



# Little Minds Learning Academy Sprouts Program Parent Handbook

\*All policies subject to change. Parents will be notified.

## LMLA SPROUTS



### 2024-2025

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# **Little Minds Learning Academy Registration Checklist**



- Completed Enrollment Form**
- \$100 Non-Refundable Enrollment Fee**
- Child Information Record**
- Health Appraisal**

**Mission Statement:** Little Minds Learning Academy is a nurturing and caring environment that will offer your child a complete and well rounded early childhood education, providing a firm foundation for life-long academic success.

**Philosophy/Values:** Little Minds Learning Academy believes that a child learns best through a balance of inquiry, play-based, and academic learning. We believe children are motivated to learn when they are actively involved in their own learning and given opportunities to make choices in an environment that is encouraging and stimulating. Children age 3 and 4 make sense of the world around them through exploration and experimentation. We believe that guidance and reinforcement will help children develop social and cognitive skills needed to be successful in any new environment.

**Staff:**

**Morgan Bechler, Director:** Morgan has had a passion for teaching as long as she can remember. She received her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and Early Childhood General/Special Education in 2018 from Saginaw Valley State University. She has taught 1st grade and Kindergarten in the last 4 years. Her passions include science and inquiry based learning practices as well as learning through play. She is very excited to bring Little Minds Learning Academy to our community!

**Kayleen Allred, Director:** Kayleen has wanted to be a teacher since she was in elementary school. She received her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with a double minor in Reading and Early Childhood Education from Spring Arbor University in 2015. She developed a passion for early childhood education after teaching Kindergarten for 7 years. She has found a love for learning about best practices for young students and play-based learning strategies. She is thrilled to be able to start Little Minds Learning Academy with her passionate and driven friend Morgan Bechler and give these young learners the education they deserve!

**Erin Bowen, Lead Teacher - Sprouts** Erin joined our team at Little Minds in the Spring of 2023 with years of experience caring for children in child care settings. She has previously worked in other child care settings and has a love for helping little learners. She has an associates degree from Northern Michigan University in Child Care Services and is currently working on her CDA. Erin can often be found immersing herself in play with the students encouraging them to use problem solving and self regulation skills. Erin brings a smile to everyone's face each day and Little Minds is lucky to have such a caring and experienced caregiver like her!

**Molli Oswald, Assistant Teacher - Sprouts** Molli is joining the Little Minds team in Fall of 2024. She is excited to help our 3 year olds learn and grow.

**Enrollment/Admission:** Enrollment for the Sprouts program is based on a first-come first-served basis. Students can enroll beginning at 2 years 9 months of age up to age 4. If your child turns 2 years 9 months after December 1st, 2024, they will be placed on waitlist and admittance will depend on enrollment.

To enroll, please visit our website to complete the online enrollment form and to pay the non-refundable \$100.00 enrollment fee.

**Your child's enrollment will be complete** when we have received all of the following documents:

\$100 non-refundable enrollment fee  
Enrollment form

**Due before start date**

**All documents due before your child's start date are required by Michigan licensing. There will be no exceptions to any missing documents.**

Child Information Record  
Health Appraisal Form  
Vaccination Records

**Tuition/Fees:**

\$45/day

\$100 enrollment fee is a one-time non-refundable fee and is in addition to the tuition cost.

A variety of payment options are available. Payment is due on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis. Tuition is due on Wednesday each week. A late fee of \$5 a day will be charged for each day payment is late. **Tuition is based on enrollment, and is not affected by absences due to illness, inclement weather, or family reasons.** We do not charge tuition for the 2 week Winter Break or during the Summer when school is closed. Tuition is due for all other breaks. If your account is not brought up to date by the 1st of the following month, your child will be withdrawn from the program.

When selecting a payment method (credit card, debit card, ACH, or cash/check), this method **must remain consistent for the duration of the school year.** If it must be changed, please notify the directors immediately, as fees need to be manually added if selecting credit, debit, or ACH methods.

If you choose to pay your child's tuition in full at the beginning of the year, a 5% discount will be applied. This does not apply to the \$100 enrollment fee. In the event that your child is withdrawn from the program after you have paid in full, this money is non-refundable.

If you are enrolling more than one child, there will be a 15% discount on the price of the 2nd child.

If you choose to withdraw your child from the program, a one month's written notice is required. If withdrawal is made anytime after the first of the month, full payment for the month is required.

**School Schedule:**

Monday - Friday

7:30-8:30 drop off  
8:30-3:00 instructional day  
3:00-4:00 pick up

**Arrival:** Your child can be dropped off anytime between the hours of 7:30am and 8:30am. **Please have your child to the school by 8:30am every morning** so we can begin our instructional day in a timely and organized manner. You will need to sign in your child every morning using our sign in Kiosk.

**Dismissal:** You can pick up your child anytime between 3:00pm and 4:00pm. Late fees are charged starting at 4:01pm. If we receive a phone call, prior to the time that we are scheduled to close, late fees will be handled on an individual basis. If no phone call is made we will charge \$10 within the first 10 minutes. If the child remains at the center past the first 10 minutes, we will charge \$1 per minute in addition to the \$10.

For security purposes, the doors to our school are always locked. We will only release your child to parents/guardians in our system and anyone listed on your emergency form. Please include all people your child can be released to on your emergency form as well as on Procure. If there is any change in your dismissal plans for the day, please send a written note to the teachers or send them a message on Procure to let them know they will be picked up by someone different. We will ask for a picture ID when there is a change in pick up.

**Daily Routine:**

7:30-8:30 Arrival/Free Play  
8:30-8:35 Clean Up  
8:35-8:50 Morning Circle  
8:50-9:00 Bathrooms/Dress for Outside  
9:05-9:30 Outdoor Exploration  
9:30-9:45 Snack  
9:45-10:00 Music and Movement and Phonemic Awareness  
10:00-10:30 Small Groups  
10:30-11:00 Free Play  
11:00-11:10 Bathrooms/Dress for Outside  
11:10-11:30 Outdoor Whole Group  
11:30-12:00 Outdoor Exploration  
12:00-12:30 Lunch  
12:30-2:00 Nap/Rest Time  
2:00-2:30 Outdoor Exploration  
2:30-2:45 Snack  
2:45-3:00 Closing Circle  
3:00-3:15 Music and Movement  
3:00-4:00 Dismissal/Free Play

**Absences:**

If your child will be absent from school, please message or call us. Payment is due regardless of absences.

**Bathroom:**

If your child is not fully potty trained, you must send in pull ups/diapers and wipes daily. You may also send in a supply of them to keep at the school. The school will help with potty training with the expectation that potty training is actively happening at home simultaneously.

Everyone must keep a zip lock baggie of extra clothes in your child's backpack every day. Please include underwear, socks(at least 2 pairs), pants, and a shirt. We suggest sending multiple of each item as we go outside rain or shine every day and items often get wet.

**Clothing:**

At Little Minds Learning Academy we foster and encourage independence. Your help is needed to ensure your child is successful. Please dress your child in clothing that meets their fine motor abilities. For example, pants with elastic waists (no buttons/clasps), velcro shoes, boots that are sturdy and students are able to push their feet into are typically best for children at this age.

**Snack Policies:**

Please send a water bottle labeled with your child's first and last name and date each day. Children will have access to their water bottles all day. Each child will be provided 2 snacks per day by the preschool. We will be considerate of all allergies. If your child has a food allergy, please provide a list of approved snacks. We will celebrate student birthdays at school and will provide a list of approved snacks that can be sent in.

**Lunch Policies:**

We receive catered lunches from Cafe53 for a fee for Sprouts families that would like to have lunch provided for their child. The cost is \$4/day and you can choose which days you would like your child to participate. Payments must be made in advance for the month. You can also choose to send a packed lunch with your child daily that includes any appropriate utensils that they may need. Please include appropriate cold packs or warming containers to keep your child's food cold or warm.

**Parent Communication:**

Little Minds Learning Academy will have 2 parent teacher conferences. One will be in the Fall and one in the Spring. We believe in the power of open communication, and will be in touch with you about your child's progress throughout the year. Please feel free to reach out at any time about any questions or concerns you have throughout the year.

**Parent Notification Policy:**

In the case of major injury or illness, parents will be called and messaged via ProCare immediately. In the case of accidents or minor injuries, parents will be messaged on ProCare and communicated with at pick up.

**Procare Connect:**

Procare Connect is the online platform we will use for parent communication, billing, attendance, important family/student information, etc. We ask that all parents/guardians download the Procare Connect app on your devices and create an account. (compatible with both Android and Apple devices)

**Health Policies and Procedures:**

If your child is sick, they will be asked to be kept home from school until they are symptom and medication free for 24 hours. If a child becomes sick at school, parents/caregivers will be notified via phone and messaged on ProCare to be picked up. We will notify you to pick up your child if they are showing signs of illness that include the following:

- Fever (100°F by mouth or 99°F under the arm)
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Unexplained or newly developed rash, blisters, or mouth sores

In the best interest of all students and staff, if staff feels a child does not feel well enough to participate in daily activities, parents will be contacted and it may be necessary for the child to be picked up.

Every child that has been diagnosed with a communicable disease will be asked to provide a doctor's note providing the following information:

- Name of disease
- Symptoms of disease
- Date diagnosed and date child is able to return to school

The Department of Child Care Licensing requires that each child have a full physical every two years, and that those records be kept on file at Little Minds Learning Academy. Immunizations need to be current according to state law and the medical form signed by a physician. In order for your child to begin school at Little Minds Learning Academy, he/she needs a list of all completed vaccinations signed by a physician.

All lead staff members are trained in first aid, CPR, AED, and dealing with blood borne pathogens.

**Medication**

If a parent requests medication to be administered at the school, it will be given only by a staff member. We require written permission from a parent prior to administration. The medication must be in its original container and clearly labeled. Prescription medication must have the

pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, child's first and last name, instructions, name and strength of the medication and will be given according to those instructions. Medication will be kept out of reach of children.

### **Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect**

All staff working at Little Minds Learning Academy, who knows or has reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected, is required by law to contact the county department of Social Services or Human Services or local law enforcement agency to report it.

### **Safety and Weather Related Policies:**

Little Minds Learning Academy will be following Bad Axe Public School's closing recommendations. If Bad Axe Public Schools have closed due to inclement weather, Little Minds Learning Academy will be closed. We will send out emergency SMS messages via Procure. If road conditions worsen while we are in school, you will be notified via Procure, phone call, or email.

### **Emergency Weather and Other Emergencies**

We will practice fire drills 4 times a year (September, November, February, and May) and tornado drills 2 times a year (September and May).

Tornado- In the event of a tornado warning, students will be taken to the bathrooms by a staff member. Bathrooms do not contain any windows. Staff members will complete a head count and have a cell phone on hand.

Fire- In the event of a fire, students will exit through the nearest emergency exit (one at the front of the building and one at the back of the building).

Man-Made Disaster (including dangerous person) - Your child's safety is our first priority. We will do everything possible to keep your child in the safest possible environment. This may mean exiting the building and relocating to another location. In the case of an event like this, a teacher will remain with your child at all times and will update you about your child's well being and location as soon as possible.

Power Outage - You will be notified via phone call or Procure to have someone come pick up your child unless the problem can be solved in a timely manner.

### **Volunteer Policies:**

Volunteers will be accompanied by a staff member at all times.

Volunteers will need to sign a document that states he/she have not been convicted of the following:

- Child abuse and neglect
- A felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual



**Field Trips:**

We go on a variety of field trips throughout the year. You will receive a permission slip for each trip that must be signed in order for your child to attend. We may ask for volunteer chaperones for field trips throughout the year. This will be communicated through ProCare or newsletters.

**Behavioral Expectations:**

We will be using a love-first discipline approach. Each student will be held responsible for their actions, while also given chances to practice and build skills as needed. Our biggest priority is your child's safety and well-being. If a behavior becomes dangerous in any way a meeting with the parents will be scheduled to discuss an action plan.

**Licensing Notebook:**

A licensing notebook will be on the premises and will include all licensing inspections and special investigation reports. Corrective action plans from at least the past 3 years are available on the department's child care licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare). The notebook will be made available to any inquiring parents or prospective parents at any time during school operating hours.

**School Calendar:**

Our tentative start date is Tuesday, September 3rd, 2024 and the tentative end date is Friday, June 6th, 2025.

Please visit our website for an updated school calendar. Parents will be notified of any changes made to the school calendar and sent an updated copy.