packaging. Please check with your child's teacher before bringing any homemade snacks. A list of healthy snack options approved by the USDA and Ohio Department of Education is available from the Facilitator.

### **Food Allergies/ Action Plans**

If your child has a food allergy, please complete a Food Allergy Action Plan form from the child's physician. A child with allergies must have form #01242, Medical, Dental and General Emergency Plan for Child Care, kept in the classroom's emergency folder. If the allergy is food-related, an Allergy Action Plan from the child's physician must be given to the facilitator, and all staff must be trained and sign off on the form. All staff working in the classroom of a child with allergies must review the Allergy Action Plan to ensure understanding of emergency procedures if the child has an allergic reaction.

### **Toddler, and Two-Year-Old Programs**

Diapered children are checked at least every two hours and whenever needed, and diapers are changed promptly when wet or soiled.

The following information applies to toddlers and two-year-old program rooms: Parents must provide diapers, wipes, extra clothing, pacifiers, blankets, and stuffed toys for rest time. Please label all items with a child's name.

### **Clothing and Items from Home for Toddler and Preschool**

Extra clothes for the appropriate season, placed in a large Ziploc bag labeled with the child's name. Sunscreen, a small blanket for rest, and a travel-size pillow. These items will stay at the center until every Friday. Blankets will be sent home to be washed.

### **Items from Home**

We ask that all items brought from home to Little Buckeyes ELC be placed in your child's cubby shortly after arrival, by the parent. Please clearly label all belongings brought from home. It is recommended that items of value, such as iPods or handheld gaming systems, be left at home due to the risk of damage or theft. Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

### **Arrival and Departure**

#### **Arrival**

Parents must accompany their child into the center and sign each child into their classroom. DO NOT release your child from your care in the parking lot or lobby. Parents should also briefly speak with the teacher in the classroom. Please inform anyone delivering the child to the center of these protocols. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teacher about their child's temperament that morning, how he/she slept the night before, and whether he/she has eaten that morning, etc. Most children go through periods of difficulty separating from their parent(s). This is common and developmentally appropriate.

Try these tips for a successful drop-off:

- Establish a regular, predictable routine. Whether you have a kiss and a hug and go, or help your child put his things in his cubby first, do it the same way every day. What often makes separation stressful for children is uncertainty. If your child can predict what will happen, separation will be less difficult.
- Separate once. If you come back into the classroom repeatedly, it will increase your child's stress. Remember, the moment of separation is the worst part for your child, so doing it more than once makes it more stressful.
- Be reliable. Return when promised. Children who are picked up later than expected may have more difficulty separating. Phrase time in terms your child will understand. For example, you will be back after snack time or before naptime.
- When a child is scheduled to arrive from another program or activity and does not arrive, the facilitator will contact the specific program the child was at to verify where the child is and/or call the parent or guardian.

### Departure

Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center closes at 5:00 pm, 5 days a week. Please make sure you fill out the required sign-out sheets for the day before departure. If a child is to be picked up by someone other than the parent/guardian or by anyone not previously listed on the CHILD HEALTH & ENROLLMENT INFORMATION or PICKUP PERMISSION, the center must be notified in advance by the parent, and that person must show photo identification at the time of pickup. NO CHILD is to be released to an unauthorized person at any time. If any unauthorized person attempts to pick up a child, parents will be called. If parents cannot be reached, the Gallia County Sheriff Department will be called.

If you will be late picking up your child, please provide us with as much notice as possible. If someone unfamiliar will pick up your child, it is essential that you inform your child's teacher or Facilitator in advance of the pickup. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form as soon as possible. Remind the authorized person that they may be asked for identification, such as a driver's license, to ensure your child's safety. Even if the individual has picked up before, they may still need identification if the teacher in charge has never met them. If custody papers have been filed, all proper paperwork shall be given to the Facilitator and placed in the child's folder. Little Buckeyes ELC will follow all custody agreements on file.

Be sure to say goodbye to your child's teachers so they know you are leaving. Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside the building.

If a child is not picked up by 5:00 pm, the parents will be called using the numbers on the "Emergency Contact and Parental Consent" form. If a parent cannot be reached, other contacts on the list will be contacted. NO CHILD is to be released to an unauthorized person at any time.

## **Attendance**

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the child and the classroom. If your child will be absent, please call the center by 8:00 am so your child's teacher can make accommodations to the lesson plan. If your child will be absent for a long time (more than 5 days), the center should be notified in writing of the date the absence begins and the expected date your child will return. Enrollment will be terminated if a child is absent for 2 weeks or more and no notice has been received or contact made by the family.

## **Health and Safety Policies**

### **Illness**

Our priority at Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. When caring for sick children, the center shall:

- Isolate the sick child away from other children in another room or portion of a room, but within sight and hearing always.
- Provide the sick child with a cot or mat to make them comfortable.
- Notify the child's parent(s) immediately to arrange discharge and if the child's condition worsens during isolation.
- Sanitize the thermometer after each use.

- Fever of 101 (under the arm) or higher, until 24 hours symptom-free without fever-reducing medication.
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing.
- Diarrhea (not associated with diet changes or medications) (two instances) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours, or until a licensed health care professional determines the diarrhea is not infectious.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.
- Vomiting (one instance). The child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 12 hours, or until a health care provider determines the cause of vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues for more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness.
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious.
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Head lice, from the end of the day until after the first treatment.
- Scabies, until after treatment has been completed.
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend childcare.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Hand, foot, and mouth sores have dried and crusted, and no fever.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.
- Chickenpox, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days).

- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment have been completed.
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of symptoms.
- Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash.
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness that requires exclusion.
- Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable drooling.

Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness rules will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious.

Parents will be notified by telephone or Class Dojo App. Please contact Little Buckeyes ELC whenever your child is ill.

### **Notice of Exposure & Reporting Disease**

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, families enrolled in Class Dojo will receive an email notification. The child's name will not be disclosed. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the Facilitator immediately. If a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Facilitator will notify the health department.

### **Hand Washing**

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm, running water is the most effective way to prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in childcare settings, such as the flu, diarrhea, and pink eye. Parents are encouraged to assist their child with hand washing upon arrival.

Other times, your child (and staff members) will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the center or when changing classrooms
- After each diaper change or using the toilet
- Before and after mealtimes
- Before and after administering medication and before returning to work.
- After handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood vomit)
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground
- After handling pets and other animals
- After cleaning or handling garbage

Warm, running water (no colder than 60°F) and soap must be used. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the backs of hands, between fingers, under nails,

and under any jewelry. A disposable paper towel should be used to dry hands and to turn off the faucet. Reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home.

### **Medications**

Little Buckeyes staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. Forms can be obtained from your child's teacher or from the Facilitator as required by rule 5101:2-12-25. Prescription and over-the-counter medications must be given to the Facilitator in the original container upon arrival for immediate safe storage that is clearly labeled with the child's full name and birth date. Little Buckeyes ELC will not administer medication to reduce a fever without a doctor's note with dosage and times. Medications are stored in a locked box (refrigerated medications) or in a high cabinet (non-Refrigerated medications) while in use at Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center. The Medication Authorization Form must always remain with the medication. Children must receive the first dose or application at least once prior to the center administering a dose or applying the product, except for an emergency medication. Medications must be returned to the family and will not be stored at Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center when they are no longer needed or have expired.

### **Medical Food**

If your child requires the administration of medical foods, you must provide a completed as required by JFS 01236 form, "Child Medical/Physical Care Plan for Child Care". All medical food must be provided by the parent, be in the original container with the child's name on it, and be handed to the facilitator immediately upon arrival. Directions on the food container must be followed to ensure safe storage.

### **Breastfeeding for Mothers**

Little Buckeyes ELC supports breastfeeding. We provide breastfeeding resources to prospective and current families. Our staff is trained in the proper storage and handling of human milk, infant feeding practices and supporting exclusive breastfeeding. Mothers are welcome to breastfeed their babies on site. A private room with chair will be provided for staff mothers/and mothers of children in our center in room # G125A who may be breastfeeding.

### **Emergency Medical /Dental Procedures**

Enrollment requires completion of emergency transportation and medical authorization documentation. The Center will follow Ohio licensing requirements regarding emergency medical transportation and treatment.

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well

as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. Parents are responsible for completing this form and making corrections to this information when necessary. • If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, the Early Childcare Associate will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers as well as through the Bright wheel app. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick-up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called. • Children who are ill will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Facilitator until a parent arrives. IF THE CHILD REQUIRES IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION: A qualified staff member will remain with the injured child and 9-1-1 will be called. Provide the center's name and location, provide the child's name and a description of the incident. Follow instructions as provided by the operator. A staff member who witnessed the emergency will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form. An emergency medical form that meets the requirements of the Ohio Revised code section 3313.712 will be filled out by parent/guardian, stating emergency contacts, physicians, dentists, local hospital, and medical specialist. Parents will have a choice of consenting to emergency medical treatment or refusal. If refusal of emergency medical treatment is stated, we will not accept the child in the program.

### **Special Needs Care**

The Center will provide reasonable accommodations, including medication administration and implementation of medical or physical care plans, to allow children with disabilities equal access to program activities unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or create an undue burden.

Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center is committed to the principle of inclusion and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. We are committed to every child equally, regardless of their special needs, and will learn more about each child's specific needs and identify the resources necessary to accomplish our common goal of providing the best care for each child. We believe that including children with special needs can enrich the learning experience for all children, and Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center will make accommodations for children with special needs within the guidelines of the ADA. To ensure that we are meeting the individual needs of each child enrolled with an identified special need, the following procedures and programs are followed:

- Staff receive ongoing training on inclusion and special needs, tailored to the specific needs of enrolled children.
- Confidentiality of children and families is always respected and maintained.
- Children with special needs will be included and encouraged to participate to the fullest extent of their abilities.
- Staff and families collaborate to meet each child's individual needs.

- Communication with families is ongoing and responsive to their needs.
- The physical environment is free of barriers.
- A variety of teaching strategies are used to meet each child's individual needs.
- An individualized special needs care plan will be created with the help of the parent/guardian, the doctor, and Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center to ensure that all parties are aware of the care practices that need to be in place.
- The special needs care plan will be completed annually or more frequently at the request of the parent/guardian or the child's doctor.

### **Physicals and Immunizations**

To attend, each child must have a current physical and immunization record on file at Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center. The physical on file must be updated at least annually, and immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received. This requirement is for licensing purposes.

### **Documentation of Accidents/Incidents**

Staff responsible for the child shall document accidents and incidents at Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center. An Accident/Incident Report is required for incidents that require first aid treatment; a bump or blow to the head; scrapes; emergency transportation; biting that breaks the skin; or an unusual or unexpected event that jeopardizes the safety of the children or staff. Parents will be notified of the incident. Parents shall sign the report on the same day as the incident. A copy may be provided to the parents. All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the Facilitator for placement in the child's permanent file.

### **Sunscreen**

A permission slip must be on file before sunscreen is applied to a child. Sunscreen must be SPF 30 or higher and will be applied by classroom teachers regularly throughout the day during outdoor events. Parents are required to bring this in.

### **Mandatory Child Abuse Reporters**

**All Little Buckeyes staff members are mandatory child abuse reporters.**

### **Guidance Strategies**

#### **Reasons for Misbehavior**

Every Little Buckeyes staff member who cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct, and socialize children toward appropriate behavior. These adult actions are often called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial because they promote children's self-control, teach responsibility, and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effectively caregivers encourage appropriate behavior, the less time and effort adults will spend correcting misbehavior. Little Buckeyes ELC will use PBIS Positive Behavior Strategies with a 5 to 1 ratio, 5 positive acknowledgments to 1 negative behavior.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the child's development. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and teach the child to be unkind to others. However, actions that acknowledge the child's efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, are likely to encourage healthy development. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation, and a good understanding of the child. Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center staff will use only positive guidance techniques. All staff are trained in PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies).

### **Guidance & Management**

The center assures that the child's integrity and value as a person with individual needs and interests will be safeguarded. However, there will be limitations, as a facility cannot operate effectively without rules and expectations in place. Limits will be clearly communicated and taught within the classroom structure, giving children a sense of security and confidence. Child guidance and management will be handled with kindness and understanding.

Children will not be subjected to any cruel, harsh, or unusual treatment; threatened or verbally abused; confined or isolated; deprived of food, rest, or access to a toilet; or subjected to any other action prohibited under rule 5101:2-12-22 of the Administrative Code.

### **Biting**

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Teachers need to work with parents to gather information about the child's behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of triggers include communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, the need for oral stimulation, or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can develop prevention strategies and begin teaching replacement skills.

Below are the steps the teacher will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior:

- The teacher will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The following questions should be asked:
- Was the space too crowded?
- Were there too few toys?
- Was there too little to do or too much waiting?
- Was the child who bit receiving the attention and care they deserved at other times?
- The teacher will change the environment, routines, or activities if necessary.
- The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate ways.
- The teacher will observe the child to determine why and when they are likely to bite.
- The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their risk of being bitten.
- The teacher, parent, and Facilitator will meet regularly to develop an action plan and measure outcomes.

- If biting continues, the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek additional resources, as necessary, to shadow the child who is biting. All information is confidential, and the names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on an Incident/Accident Report, which is completed and signed by a teacher and parent.

A copy is provided to the parent, and the original is kept in the child's permanent enrollment file in the office.

### **Preventing Misbehavior**

Intervention strategies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- One-on-one relationship-building activities, such as PBIS.
- Utilize mental health, social workers, and psychologists in service of the child and family. Refer to special-needs programs, if available.
- Class-made books are individualized for the student. Individual picture cards to support behavioral expectations.
- Ways for the student to serve the school, others, or their community.
- Noticing and describing the child's body, face, and actions, labeling of feelings, and acknowledging the true intent.
- I Am: Feeling Chart, I Choose: Project Kind, Green Choice, Red Choice, Thumbs up, Thumbs Down.
- Assessing, teaching, or scaffolding missing executive skills.

### **Severe Behavior**

Suspension and Expulsion: Little Buckeyes ELC will make every effort to support children exhibiting challenging behaviors through observation, intervention strategies, family meetings, referrals, and individualized plans before considering suspension or expulsion. Decisions regarding suspension or expulsion will comply with Ohio licensing requirements and will be documented. Expulsion shall be considered only after reasonable efforts have been exhausted or when there is an immediate safety risk.

The following process will be followed if a child's behavior consistently compromises the care or safety of others.

- Proper documentation of incidents, meeting with the parent, teacher, and facilitator to discuss a plan of action to increase positive behavior at school and home. If a child continues to be aggressive (biting, hitting, throwing items, or furniture in anger), a meeting will be held with the teacher, facilitator, and parents, which could result in the child's expulsion from the program.
- Logs must be kept, seeking out triggers and patterns for repeated undesired behavior. Upon written request, these logs will be made available to the parents and/or evaluator.

- The center reserves the right to dismiss any child whose behavior is uncontrollable or who poses a threat to the safety and well-being of other children enrolled.

### **Safe and Sanitary Environment**

Children will be protected from items and conditions that threaten their health, safety, and well-being. Children will not be exposed to inappropriate language, conversations, or behavior by center employees, visitors, or volunteers, or to media of any type.

All personal belongings will be kept in an area that is not accessible to children. Children will be provided with developmentally appropriate materials and furniture that is sturdy, safe, and easy to clean and maintain. The staff is responsible for monitoring play areas inside and out, ensuring that all furniture, materials, and equipment are sanitary. Gates are closed as needed, and all equipment and furniture are free of missing parts, rust, cracks, and holes. Anything that is not used because of breakage or hazards shall be removed. All cleaning supplies will be placed in a locked cabinet. Aerosol sprays will not be used when children are present.

### **Water Safety**

All water play will be at the Little Buckeyes Learning Center. Outdoor water play may include wading pools, sprinklers, and/or slip-and-slides. Parent/guardian permission slips for each child must be signed before they can participate in water activities. Adults will actively supervise children. We will provide the required staff for the number of children to meet licensing requirements pursuant to rule 5101:2-12-19 of the Administrative Code. Children should bring appropriate clothes and towels on water days. Parents will be informed 1 week prior to these activities, through the newsletter, and the Class Dojo App.

### **Emergency Procedures**

The center's primary concern is the safety and well-being of each child. The center will conduct monthly fire and tornado drills, as well as quarterly emergency/lockdown drills. Each classroom is equipped with first-aid kits, a fire evacuation and weather alert plan, and a "Medical, Dental, & General Emergency Plan," all posted near the exits in each classroom, throughout the building, and in the office. In the event of a fire or tornado, we will follow the written instruction diagram posted by each door in the classroom and/or hallway, which outlines emergency evacuation routes and the procedure to ensure that children arrive at their designated spot on the evacuation diagram. If we need to evacuate due to fire or a threat, our emergency location is 600 yards from the school at 351 Buckeye Hills Road. Signs will be posted in front of the program indicating our location. If the immediate area is evacuated, we will be transported by bus to the University of Rio Grande Lyne Center gymnasium. Parents will be called by phone or contacted through Class Dojo as soon as it is safe after an emergency. For the safety of children, parents, and staff, we ask that parents not attempt to pick up their child during an emergency.

In case of an environmental emergency or violence, the children will be secured in the safest location with staff supervision. A call will be made to 9-1-1, and we will follow their directions.

### **Weather**

The Superintendent will monitor the weather and local news stations throughout the day to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. The Facilitator will post on Class Dojo app/ or call to inform parents of the situation. Routine classroom activities will continue until parents arrive. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home.

### **Power and Water Outages**

If power or water cannot be restored within a reasonable time, the center will close, and parents will be contacted. The Facilitator is responsible for notifying parents of the closure and the need to pick up their child immediately. If we must evacuate immediately due to a loss of electricity or water, we will transport students to the University of Rio Grande Lyne Center by bus. We will contact parents by phone and through Class Dojo to inform them of the situation. Signs will be posted at the front door of Little Buckeyes to inform parents of our location.

### **Questions/Concerns**

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher most directly involved.

If the concern is not resolved, the Facilitator can be reached at (740)245-5334 ext. 318 or [Littlebuckeyes@buckeyehills.net](mailto:Littlebuckeyes@buckeyehills.net).

The Little Buckeyes Early Learning Center is available to assist parents and staff in resolving concerns. We are open 7:00 am to 5:00pm Monday-Friday

Office hours for the Facilitator are: 7:00 am to 3:30 pm.