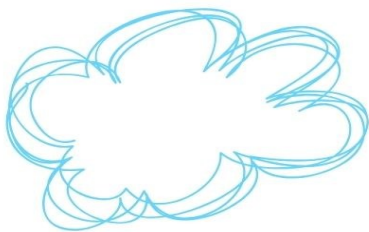


Small Wonders



FAMILY HANDBOOK



Welcome to Small Wonders Learning Center, where we believe in nurturing the unique nature of every child. Our program is designed to provide a stimulating environment that fosters curiosity, wonder, and a love for learning! We are so glad you are here!

Parents, staff, and Child Care Licensing receive a copy of this handbook and will be notified of any changes made to the handbook.

Hours and Days of Operation

We are open Monday-Friday from 7:00 am-5:30 pm. We are closed on most federal holidays. We serve children aged 3 until they enter kindergarten, and all children must be fully potty-trained to attend our program. Please drop your child off before 9:00 am each day, so they can fully participate in our curriculum and structured activities.

Important Addresses and Phone Numbers

Small Wonders Preschool at Larry D Johnson (LDJ) Community Center

1200 12th Street
Sparks, Nevada 89431

Small Wonders Preschool at Alf Sorensen (Alf) Community Center

1400 Baring Boulevard
Sparks, Nevada 89434

Nancy O'Connor - Parks & Recreation Director	775-353-2376
Emily Pate - Parks & Recreation Manager	775-353-7817
Emily Treischel - Preschool Director	775-895-7199
Kayla Morgan – Assistant Director at Larry D. Johnson Facility	775-895-6880
Candice Rowley- Assistant Director at Alf Sorensen Facility	775-484-9175
Alf Sorensen Front Desk	775-353-2385, press option #1
LDJ Preschool Landline	775-353-7815
Alf Sorensen Preschool Landline	775-353-7801
State Child Care Licensing	775-684-8781
Epidemiology	Outbreak@health.nv.gov

Our Philosophy

At Small Wonders, we recognize the individuality of each child and aim to create a supportive environment where they can thrive. Our multi-aged classrooms, with a ratio of no more than 12 children to 1 teacher, ensure personalized attention and opportunities for growth at each child's pace. We are a play-based center with a focus on each developmental domain, including fine motor, large motor, language, cognitive, and social and emotional learning. As required by our state licensing agency, each family will be asked to complete a developmental assessment, biannually for their child. We are happy to support your child's developmental needs or suggest resources for additional support, if needed.

Curriculum and Learning Approach

Our curriculum is based on monthly themes that are engaging and relevant to the children's interests. We follow the children's interests and developmental needs to curate our curriculum. We utilize the Nevada Pre-K Standards to help meet developmental milestones. We provide a balanced environment with developmentally appropriate materials and activities, opportunities for free choice and free play, as well as some structured activities led by a staff member, to help prepare the children for the more structured world of kindergarten. We aim to encourage independence, decision-making skills, and creative exploration.

Daily Schedule and Activities

A structured yet flexible daily schedule offers a sense of routine while allowing for the changes and daily needs of the children and staff. Through a mix of teacher-led and child-initiated activities, children have opportunities to explore, experiment, and develop social, cognitive, and physical skills. Our daily schedule is posted in each classroom and is similar, yet specific to each site. Please ask the Assistant Preschool Director at your child's facility for the daily schedule or find it posted in your child's classroom.

Enrollment and Registration

Enrollment in our program is based on availability, and our ratios, put in place by the State of Nevada. You can call the childcare center directly to inquire about enrollment opportunities or to be placed on our waiting list.

A completed online registration, current immunization record, and Well Child form are due upon registration and can be completed and uploaded online, using our ePACT system. These materials will need to be completed and verified ahead of your child's first day.

Tuition is due on a weekly basis; however, you are welcome to pay for as many weeks as you'd like in advance. Non-payment for a week of tuition will result in your child not being able to attend our program until the tuition balance is paid in full.

Weekly tuition must be paid by Friday for the upcoming week. Late fees may be assessed for fees that are not paid on time. Tuition that is not paid may result in your child's spot at the center being forfeited. Please work closely with the Preschool Director or Assistant Director at your child's facility to coordinate vacation time or extended absence. Rates are subject to change at the City's discretion at any time. Please check with the Preschool Director for current rates.

Vacation

Each child is permitted two weeks of vacation annually in a calendar year. Unused vacation weeks do not roll over to the following year. During these weeks, the child taking vacation will not pay tuition nor will he/she attend Small Wonders Learning Center. Please notify the Preschool Director in writing at least two weeks prior to your vacation for approval. After you have utilized the two vacation weeks, any absences will incur regular tuition fees. Vacation time cannot be utilized in place of a two-week notice of unenrollment.

Withdrawal from Program

A two-week written notice with the intent to withdraw your child from the program is required. Full refunds may be granted if a cancellation request form is submitted a minimum of 14 days prior to the program start dates. If a cancellation request form is submitted less than 14 days prior to the program start date, the refund (if approved) will be issued as household credit only, less a processing fee. The processing fee will be deducted from the original registration payment. Cancellation request forms can be obtained at the Recreation Office or online. If you are withdrawing on the first day of, or after a session that you have already paid for has begun, no refunds or reimbursement credits will be issued. Allotted annual vacation weeks cannot be used in place of a two-week notice.

Snacks and Meals/Allergies

We are a nut-free program. Please do not send any nut products to school. This includes peanuts, hazelnuts, almonds, walnuts, pistachios, tree nuts, etc. Families are required to provide a cold lunch with proper ice packs and two healthy snacks for their child, each day. Children's meals should include healthy options with plenty of variety. Snacks can be left for the week in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name. These can be left in their cubby or a designated snack area. We are unable to warm up lunches for children, as per Nevada Public Health, so please plan accordingly and provide the necessary thermos, etc. to keep food warm. Bento boxes are ideal for storing meals. Please ensure they can open and close their own lunchbox and containers as necessary. Please note that juice and candy are not allowed at school. If lunch is forgotten, a parent will be contacted to bring in a lunch.

Allergies and Food Preferences

If your child has an allergy of any kind, it is your responsibility to alert staff upon their registration for the program. If they require medication or an epi-pen, we will keep that on-site in our locked medication box. Any medication stored at school must have a prescription label specifying dosage, the expiration date and administration instructions, as well as be in the original, child-proof packaging. This includes Epi Pens. A list of allergies will be posted in the classroom for all staff to see, including a photo of your child. Please make sure we are aware of any food preferences as well, in the event of a special celebration treat, etc. Please ensure all snacks and food sent to school are cut to proper size and do not present any choking hazard.

Illness Policy

At Small Wonders Learning Center, the health and well-being of our children and staff are our top priorities. To maintain a safe and healthy environment, we adhere to the following guidelines for excluding sick children and staff:

Exclusion Criteria

Fever: Children with a fever greater than 100.1 degrees Fahrenheit axillary will be excluded from the program.

Vomiting: Children who have vomited will be excluded until they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication.

Diarrhea: Children with diarrhea will be excluded until they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication.

Respiratory Illness: Children with respiratory symptoms accompanied by green or yellow mucous, or a congested-sounding cough and/or fever will be excluded. Children who are lethargic, unwilling, or unable to participate due to symptoms will also be excluded.

Earache: Children with an earache, especially if accompanied by drainage from the ear, will be excluded.

Rashes: Children with an unidentified rash will be excluded and may require a doctor's note to return.

Sore Throat: Children with a sore throat accompanied by fever will be excluded.

Stomachaches: Children with stomachaches accompanied by diarrhea will be excluded.

Eyes: Children with red, puffy eyes or discharge, pus, or uncontrolled watering from the eyes will be excluded.

Returning to the Program

Children who have been excluded from the program due to illness may return under the following criteria set forth by Nevada Public Health:

- With a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and fit to return to school, or
- After symptoms have subsided, the child has been symptom-free and unmedicated for at least 24 hours.

Other circumstances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Preschool Director. Exceptions to the exclusion guidelines for any illness may be made for children on antibiotics for the previous 24-48 hours, provided they are not experiencing severe symptoms and have been cleared by a doctor to attend school.

We appreciate your cooperation in adhering to these guidelines to ensure the health and well-being of all children and staff members at Small Wonders Learning Center.

Medication Administration

Parents are required to provide detailed information and authorization through signing a state-issued form for any medication their child may require during program hours. We cannot administer any medication without a prescription. To administer an over-the-counter medication, we will need a written letter or prescription from their doctor. All medication is stored in a locked box and administered by a trained staff member and will be discarded once expired.

Sunscreen Policy

When necessary for outdoor activities, we ask participants to apply sunscreen before arrival at the program. If you would like our staff to reapply sunscreen throughout the day, please sign the non-prescription cream application form and send sunscreen with your child. Ensure their sunscreen bottle is properly labeled with their first and last name.

Parental Involvement and Communication

We value the partnership between parents and teachers, recognizing it as integral to each child's success. Regular communication, parental involvement opportunities, and mutual respect form the foundation of our supportive community. Directors can be reached via the landline or cell phone numbers provided. Additionally, you can reach them via email or by scheduling a meeting with them in-person.

Professional Communication and Conduct

Small Wonders is committed to maintaining a positive, respectful, and professional environment for children, families, and staff. We ask that all interactions between parents, guardians, staff members, and administrators remain courteous, respectful, and constructive at all times. Harassment, intimidation, threats, abusive language, or disruptive behavior toward staff, families, or children will not be tolerated. If concerns arise, we encourage families to address them through appropriate channels in a respectful manner. Failure to maintain professional conduct may result in intervention by the City of Sparks and could lead to corrective action, including restrictions on program participation or other measures deemed appropriate.

Cell Phone Use During Drop-Off and Pick-Up

To help ensure the safety of all children and support meaningful communication between families and staff, parents and authorized pick-up individuals are asked to refrain from using cell phones during drop-off and pick-up times. These transitions are important opportunities to exchange information about a child's day, health, behavior, and other important updates. Being fully present also helps children feel secure and supported during these transitions. If you are on a phone call when arriving, please end the call before entering the classroom or checking your child in or out.

Arrival Time/Drop Off Routine

Please bring your child to their classroom by 9:00 am, whenever possible. Arrivals after 9:00 am can be disruptive to the routine. When an arrival after 9:00 am is anticipated, please notify the classroom teacher or Preschool Director. Routines are crucial to the children's comfort level at school and help create a predictable day for everyone. We appreciate your help with this.

Late Pick-Up Policy

The licensing agency only allows children in the building with us until the time listed on our license. Our childcare centers close promptly at 5:30 pm each day. Please ensure you have picked up your child and left the school premises by that time. If you are going to be late or if there is an emergency that is preventing you from arriving on time, please alert your child's teacher as soon as possible. Late fees may be assessed for late pick-up according to the Late Pick-Up Policy accessible through the parents' ePACT account.

Sign In/Sign-Out Policy

Our sign-in/sign-out policy ensures the safety and security of every child. Parents must always accompany their children into their classroom. Please make sure a staff member is aware of your child's arrival. Please ensure you are signing your child in and out each day as you arrive at the center. Signing in and out is done on the classroom iPad. People who are not listed as a designated pickup person on your child's ePact forms will not be allowed to pick your child up. No verbal changes to ePact will be made. Additionally, someone picking your child up may be required to show photo ID at any time, unless a high-resolution photo of the person's face is uploaded to the child's ePact account.

Holidays and Celebrations

Small Wonders Learning Center will be closed in observance of the holidays listed below under **Small Wonders Observed Closures**. Tuition is not reduced for holiday closures.

Holidays afford us the opportunity to learn about other cultures and traditions. In the days leading up to a holiday, we may talk or learn about the holidays and celebrations that are important and relevant to the children and staff in our program. We put an emphasis on embracing differences, inclusivity and cultural sensitivity. There may be occasional activities, projects or conversations surrounding various holidays, and we encourage you to share your holidays and cultural practices with us, so we can all learn about them together. If you do not wish for your child to participate in holiday-centered activities, please communicate this to the Preschool Director or the Assistant Preschool Director at your child's facility, and we will work together to provide a reasonable accommodation for your child.

Child Custody

By law, we require any child custody concerns to be in writing from a legal agency, such as a court official or judge. The paperwork must be signed by both parties, and we must be made aware of any custody arrangements prior to your child's enrollment.

Birthdays and Special Celebrations

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school by bringing something special to share, please check in with your child's teacher to determine if there are any allergies or dietary restrictions in your child's class. The items must be free from nut products, and we recommend dairy-free products that can be easily served. Only packaged items will be allowed, according to state health department regulations. Homemade goods are not permitted. If you do not wish for your child to participate in birthdays or special celebrations, please communicate this to the Preschool Director or the Assistant Preschool Director at your child's facility, and we will work together to provide reasonable accommodation for your child.

Outdoor/Playtime Policy

Children at our preschool play outdoors every day to support their health, learning, and overall well-being, except in cases of extreme weather or unsafe air quality. Families are expected to send children with appropriate outdoor gear and layers **every day** (e.g., coats,

hats, gloves, boots, sun hats) so they can participate comfortably and safely in all outdoor activities.

Snow/Smoke Day Policy

In the event of extreme weather conditions, your child's teachers will notify you as soon as possible with next steps. There may be a rare occasion that our centers will close due to extreme weather. Please keep an eye on your email or phone on days when extreme weather is expected. We will notify you via the ePACT system, text message or phone call of any changes to our operating hours as soon as possible.

Biting/Hitting Policy

We understand that occasionally, children have a difficult time expressing themselves in a safe and appropriate manner. We model appropriate behavior for the children in our care and set clear behavior expectations, which include no tolerance for physical behaviors. Occasionally, incidents do happen. When a child becomes physical with another peer or a teacher, we will immediately redirect that child to another area of the classroom and speak with them one on one about their behavior. An incident report will be written, and staff will speak to the parents about the incident. We focus on teaching children replacement skills that are more appropriate for expressing their needs. Repetitive occurrences of challenging behavior will be assessed on a case-by-case basis with the Preschool Director and the family and may result in removal from the program. Small Wonders reserves the right to make decisions regarding enrollment based on the safety and needs of the center.

Discharge Policy

Small Wonders Learning Center reserves the right to cancel enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

- Non-payment and/or excessive late fees
- Not observing the rules of the center as outlined in the parent handbook
- Physical and/or verbal abuse directed towards staff or child by a parent or child
- Any other behavior or occurrence, which in the opinion of the Department Director, is detrimental to the center

Injuries & Incident Reports

In the event of an injury or medical incident at school, staff will provide necessary first aid measures immediately and notify first responders as needed. Parents will be notified via the ePACT system, text message or phone call. Staff will write an incident report to be signed by families as well as notify the Preschool Director. In the event of a serious incident as determined by staff, staff will also report this to state licensing via email or phone call.

Child Abuse & Neglect

All staff are mandated reporters according to NRS 432B. We are required to document and report any signs or reports of suspected child abuse or neglect within one hour. If you have any questions or concerns regarding our reporting policy, please reach out to the Preschool Director.

Facility Staff Training

All staff are required to accrue 24 hours of training per year. Training in topics such as child development and guidance, lifelong wellness, safety procedures, and first aid & CPR are included. Someone CPR and First Aid certified is always on site. Below are the required initial training courses for staff to complete at the beginning of their employment.

- Infant/Child CPR (every 2 years)
- First Aid
- Signs and Symptoms of Communicable Disease
- Recognition and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect (every 5 years)
- Child Development specific to age group

- Lifelong Wellness (annually)
- Building and Physical Premise Safety
- Emergency Preparedness
- Medication Administration and Food Allergy Management
- Transportation and Field Trip Safety

Video/Photograph Policy

We value the privacy and consent of all families in our program. If you do not wish to have your child photographed, please make sure you alert the staff about your wishes in writing via your ePACT account and notify your child's classroom teacher. Should you update your response to the video/photograph policy through your children's ePACT account, please notify the Preschool Director of this change.

Toys at School

Please keep all toys at home. The only exception to this is a small stuffed animal for your child to rest with during nap time. No other toys will be allowed.

Special Needs

We are not specifically equipped with proper fixtures to accommodate special needs; however, we may be able to accommodate needs on a case-by-case basis. Please reach out to the Preschool Director for more information prior to registration.

Emergency Information

To prepare for emergencies, we gather emergency contact information from families on the ePACT system.

Emergency Evacuation and Drills

We perform emergency evacuation drills for fires monthly, as well as all other emergency drills on a quarterly basis. All staff and children are trained to exit the building quickly and safely when needed. Our evacuation sites are as follows:

Alf Sorensen: the parking lot outside of the main preschool entrance, and the Reed High School parking lot when further evacuations are needed.

LDJ: The parking lot directly outside of the building, the parking lot of the Sparks Branch Library, and Saint Paul's Church parking lot located at 1135 12th Street, when further evacuation site is needed.

Children and staff follow evacuation routes posted in the classroom and walk with the supervision of staff to and from the sites.

Grievance Procedures

Families have the right to report any concerns to the facility director or the Parks & Recreation Manager at any time. Additionally, concerns about any City facility may be reported to the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services licensing division. They can be reached at 775-684-8781 or 702-486-3822.

Parent Involvement & Right to Observe

Parents have the right to observe the program prior to and at any time after enrollment in our program. If you would like to observe the program, or volunteer your time in the classroom, please give the facility director advance notice of 48 hours, and we can accommodate your request.

Your Child's Adjustment

Change is hard, and entering a new program usually comes with an adjustment period. The best way to prepare your child for school is to adequately and honestly inform them of the expectations. Please explain to them that they will be at school for a while and then their parents will return to pick them up, so that they can be more prepared emotionally. We will work directly with your child to help them feel more comfortable at school. Please send a family photo to school for your child to look at when they miss you. We will provide updates daily on how their transition is going and do our best to make them as comfortable as possible. A prompt departure from the classroom upon drop-off also helps the process.

Children's Belongings

All belongings allowed to accompany your child into the classroom must be labeled with your child's name and stored in their cubbies or backpacks. This includes extra clothing, jackets, etc. Please always ensure your child has an extra set of weather-appropriate clothing at school with them in case of messy play or accidents. This includes extra shoes.

Rest Period and Nap Time

All children are required to have a quiet rest time for at least 30 minutes. If your child does not want to sleep, they will be offered quiet activities after rest time. All children will be provided either a nap mat or a nap cot for rest time. Please send a nap roll or with your child at the beginning of the week. We will send home the nap items to be washed on your child's last day of the week. Please do not send any sleeping bags or large blankets.

Field Trip Consent and Information

Occasionally, and especially during our summer program, we will attend field trips. Each child will need a field trip consent form completed prior to the event. Families will be notified ahead of time about field trips, and we will ensure the proper supervision and safe transportation to and from the field trip. We utilize Washoe County School District buses for our field trips.

When field trips are scheduled, children that arrive after their group has left for a trip must sign-in but will not be allowed to remain at the program location. Parents will be required to deliver the child to their assigned group at the off-site location for the child to attend the program that day. All children must be signed in at their arrival time.

Smoke-Free Facility

Alf Sorensen and Larry D. Johnson Community Centers, including the parking lots, are smoke-free facilities. This includes the use of electronic cigarettes and vaping.

Small Wonders Observed Closures

New Year's Day

Birth of Martin Luth King, Jr.

President's Day

Memorial Day

Juneteenth National Independence Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Indigenous People's Day

Nevada Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving and Family Day

Christmas Day

Professional Development Days: Our Center is closed for two professional development days throughout the year. Notice will be given 30 days prior to the closure.