Lilac Sea
NURSERY SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

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GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Dear Parents and Caretakers:

Thank you for choosing Lilac Sea Nursery School for your child. Our goal is to be your child's home away from home.

Our society is becoming more and more complex, impersonal and fast-paced. Often, care environments for the young child take on the same "institutionalized" feeling. Inconsistent caregivers that barely know the children in their care, over-stimulating classrooms, and large groups of same-age children all contribute to great stress for the child. While our society changes rapidly, all of the studies that have been done recently on the development of the young child have concluded that what the child needs most are *nurturing relationships*. When a child feels safe and cared for, he can move forward with confidence to learn about the world. And so, at Lilac Sea our goal is to create a haven for children where they are nurtured, loved and allowed to be themselves.

It's from this place of security and warmth that the child begins his journey of learning discovery. And what a journey it is! At Lilac Sea, we know that children learn best from real-life experiences. Just what is a child learning as he helps his caregiver plant a garden or fold laundry? Planning, counting, following directions, nutrition, sorting, color recognition, the process of following a task through to completion, and language skills, to name a few! This is why, in the early childhood LifeWays training, caregivers are taught how to be "at home" with the children. In this environment, both child and caregiver truly thrive.

It is important to us that, together with you, we form a partnership of care for your child. At any time, please feel free to bring your ideas, questions or concerns about your child to our attention. Thank you for allowing us to care for your precious little one.

Warmly,

Mallory Ott
Caregiver & Director

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Enrollment Procedures
After taking a site tour, parents submit the enrollment application form found on our website: www.lilacseanurseryschool.com.

When Lilac Sea Nursery School and the parents/guardians assess that the program can meet the needs of their child and family, then the parents return all paperwork including:

- A $250 materials and registration fee
- A one month's deposit
- A signed copy of the contract found on our website
- The following required state forms:
    1. Consent for Medical Treatment
    2. Identification and Emergency Information
    3. Notification of Parents' Rights
    4. Immunization Record
    5. Child's Pre-admission Health Report

    All forms are due on the first day of care.

When the tuition deposit, materials fee, contract, and all completed forms have been received, your child will be considered enrolled.

Trial Period

There will be a **two week** trial period for full-time enrollment and a **four week** trial period for part-time enrollment, part-time being less than 3 full days a week, starting on the first day of care. During this period, parents or the caregiver may withdraw the child from care without notice. Tuition will be prorated for the month of the child's enrollment.

Statement of Non-Discrimination
Lilac Sea care is available to all persons without discrimination of any kind. The only time a child's enrollment will not be accepted is if the parents or the caregiver feel that the childcare's services cannot meet the needs of the child.

Scheduling
Hours: 8:15 am - 4:30 pm | Monday through Friday I September through July

Morning drop off is between 8:15am and 9:30 am in the backyard. Please use the gate to the left of the house.
Half day pick-up time is between 12:30 pm and 1 pm
*Please note that nap time preparations begin at 1 p.m. and pick-up during nap time can be very disruptive, therefore we ask that you schedule pick-up either before 1 p.m. or after 3 p.m., unless there are special circumstances that the caregiver has been made aware of in advance.

Daily attendance records will be kept through a sign-in system.

Holidays, Sick Days and Vacation Days:
Lilac Sea is open from September to July and closed for the following holidays:

Martin Luther King Day
President's Day
Spring Break (one week)
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving (Thurs and Fri)
Winter Break (two weeks)

Lilac Sea may be closed for up to two days for teacher sick leave.

Payment is required for the days that school is closed, with the exception of the month of August.

Tuition Payments
Tuition is due on the 1st of each month. If tuition is three days past due a $50 late fee will apply and be added to the current month's tuition.

A $250 yearly materials and registration fee is due upon acceptance and each subsequent year of enrollment on your child's anniversary date. There is no tuition due for the month of August.

Sibling Discount
A 10% discount will be applied to the monthly tuition for the second child and 20% for the third child.

Termination of Enrollment
Parents may terminate enrollment during the school year, however as stated in the contract, the one month's deposit will be forfeited. In the unlikely event that Lilac Sea terminates your child's enrollment, as much notice as possible will be given. All fees are non-refundable.

Late Pick-up Charge
There will be a late charge of $1 per minute after a 5 minute grace period for parents who pick up their child past their scheduled pick-up time. The charged amount will be due by the student's next day of attendance.

Change of Address, Place of Employment or Phone Number
Please let us know immediately about job changes, work schedule changes, phone number or address changes and any changes in the designated contact person(s).

MEALTIME

Caregivers will eat family-style with the children at both snack and lunch. Children will be asked to help pass out placemats and napkins. After a blessing and thanks, children will be encouraged to try a bit of everything in their snack/lunch. When children are finished, they will be asked to remain seated until they are excused and they will be expected to clean around where they were sitting.

MEDIA POLICY

Lilac Sea advocates for minimal media exposure in early childhood. The forms of media we are referring to include the television, computers, video games, smart phones, and tablets. This section is not meant to replace in-depth scholarly articles and studies on the effects of media on children. If you would like more thorough information on this

topic, we have articles available and can point you to helpful websites and books. Here are just a few questions we challenge you to ask yourself if your child regularly uses media: When a child is watching television or playing on the computer or a smart phone, what activities, sights and sounds is she not engaged in, seeing, or hearing? What could the child be doing and what types of skills could she be learning if she were not watching TV? What types of messages and information is he hearing during TV shows and commercials?

The following are the top reasons Lilac Sea advocates for a media-free childhood:

- Watching television is a passive activity which requires no interaction from the viewer. This means that while a child watches television he is not developing social skills or language skills. In fact, studies have shown that young children exposed to large amounts of television learn to speak later than their peers who have little to no exposure.
- Television viewing has been directly linked to lower academic performance and obesity. Video/computer gaming can lead to serious addiction.
- Children have a difficult time separating what they see in the media from reality; therefore, in order to make sense of what they watch, they play out these oftentimes violent and fantastical scenarios. Children who are overcome with media images have a hard time using their imagination; they often can only take ideas from what they have seen on TV.

Due to these reasons and many more, Lilac Sea asks that **children under age two be exposed to no media and that older children are permitted one to two hours of good quality media on the weekend only**. If Lilac Sea staff notices that a child frequently speaks about media or acts out scenes from a television show or movie, the parents of the child will be asked to reduce the child's media exposure. If after the issue has been brought to the parents' attention, the child continues to display media-related behavior, the parents of the child will be asked to set up a meeting with the director. We thank you for your full cooperation on this matter.

CLOTHING

Comfortable clothing made of **natural fibers,** like cotton, linen or wool, are best. Synthetic fabrics, such as polar fleece or polyester, can cause children to overheat or feel cold and clammy because these fabrics don't breathe like natural ones.

Layers of clothing are preferred. As the temperature changes during the day, caregivers can peel off layers as needed to keep your child comfortable. In the winter months, a good rule of thumb is 3 layers on top (undershirt, long sleeve shirt, and sweater or sweatshirt).
The best clothing for children is **free from media images,** like TV or movie characters. These images can sometimes affect the children's play. Children don't have the filters that we adults have, and the television medium has such a powerful hold on them that even seeing the image of a character can change their play, making them less free in their imaginations.

Hats are important. The children play outdoors every day, so in winter they need a warm cap that covers their ears; in warmer months, a sun hat with a wide brim to protect them from the sun's rays.

Please send the appropriate **outdoor clothing** every day. The children go out in all weather, so they need clothing to keep them comfortable in rain or shine.

If your child's clothing becomes wet or dirty while at Lilac Sea, it will be set aside for you to take home and launder. Please check and re-stock your child's box at least once per week to make sure that the clothing still fits your child, is appropriate for the season, and that there is enough in there for needed clothing changes.

Parents will provide the following personal items for their child:

- three full sets of spare clothes for children regardless of age
- an extra sweater or sweatshirt
- two pairs of socks and underwear
- hats for all seasons
- proper outerwear for each season to include:
    - -Jacket/rain coat, rain pants and rain boots for rainy days (No umbrellas)
    - -Warm hat and coat for cold months
    - -Wide-brimmed sun hat for summer
- proper footwear for play outside. Please no dress-up shoes, Crocs, flip-flops, open-toed shoes or other impractical shoes for vigorous outdoor play.

CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY

Our discipline policy is intended to be proactive rather than reactive. Caregivers will move to situations that could be potentially problematic and try to diffuse them before they are out of hand. Caregivers will use redirection, positive encouragement, and act as models of the behaviors we wish to have the children imitate.

Time Out

There will be no official use of time-out as a punishment. A child may be led to a quieting activity, but there will be no designated "time-out" chair.

Prohibited Punishments

The following activities will not be tolerated by any caregiver or staff member even at the request of parents: hitting, shaking, pinching, screaming, threatening, or similar harsh punishment.

Parent Involvement in Promoting Positive Behavior

Through participation in the various activities at the childcare home and open dialogue with parents and caregivers, it is our intention that the home life of the child will support the child's life at Lilac Sea, and vice versa.

When a child's behavior is such that the child or other children could be harmed, the child's caregiver will request a meeting with the parents to work out a plan for use both at

home and at childcare to help change the behavior. All efforts will be made to retain the child as long as it is clear that the family and Lilac Sea are working healthily together toward a resolution and that progress is being made. If there is no significant change in behavior, or Lilac Sea and parents are not supporting one another in a healthy way, the child will be dismissed from the program.

Dismissal Policy

If either the parent and/or Lilac Sea believe that placement is inappropriate, enrollment may be terminated. Lilac Sea reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for one or more of the following reasons:

1. If a child has needs the caregivers are not able to meet
2. If non-payment of fees or repeated late payment of fees occurs
3. If a parent knowingly fails to observe the childcare's policies
4. If physical or verbal abuse of children or caregivers by a parent occurs
5. If Lilac Sea feels that a child's behavior is harmful to himself or others

EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

Our developmental practices are based upon the care of the senses, development of mind and body, and the nurture of a healthy social life. These practices are indicated by contemporary research, the insights of educators, Waldorf early childhood philosophy, and the common sense wisdom of generations of parents.

Developmentally Appropriate Programming for Toddlers

Our focus with toddlers is on the healthy development of movement, language and physical growth. Children are sung to and spoken to articulately throughout the day. Recognizing that the young child learns by imitating the adults in the environment, caregivers work on their own speech and music development on an ongoing basis.

Development of movement is encouraged through the child's own natural processes. They are provided with spaces to practice running, climbing, jumping and balancing. In a mixed-age environment, the toddlers also have the advantage of being around siblings and older children who have already mastered these skills.

Toilet Training

Children are required to be potty-trained before starting at Lilac Sea. We recognize that accidents are a part of the learning process. Please provide plenty of additional bottoms and a reusable/wet bag for your child's dirty clothes.

Daily Rhythm

8:15am Doors Open - Outside Play, Gardening

9:15am Snack Preparation and Table Setting

9:30am Morning Snack

10am Outside Play, Canyon Hike, Neighborhood Walk

12pm Lunch

12:30pm Lunch Clean Up | Outside Play

1pm Half Day Pick-up Time

1:05pm Bathroom and Wash Hands | Nap Time | Songs

3:00pm Wake Sleeping Children | Story | Color

4:00pm Afternoon Snack

4:30pm Pick-up Time

Learning Opportunities

*"...the child learns by imitating, and his most important activity is play. The modern tendency to force intellectual learning on young children, and to structure their lives with classes, lessons and team sports, derives children of the vital development that accrues from unstructured, imaginative play, and can have serious consequences on the child's emotional and intellectual development...well nourished children will learn to read, write, study and think when the time is appropriate; we do children no service by forcing them into these activities before the seventh year." (*The Nourishing Traditions Book of Baby & Child Care by Sally Fallon Morell & Thomas S. Cowan, MD)

LifeWays centers are based on the understanding that young children learn through imitation, sensory stimulation and active participation. The following opportunities will be available to children in these areas:

large/small motor skills – Children will be allowed to do extensive building, creating and climbing, both indoors and outdoors with blocks, chairs and tables (indoors), and tree limbs, rocks and stumps (outdoors). Through painting, folding, washing, and other practical skills, they will develop their fine motor skills.

creative activity – Almost everything in the environment will be allowed to be transformed through the child's play. They will build their own environments rather than having fixed and finished play centers. Manipulatives such as silk and cotton play cloths, building blocks, objects the children find in nature, dishes, baby dolls, etc. will be available for them to create their own scenarios. Children will have opportunities to paint with watercolors, draw with natural beeswax crayons, and have simple craft projects throughout the year that have to do with the seasons.

social – A primary focus of Waldorf Early Childhood Education, from which LifeWays draws much of its inspiration, is to help the child develop a healthy social foundation. This is especially supported through the creative playtime. Social challenges are handled on an individual basis, often through the use of stories, redirection and modeling of the appropriate behavior. Finger games, transitional tools, and games are also used as redirecting tools.

intellectual – Recent brain research indicates that the kinds of activities listed above are the necessary foundation for healthy synaptic connections. Through touching, feeling, and doing, the child's budding intellect is allowed to unfold at its own appropriate pace. Through their own growth and development, caregivers model healthy speech and movement for the children to imitate.

cognitive – Growing a healthy body is of primary concern in the first seven years of life, and will be a primary focus at Lilac Sea. Although the children will be read to, and they will see their caregivers writing and reading, there will be no formal academic drills or intentional academic instruction time. Research indicates that early academic training can create a type of burnout by third grade. As the child's natural interest in letters and numbers awakens, he will be helped to explore them.

Outdoor Curriculum

At Lilac Sea, an essential part of our curriculum is expanded nature exploration. Studies show that children who regularly spend time in nature are healthier – physically and emotionally – and exhibit longer attention spans, heightened creativity and better developed social skills (Last Child in the Woods, Richard Louv.)

For these reasons, children at Lilac Sea spend a large majority of their day outdoors and are regularly taken down into the canyon behind the play yard.

Celebrations and Festivals

There is no religious training connected with LifeWays. The faith backgrounds of the children will be honored through the celebration of festivals that the parents may wish to bring to the childcare in a simple way. Lilac Sea will celebrate some holidays during the day with the children, and will celebrate each child's birthday.

Toys and Children's Play

One of the first things that people tend to notice about childcares inspired by Waldorf methodology are the beautiful and creative toys. The toys are simple and open-ended. We believe the best toys are 90% child and 10% toy. In other words, we try to find toys that will invoke the child's natural creativity, imagination and healthy development. We also strive to provide playthings that are from natural materials, as they provide more and varied sensory experiences, are non-toxic, and are created from living, renewable resources.

Toys From Home

We recognize that young children often have a "beloved" blanket or sleeping companion that brings them comfort. We welcome these toys for naptime. We prefer that they be kept with the child's sleeping mat and used only for napping.

We ask that all other toys that do not fall into the category of comfort object for naptime be kept at home. Toys from home are more difficult for children to share. They often create unnecessary conflicts. If a child earnestly wants to show something to his caregiver, he may bring it to show her and then the parent can take it back home. We thank you for your cooperation on this.

Communication With Parents

Brief conversations will take place with each child's parents at pick-up and drop-off times.

The caregiver is responsible for every child in their care, and unexpected interruptions or too much adult conversation can keep them from focusing on the children. Please don't think your child's caregiver is intentionally being rude if they don't seem to have much time for conversation. If you have something to discuss that will take awhile, please set up a time to talk with the caregiver either in person, by phone or through email.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Transitions are usually challenging for children. In our work with the children, we plan ways to ease transitions from one activity to the next. Certainly the most impacting transition of the day is when the child is being dropped off or picked up. The more routine and rhythmical we can make that, the easier it is for the child.

At drop-off, let the caregiver know about anything that might affect your child's day (sleep, health, an event, etc.) After saying good-bye to your child, quietly take your leave. We find the process is best done in less than five minutes. A longer process is often more difficult for the child.

At pick-up time, your child is your responsibility from the time you arrive. As previously stated, it can be difficult for your child when both parent and caregiver are "in charge" and if other children are still present when you pick up, your child may continue to want to play. Therefore it is best to keep pick-up time to less than five minutes so your child becomes accustomed to leaving soon after you arrive. The caregiver will quickly share with you important information pertaining to your child's day and if you need to discuss anything further you are welcome to contact her by phone or email.

Cultural Diversity

All families are encouraged to share the festival life of their particular culture in a simplified version for the children. The prints and artwork, as well as children's books, will be chosen to represent a variety of ethnic groups, particularly those represented among the families at the school. Tolerance will be taught through example rather than through contrived programs.

FIRE AND OTHER EMERGENCY POLICIES

Fire Evacuation and Staff Responsibilities

To ensure readiness in case of emergency, regular fire drills will be conducted. It will be the responsibility of the caregiver to escort all of the children to a designated area outside in a calm and orderly manner and then conduct a head count.

HEALTH CARE POLICY

Childhood illness is a natural part of early childhood whether the child stays at home or is in childcare. It is not unusual for young children to have fevers and occasional colds. Some physicians feel that such illnesses help to build the natural immune system. Many pediatricians also recognize the importance of allowing children to have fevers to help fight infections. For this reason, we encourage parents to stay home with their children when they become ill in order to allow the illness to follow its natural progression. Studies indicate that children are being given far too many antibiotics partly because parents feel a need to return to work and need "quick" remedies to get their child back to childcare.

We require that children stay home who have influenza, painful sore throats, fever, diarrhea, head lice, pink eye or have been vomiting. If they develop any of these symptoms while in care, they are to be picked up immediately. **Children who have any of these symptoms may not return to childcare until these symptoms have been gone for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication.**

Please establish a backup person for your child's care if they are ill. Ideally, when a child is ill the most important place for the child to be is at home. Healing comes from more than prescription medicine. More important is the sense of well being that comes from being with one's loving parents and in one's own surroundings. If that is absolutely impossible, please do not ask Lilac Sea to make an exception. It is against State regulations. Thank you for your cooperation on this.

<u>Communicable Diseases</u>
A child with a reportable communicable disease will be sent home and asked to remain home during the period the disease is communicable. Parents of other children will be notified via email. The child may be admitted when his/her condition is no longer contagious.

Communicable diseases that must keep a child home include: pink eye, coxsackie virus, cold sores with drooling or fever, impetigo, head lice, ringworm, scabies, Hib, measles, mumps, rubella, meningococcal disease, fifth disease with fever, whooping cough, rash with fever, strep throat, TB, chickenpox, diarrhea, hepatitis A.

<u>Dispensing Medications</u>
Caregivers may give a prescription or non-prescription medication to a child only under the following conditions:
1. A written authorization dated and signed by the parent is on file.
2. The medication is in the original container and labeled with the child's name, and the label includes the dosage and directions for administration.

Tylenol or other fever-reducing drugs will not be dispensed to any child for fever, because children with fever need to be at home.

Sunscreen: At Lilac Sea, we believe that hats and long-sleeve shirts are the best skin protection from the sun. Children are encouraged to play in the shade on hot days and umbrellas will be moved to shield the sun. Chemical sunscreens are made with harmful ingredients that seep into the bloodstream, not to mention into our oceans. If you would like your child to wear sunscreen at school, we ask that you please use a mineral-based sunscreen and apply it to your child's skin before he/she arrives at school. Your caregiver will use the methods described above to help protect children from the sun.

Medical Log Responsibilities and Entries
A written record, including type of medication given, dosage, time, date and the name of the person administering the medication, shall be made in the medical log on the same day the medication is administered.

Rest Periods
All children in care for more than 6 hours will have at least one nap or rest period. Children who do not sleep after 45 minutes or who awaken will be allowed to play quietly until the rest period is over. Each child shall have his own mat with a cotton sleeping bag, freshly laundered at least weekly.

Handwashing Procedure for Staff and Children
Children's hands will be washed with soap and warm running water before meals and snacks and after using the toilet. Faces and hands will be washed after meals. Staff members will wash hands after assisting with toileting and after wiping noses.

Minor Injuries
When a child receives a minor injury, the caregiver will spend a brief time soothing the child with a moist clean cloth, a hug, and a bandaid if needed, then encourage the child to return to playing. Parents will be notified upon pickup regarding the nature of the injury.

First Aid
All caregivers will be first aid and CPR certified.

Emergency Medical Facility and Procedure
In case of a serious accident or injury, 911 will be called and the child will be transported to the nearest hospital by ambulance or by the parent if it is determined that an ambulance is not necessary. Parents will be notified as quickly as possible.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Lilac Sea Nursery School believes in developing a partnership with parents and working together to ensure that the needs of their children are being met. With that in mind, Lilac Sea welcomes and encourages your questions and concerns. If there is something you would like to discuss, we recommend that you bring it to our attention right away either in person or by phone or email.

Please sign and return this page to Lilac Sea within the first two weeks of your child's enrollment.

I have read, understand, and will adhere to the policies stated within Lilac Sea's Parent Handbook.

_____

Signature Date

_____

Print Name