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Parent Manual

Little Blessings Nursery School is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing nursery school education for preschool children (ages 2–5). As such, any parent whose child is enrolled in our program becomes a member of this organization for as long as their child is enrolled.

We are licensed by the Ministry of Education and are regularly inspected by the Durham Region Health Department, the Fire Department, and Durham Region Children's Services. These agencies provide us with information on the Operating Criteria for our program, as well as training and support to help us make Little Blessings a safe and nurturing environment for children.

LBNS was established in 1996 and operates out of Hebron Christian Reformed Church. While Little Blessings operates independently, we partner with the church to provide a Christian-based school where children can learn and grow in a preschool setting.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Little Blessings Nursery School is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where children can learn through play while supporting their families and promoting Christian values.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe every child has the right to a safe, nurturing environment that offers positive experiences to enhance their individuality. We also believe a healthy, positive sense of self is essential for personal growth and learning. Therefore, we strive to provide quality care in an environment that is:

- Child-centered and fun
- Encouraging open exploration and discovery of nature and the environment
- Providing numerous opportunities for self-expression and self-discovery
- Fostering understanding and cooperation, with respect for diversity, equality, and inclusion in a group setting
- Rooted in Christian values

Our goal is to meet the needs of each child through ongoing parent involvement and open communication.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Little Blessings Nursery School is a not-for-profit organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board's role is to oversee the school's operations within the framework of applicable laws and standards. This includes ensuring the organization's mission and strategic direction, financial management, and long-term sustainability. According to the organization's by-laws, it is essential to maintain enough board members for Little Blessings to remain in operation, as well as to fill the key positions of Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Board members may occasionally be called upon to assist with tasks or assignments during the school year, such as supporting fundraising activities. They are also required to be available one evening per month to attend board meetings and to contribute to the Board's ongoing activities. We encourage you to consider joining our Board, as we are always looking for new members who are passionate about supporting Little Blessings. If you are interested in learning more, please speak with the Supervisor.

Little Blessings holds an Annual General Meeting each October. All parents with children enrolled in the program are members of the Corporation and are welcome to attend this meeting. It is a great opportunity for parents to learn more about our school.

OUR PROGRAMS

Our morning program runs **Monday to Friday** from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. for children aged 2–5 years. *Limited spots are available for children aged 2–2.5 years. We offer the following options:

a 2-day morning program (Tuesday and Thursday)	OR	a 3-day morning program (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday)
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* Children may also enroll in both the 2-day and 3-day programs, creating a **5-day program** (Monday through Friday), if spots are available.

Our **afternoon program** runs from 1:15 to 3:45 p.m. for children aged 2–5 years.

a 3-day afternoon program (Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday)

Little Blessings Nursery School adheres to the teacher/child ratios outlined in the Child Care and Early Years Act. **A ratio of eight children to one teacher, or lower, is always maintained.**

Our morning and afternoon programs provide a variety of play experiences designed to support each child’s development in spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and emotional areas. We view children as competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. Our programs encourage child-initiated activities supported by adult guidance.

Our bright, welcoming rooms are organized into learning centers that promote learning through play. Teachers provide open-ended materials for exploration, and the rooms are arranged to accommodate both group play and individual experiences. Play materials are accessible on shelves and tables, allowing children to choose and explore independently.

Little Blessings Nursery School adheres to the following teacher/child ratios in accordance with Act. A ratio of eight children to one teacher, or lower, is always maintained.

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The daily schedule includes long periods of uninterrupted play to engage active minds and bodies. Teachers observe and respond to each child’s cues, offering materials or suggestions to extend their play. We also come together to enjoy a healthy snack and pray before eating.

Throughout the school year, our Christian curriculum is thoughtfully integrated into various play areas through art, cognitive activities, music, and Bible stories. Activities are designed to accommodate all children, offering opportunities for both active and quiet play. When necessary, teachers make adjustments based on observations to address individual needs.

Teachers allocate time in the program schedule for both indoor and outdoor play in our large play yard when weather conditions permit. In cases of rain, high winds, icy conditions, or temperatures **below -15°C**, children will participate in alternative active play experiences indoors.

Our teachers engage in positive and responsive interactions with children, parents, and other staff members. They are approachable, open to discussions, and respectful of differing opinions. Teachers utilize *How Does Learning Happen?*, Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years—a resource focused on learning through relationships, designed for those who work with

young children and their families. This tool strengthens the quality of our program by ensuring it is child- and family-centered.

As required by the Ministry of Education, all teachers in the program must read *How Does Learning Happen?*. It is also used as a training resource during team meetings, with its principles guiding program planning. Teachers regularly evaluate the program and share ideas during team meetings to ensure that children, teachers, families, and educators feel a sense of belonging, engagement, expression, and well-being.

Individual goals are developed for each child and incorporated into the program plan to support their growth and development.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

From time to time, we welcome volunteers and students into the program to learn and add additional help. These individuals are outside of the student/teacher ratio and children are always accompanied by a qualified teacher.

There are Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) agencies available to support licensed child care programs in Durham. These agencies are funded through the Regional Municipality of Durham and the Ministry of Education to assist in providing inclusive environments for children and families. LBNS has the opportunity to work in partnership with local agencies.

LBNS will contact outside agencies that support children and their families based on observations of children or requests made by parents. These agencies will be invited to visit our program, with a parent's consent, to observe and assess children in our program environment. These individuals must provide us with a Criminal Reference Check with Vulnerable Sector Check. During the visit we sit with them and the parents and share suggestions that will help create individual goals and a specific plan to meet the child's needs. Teachers will take additional training to assist a child with special needs. If specific aids are required, instructions to adapt the program or environment to meet the child's needs will be added to their individual plans and shared with all staff/volunteers.

Teachers will respond to parent's inquiries about their child's progress with factual information. If the teacher needs to acquire more information through observation or collaboration with other team members or even at a better time of the program, the teacher will set up a time with the parent to discuss such information.

TEACHER/CHILD INTERACTIONS & GROWTH

Teachers allow children to take the lead in play by listening to their questions and offering materials or suggestions to extend their play. Play is encouraged as a means to foster problem-solving skills, learning to cooperate with others, coping with challenges, overcoming obstacles, and developing the ability to focus attention.

Teachers support problem-solving by facilitating conversations that help children explore alternative strategies. Children are guided to take responsibility for their actions, and through problem-solving, they are encouraged to grow and develop positive interactions and communication skills.

Teachers also encourage children to develop independence by supporting them in serving their own snacks, dressing for outdoor play, using the toilet independently, and cleaning up after

themselves during play. Time and guidance are provided as needed to help children succeed in these tasks.

Children are encouraged to become valuable contributors to the program according to their developmental stage. The ultimate goal is for the child to achieve self-regulation. They are encouraged to express their feelings verbally and to respect the rights of others.

The following practices are prohibited as outlined in the Child Care Early Years Act:

- Corporal punishment of a child.
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller, or other device for disciplinary purposes or in place of supervision, unless the restraint is necessary to prevent the child from harming themselves or others, and is used only as a last resort until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- Locking exits to confine the child or isolating the child in a room or area without adult supervision, except in an emergency when required by the licensee's emergency management procedures.
- The use of harsh or degrading measures, threats, or derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that could humiliate, shame, frighten, or undermine their self-respect, dignity, or self-worth.
- Depriving the child of basic needs such as food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children, including forcing them to eat or drink against their will.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of each child. Creating an atmosphere of love, care, and understanding is central to the school's philosophy. The school will take all necessary precautions to ensure the well-being of all children in attendance.

PARENTAL, VOLUNTEER & STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to share any special talents, professions, or ethnic customs to enrich our program. Additionally, teachers often need assistance with various responsibilities to help run the program smoothly. If you would like to contribute, please speak with the supervisor. If you're interested in volunteering directly with the children, we would greatly appreciate your support. Please note that volunteers in the program are required to undergo a police background check, including vulnerable sector screening, a health assessment, and completion of an orientation session, which includes reviewing our policies and procedure manual.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING FOR TEACHERS

Little Blessings Nursery School requires that teachers participate in ongoing professional development. As needed, teachers will be given time away from the program to attend these sessions.

The Supervisor will review the goals set bi-yearly. The Staff and Board of Directors are committed to reflecting on the program, considering both its successes and challenges. This Parent Manual, along with other policies, will be reviewed, and new goals will be established each year or as necessary to continually enhance our school for families.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Step 1: Complete the Registration Form available on our website. If multiple children from the same family are attending, please submit separate forms for each child. Read the Parent Manual and sign the Registration Form to confirm that you have done so.

Step 2: Prepare payment (either by cheque or e-transfer) for the non-refundable registration fee, dated at the time of registration.

Step 3: Write post-dated cheques for program fees, dated for the first of each month from September to June, at the time of registration. Alternatively, monthly e-transfers for payments are also accepted.

Step 4:

a) An Immunization Information Form and a copy of your child's up-to-date immunization record are required to submit to the Health Department. OR

b) Objections to immunization for reasons of conscience or religious belief must be accompanied by an Affidavit, signed by a Commissioner of Oaths (such as a notary public, town clerk, Member of Parliament, lawyer, judge, or justice of the peace). A Statement of Medical Exemption must be completed by a doctor or Nurse Practitioner. Links to both forms are available on our website.

Please note: If you choose not to immunize your child, Little Blessings will follow the Ministry of Health's guidance regarding the exclusion of students in the event of an outbreak.

Step 5: Inform the Supervisor of any allergies, special needs, or health conditions your child may have before they begin, so that appropriate plans can be made with teachers, parents, and doctors. Please also provide your child's history of communicable diseases.

Please return the completed Registration Form, Immunization Record (or alternative documentation), and the registration fee to the Supervisor as soon as possible to ensure that your registration is complete and a spot is secured for your child on your preferred days. All forms must be on file before your child begins in the program.

SCHOOL FEES / LATE FEES / LATE PICK UP FEE

A non-refundable registration fee of \$70 is required upon registration for each school year. This fee will secure a spot for your child starting in September and helps cover administrative costs.

The Monthly Fee is due regardless of the number of days in the month. Fees are averaged over ten months of the year. Absences due to illness, family holidays, inclement weather, school holidays, and statutory holidays will not be deducted from the monthly fee. Payment must be received by the first day of the month in which your child is participating in order for your child to attend. Write post-dated cheques for program fees, dated for the first of each month from September to June, at the time of registration. Alternatively, monthly e-transfers / cash for payments are also accepted. **Our monthly fee is non-refundable under all circumstances.**

Late Fees: A late fee of \$5.00 per day will automatically be added from the 8th to the 15th of each month. If payment is not made by end of business day on the 15th of the month, the child will be withdrawn from the program. Families requiring alternate arrangements

must contact the Supervisor by the 1st of the month. The matter will also be discussed with the Board of Directors.

Late Pick-Up Fee: If you are more than 5 minutes late picking up your child on more than two occasions, an additional \$25.00 fee will be charged. Teachers need adequate time to clean and prepare activities for the next group of children, so it is important that children are picked up on time.

Non-Sufficient Fund (NSF) cheques: NSF cheques are subject to a \$25.00 administration fee.

A receipt for income tax purposes is available upon request.

CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE SYSTEM (CWELCC)

LBNS has been successfully enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC). To make child care more affordable for families, CWELCC will reduce average fees for participating licensed child care programs through a phased approach. By September 2025, licensed child care fees will be reduced to an average of \$10 per day.

<u>Morning & Afternoon Program Fees</u>	Per month	Per month (CWELCC 25% reduction) effective Sept 2022	Per month (CWELCC 52.75% reduction) effective Jan 2023
2-day Mornings	\$210/month	\$157.5/month	\$99.22/month
3-day Mornings	\$290/month	\$217.50/month	\$137.02/month
3-day Afternoons	\$290/month	\$217.50/month	\$137.02/month
*5-day Mornings	\$500/month	\$375/month	\$236.24/month

*The 5-day a week option is available in the morning program by selecting both the 2-day and 3-day programs.

HOLIDAYS

Our school operates from September to June. We are closed on the following days: Thanksgiving Monday, two weeks in December for the Christmas & New Year's break, Family Day, March break, Good Friday, Easter Monday, and Victoria Day. We remain open on elementary school professional (PA) days.

WITHDRAWAL

One month's written notice is required to withdraw your child; otherwise, the fees for the following month will be charged. If your child is withdrawn for May and/or June, full fees are payable for the remainder of the term unless a replacement is found.

ABSENCE

Please notify the school via email or phone if your child will be absent and provide the reason for the absence, as we are required to keep attendance and health records for all our children.

ILLNESS

We request that you call or email the school before 9:00 am / 1:15 pm if you know your child will be absent due to illness or any other reason. Please inform us of your child's symptoms if they are ill or if they have developed any contagious conditions.

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms of illness, please keep them home:

- Elevated temperature
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Undiagnosed skin rash
- Nasal discharge
- Coughing
- Red or discharging eyes or ears

For more information, please refer to the Durham Region Infectious Disease Reporting Guidelines: [Infectious Disease Reporting Guidelines https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/resources/Documents/IllnessInfectionDisease/InfectiousDiseaseReportingGuidelines.pdf](https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/resources/Documents/IllnessInfectionDisease/InfectiousDiseaseReportingGuidelines.pdf)

If your child shows any of these symptoms during the program, you will be asked to pick them up immediately. They will be isolated from the other children, and a teacher will contact you or your emergency contact. An "Ill Health" form will be filled out by a teacher, and a parent or caregiver will be asked to sign it. This form will be kept in your child's file.

We ask that all children, teachers, volunteers, caregivers, and guests remain at home until 24 hours (or 48 hours for diarrhea and vomiting) after the last sign of symptoms, and consult a physician or follow any requirements set by the health department for the condition.

An assigned staff member will track children's illnesses using the "Child Care Center Routine Illness Surveillance Form." Any symptoms or illnesses that show an above-average occurrence will be brought to the Supervisor's attention. Depending on the severity and in accordance with criteria set by the Health Department, the illness may be reported to the Health Department. The Supervisor will inform parents if an illness of a severe and contagious nature arises. Relevant information will be emailed to parents and posted as you enter the school.

ARRIVAL & PICK-UP

A teacher MUST meet each child at the time of arrival. If a child does not arrive at the child care center and the parent/guardian has not notified the Supervisor, the Supervisor must begin contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 9:45 am / 2:00 pm. LBNS Staff will initially contact the parent/guardian by sending an email. If no response is received by the end of the scheduled program time (11:30 am / 3:45 pm), the Supervisor will send a follow-up email.

If the Supervisor is unable to confirm the child's absence, they will call the parent/guardian on the following program day if the child does not arrive.

Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff will document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the absence in the daily written record (log book held at the foyer).

A written record will be kept of each child in attendance. The total number of children will be counted and displayed on the whiteboard in the room that your child attends and this number will be verified during transitions. Any special instructions for your child can be given to a teacher, who will write them in our log book.

When picking up your child, please be on time. If we are in the play yard for dismissal, a teacher will assist with opening the gate to ensure the teacher is aware of who is coming and going. Please do not leave infants or valuables unattended in your car.

LBNS will ensure that any child receiving care at the child care center is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual whom the parent/guardian has authorized in writing (as indicated on the registration form) to pick up the child.

If the person who regularly picks up your child is unable to do so, please inform the Supervisor as soon as possible of the individual to whom the child is to be released. Photo identification is required and will be checked by teachers if the individual is unknown to them.

If LBNS Staff are unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g. emergency contacts) by 12:15 pm / 4:15 pm, they will follow the procedures set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children. LBNS Staff will contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) and follow their direction regarding next steps.

If you are more than 5 minutes late picking up your child on more than two occasions, an additional \$25.00 fee will be charged. Teachers need adequate time to clean and prepare activities for the next group of children, so it is important that children are picked up on time.

NEW ENROLLMENT STUDENT SETTLE-DOWN PROCEDURE

To ensure that all new students have a smooth transition into the school environment and in the event that a student is having difficulty settling in, the following steps will be implemented to provide individualized support and make adjustments as needed.

1. Observe: During the first two program days, teachers will closely observe the child's behaviour, reactions and emotional responses to better understand how they are adjusting to the new environment. Special attention will be given to signs of distress, such as crying, clinging, or yelling, while teachers work to identify triggers like separation from parents, new routines, or the classroom setting.
2. Communication with Parents: On the first or second day, teachers will send a brief update to parents on the child's response to activities and routines and encourage sharing helpful home strategies. If difficulties persist during the program, the teacher will call parents to inform them of the child's behaviour and emotional responses.
3. Gradual Separation
 - a) Transition Time: For children struggling with separation, offer an early pick-up option, allowing the child to participate for an hour before being picked up.
 - b) Parent Participation: If necessary, allow the parent to stay with the child for a short period (around 15 minutes) during free play until the child feels more comfortable in the class.

4. Meanwhile, teachers will provide a consistent routine, create a visual schedule and offer emotional support and comfort. They will also provide alternative activities or toys to engage the child and if possible, arrange one-on-one engagement to help build trust with both the teachers and other children in the class.

5. Evaluate: If, after consistently following the above strategies for several days, there is no improvement in the child's adjustment, a discussion will be scheduled with the parent to explore alternative strategies. In some cases, a temporary opt-out may be considered with the child placed back on the waitlist as a priority. The fee for the remaining month will be non-refundable, but if the child returns later in the school year, the registration fee will be waived.

This procedure is to help the child feel secure, respected and gradually become accustomed to their new school environment, while providing individualized support based on their unique needs. Open communication with parents is key to ensuring success and the child's emotional well-being will always be a priority.

CLEANING PRACTICES

Teachers will perform daily, weekly, and monthly cleaning and disinfecting tasks, signing off to confirm that these tasks have been completed to help prevent the spread of germs. Teachers will also follow safe handwashing practices as outlined by the Health Department and encourage children to use this method as well. These practices will be reviewed at team meetings and documented. Staff will encourage children to wash their hands during activities such as art projects and toileting. Any toy that is observed entering a child's mouth will be set aside to be washed daily.

CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable clothing that is suitable for physical activity and appropriate for the current weather. Painting smocks are provided during creative activities, but children may get dirty during the program. **Be sure to label all clothing items.** Additionally, please pack an extra set of clothes in your child's backpack in case they need to be changed.

Our center will provide age-appropriate and safe toys for your child. Please do not send toys from home. A pair of indoor shoes, labeled with your child's name, must be kept at school throughout the year.

Please ensure that your child has labeled outdoor wear, such as boots, hats, mittens, and an appropriate jacket/pants, as our program includes outdoor play. Hang all outdoor items on your child's hook in the coat room, with hats and mittens in their sleeves, to make it easier for your child to get ready for outdoor play.

NUTRITION

We offer snacks during both the morning and afternoon sessions, served according to our posted snack schedule. If any changes are made to the posted schedule, these will be posted near the snack schedule on the board as you enter the school. Water will also be provided, and children will be encouraged to serve themselves and clean up their dishes.

If you would like to bring a special treat for your child's birthday or a special occasion, please ensure you inform the class teachers in advance. The food/items must be nut-free, and you are required to provide the ingredients label. Please ensure the treat is from our Acceptable Snack List (peanut-free), which is posted at the entrance.

ALLERGY

Little Blessings takes children's allergies very seriously. We understand that it can be challenging to keep track of foods that are safe for children with allergies, so we ask that no food, except those on our Acceptable Snacks List, be brought into the school for special occasions. Please refrain from sending snacks in your child's backpack, as children may access them when preparing to go outside. Unfortunately, home-baked goods will not be accepted, as per Health Department guidelines.

Some children in the nursery school may have severe allergies that can trigger an anaphylactic reaction, which can be life-threatening. An anaphylactic reaction is so severe that it can lead to death, and it can be triggered by eating, touching, or even inhaling trace amounts of the allergen. Emergency treatment involves an immediate EpiPen injection and a trip to the hospital by ambulance. Parents will be informed of any allergy triggers affecting children enrolled in the program. Our center strives to maintain a NUT-FREE environment. We ask that the entire nursery school community helps ensure these children have a safe learning space by removing any traces of the allergen from hands, faces, and clothing before coming to school and by not bringing anything that may be questionable.

If your child has an allergy, special dietary requirements, or any other health needs, please inform the Supervisor before your child starts in the program, or as soon as you are aware of them, so that plans can be developed and shared with all staff. If your child has dietary restrictions, parents may bring in their own snacks. These must be peanut-free and still in their original packaging, so staff can easily identify them. Please discuss any dietary restrictions with the Supervisor.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events may be offered throughout the year. Please keep an eye on our bulletin boards, read the weekly reminder emails, newsletters, and check our social media for updates and details. From time to time, we may take the children to the garden behind the Church.

PARENT BULLETIN BOARDS & COMMUNICATIONS

Parent bulletin boards are located at the entrance of our school. Here, you will find our daily schedule, upcoming activities, weekly curriculum, newsletters, monthly calendars, holidays, and snack menu.

Teachers will provide information about community events and agencies that support families via email or postings on the parent board. A newsletter will be emailed in September, January, and April. If you would like to post any information to share with other families, please let us know.

As you enter the school, you'll see boards displaying pictures of the children, along with descriptions of activities we've done in the program. Our Program Plan is also displayed here. We encourage you to take the time to read these and enjoy the pictures. Additionally, we display pictures of the children within the program area to create a visual schedule, which helps

with transitions and adds to the enjoyment of the children (they love seeing pictures of themselves!).

If you take pictures of your child enjoying the program, we ask that you avoid including other children in the photos unless you have consent from their parents. Please also refrain from posting these photos on any social media to respect the privacy of others.

Little Blessings creates a slideshow available through Google Drive, which includes pictures of the children in the program. This slideshow is shared with parents at Christmas and Graduation time. We kindly request that you do not share or copy this slideshow onto social media in order to respect the privacy and rights of others.

All media/music usage is documented in each of the classrooms. Parents can request to see this documentation at any time.

Please follow us on our Facebook page [Little Blessings Nursery School](#) and on Instagram [@littleblessingsns](#), where we post pictures of activities, updates on special days, fundraising, and photos of our space. Children's photos will not be posted on social media without written consent from a parent/caregiver.

Our license is posted at the entrance of the school. If you wish to see the detailed copy, it is available for your review or can be accessed on the Durham Region website under the Early Learning section.

We are also required to post any serious occurrences that may affect the program on the licensing board to support transparency with parents. A serious occurrence could include an injury to a child, fire, disaster on-site, or a complaint about service standards. The Serious Occurrence Notification will protect personal information and privacy. It will be posted for 10 days and does not necessarily indicate that the center is out of compliance or that a child is at risk. Longer-term actions will be included to prevent similar incidents in the future.

MEDICATION

If medications are to be administered to a child during school hours, a Medication Administration Form must be completed. The medication must be prescribed, with the child's name, times of administration, and dosages clearly labeled on the container. The expiry date, as well as instructions for storage and administration, must also be included. The medication must be handed directly to the Supervisor, and the necessary forms must be filled out and signed by both the parent and Supervisor to confirm the prescribed times and dosages.

Please inform us ahead of time if medication needs to be administered, as this procedure takes time. Arrival time is very busy, and it is difficult to complete these steps during that period. For allergy-related medications, a plan agreed upon by the teachers, parents, and the child's doctor must be documented in full. Each situation is unique, so please discuss your child's specific needs before leaving medication with the teachers.

All teachers will sign these plans, and they will be posted in each room. Plans for children with an anaphylactic allergy will be reviewed monthly and must be signed off by the parent/caregiver and Supervisor.

Please do not store any medication in your child's backpack in the coat room, as children have access to these bags when we are preparing to go outside.

INJURY

If a child is injured during the program, teachers will complete an "Accident Report" and discuss the incident with the child's parent. The form will be signed by the teacher, supervisor, and parent. A copy of the form will be provided to the parents, and another copy will be kept in the child's file. Parents are responsible for any expenses incurred due to emergencies, illness, or accidents, including financial costs.

SAFETY

The teachers will consistently adhere to the guidelines for supervising children. They will regularly inspect areas and items the children are using for any sharp or broken objects that could cause harm. Inspections of any area the children will use will be conducted according to the designated checklist in the policy for that specific area.

At Little Blessings Nursery School (LBNS), only individuals who have completed a full orientation, police check, health assessment, and have read the policy and procedures manual will be allowed to interact with the children. Pictures of these individuals are posted on the board as you enter the school. Qualified staff, including those maintaining the required ratios, will have current First Aid, Infant and Child CPR training, and Occupational Health and Safety training. Other individuals who require access to the program area, such as professionals from outside agencies, repair personnel, community helpers, and inspectors, will be asked to sign in the logbook. These individuals will not have physical contact with the children, although they may engage with the children under the supervision of a staff member. Written consent from a parent is required for any professional conducting assessments on children.

The entrance doors to Little Blessings are locked at 9:30 am and 1:45 pm. Interior classroom doors remain closed, and teachers are trained to always be aware of the door areas. Children are instructed to only go through the classroom doors with a teacher or parent/guardian. Stop signs are posted to remind the children of this rule and serve as a teaching tool.

Parents will be notified of any serious occurrences reported to the Ministry of Education, and the details will be posted for 10 days. Additionally, if the school experiences an outbreak, families will be informed about any infectious diseases.

IMMUNIZATION

The Supervisor is responsible for reviewing children's immunization records to ensure they are up to date. Any child who is not fully immunized will not be permitted to start in the program unless the parent provides a Statement of Medical Exemption signed by a regulated health professional, or a Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief signed by a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits. In the event of an outbreak of a disease for which a child is not immunized, the parent will be contacted, and the child will be excluded from the program as per the recommendations of the Health Department.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

During the winter months, the school may be closed if the weather conditions are deemed hazardous. LBNS staff will assess conditions both at the start of the school day and at pick-up time to determine if it is safe for the children to be at school.

Closures will be based on local school bus cancellations, public school closures, local town facility closures, and weather reports. If the school is closed due to inclement weather, the closure will be posted on our social media pages, and an email will be sent to inform parents of the cancellation. The closure message will be sent by **7:30 am** on the day in question.

- a) If local schools and buses are not canceled, but conditions still warrant a closure, the decision will be made by the **Board** and **Supervisor**. This may be initiated by the Supervisor contacting a Board member (preferably the president) or by a Board member contacting others and then informing the Supervisor. Once a decision is made, the **Supervisor** will send an email to parents, or contact them by phone as soon as possible.
- b) If the weather begins favorably but turns hazardous during the day, the school may close following the same protocol. In this case, staff will contact parents by phone to inform them of the school's closure. Parents are required to pick up their child or arrange for an approved delegate to do so.

SUN PROTECTION

When possible, activities will be carried out in shaded areas to minimize children's exposure to direct sunlight. Teachers will monitor weather reports for humidity, high UV index, or smog alerts. Sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher that provides protection from both UVA and UVB rays must be applied to children before coming to school, as Little Blessings does not apply sunscreen. Sunscreen should be applied to all exposed areas as per the manufacturer's instructions. A hat and clothing that covers the shoulders will also help reduce sun exposure. Please do not leave sunscreen products in your child's backpack in the coat room.

WEST NILE/INSECT REPELLENT

West Nile virus is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito and can cause illness ranging from mild flu-like symptoms to severe neurological issues. During the warmer months of the West Nile season, teachers will take precautions to minimize the risk. Teachers will limit the time that children spend outside when mosquitoes are present and will drain any standing pools of water in the play yard daily to prevent mosquitoes from breeding.

When the risk of exposure is high, parents are asked to dress children in clothes that cover exposed skin, including socks and a hat (no sandals or open shoes). Light-colored clothing is recommended.

Parents are encouraged to apply personal insect repellent containing up to 10% concentration of DEET to their children before coming to school, following the manufacturer's instructions. Little Blessings does not apply insect repellent to children. Please do not leave insect repellent products in your child's backpack in the coat room.

FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION

An emergency situation could involve anything that poses a threat to life, health, or property. Little Blessings Nursery School (LBNS) has policies and procedures in place to address emergency situations within or near our school. Teachers and volunteers have been trained to handle these scenarios.

In accordance with Fire and Safety Regulations, fire drills are held monthly and are documented. The procedure for these drills is posted at the entrances of the school.

In the event of an Emergency Evacuation, the children will be relocated to Sinclair Secondary School located at 380 Taunton Rd E, Phone # 905-666-5400. If an emergency or evacuation occurs, parents will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so. We ask that parents follow the directions of emergency personnel to ensure the proper procedure is carried out safely.

SMOKE FREE POLICY

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, we ask that everyone (including teachers, volunteers, and caregivers) refrain from smoking in any area of our school or church property. Additionally, we ask that the Whitby city by-law be followed, which prohibits smoking within 15 meters (50 feet) of the play yard or school entrance, as these areas are considered public spaces.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The **Child and Family Services Act** mandates that any person in Ontario must immediately report to a Children's Aid Society (CAS) if they believe a child may have been abused or is at risk of abuse. The Act further clarifies that individuals who work with children have a legal responsibility to report any suspicion of child abuse immediately. Professionals who fail to report a suspicion of abuse can be charged and fined.

At **Little Blessings Nursery School (LBNS)**, all teachers are required to contact CAS if they suspect abuse. This is part of our commitment to safeguarding the well-being of every child. It is not the responsibility of individuals working with children to determine whether abuse has occurred. Rather, it is the duty of the CAS, in collaboration with police if needed, to investigate the suspicion and decide on the appropriate course of action.

PARENTS' ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and to regularly discuss their child(ren)'s experiences within the program. In alignment with our program statement, we promote positive and responsive interactions among children, parents/guardians, child care providers, and staff, fostering ongoing communication and engagement with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are always available to engage parents/guardians in meaningful conversations and support a positive experience during each interaction.

Any issues or concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the staff and supervisor, and we will work diligently to address any concerns in a timely manner. We strive to resolve concerns to the satisfaction of all parties involved, as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Concerns or issues can be brought forward either verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally or in writing, upon request, and will respect the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to any issue or concern will be provided within 2 business days. The person who raised the concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process. Investigations into concerns will be conducted in a fair, impartial, and respectful manner.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be handled with confidentiality, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students, and volunteers, unless disclosure is required for legal reasons (e.g., to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities, or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider, or staff member feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or Board Chair.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is legally required to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If a parent/guardian expresses concerns about a child being abused or neglected, they will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS, as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit: [Reporting Abuse](#)

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

Reporting Concerns about Program Conduct

Any concerns about the conduct of the program, staff, volunteers, or students that may put a child's health, safety, or well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as the parent/guardian becomes aware of the situation.

Procedures when Parental Concern is Raised

When a parent or guardian raises a concern about any aspect of the program, staff, or their child's experience at Little Blessings Nursery School, the following steps will be followed to address the concern:

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
General, Centre- or Operations-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the supervisor or Board Chair	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address the Concern Immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If possible, address the issue or concern at the time it is raised. ○ If immediate resolution is not possible, arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian within 2 business days to discuss the concern. 2. Documenting the Concern: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The issue/concern will be documented in detail, including:
Staff, Supervisor, and/or Licensee Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the individual directly or - the supervisor or Board Chair	

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Student- / Volunteer-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the supervisor and/or Board Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Date and time the issue/concern was received. ■ Name of the person who received the issue/concern. ■ Name of the person reporting the issue/concern. ■ Details of the issue/concern raised by the parent/guardian. ■ Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern, including information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referrals. ■ Contact information for the appropriate person, in case the person being notified is unable to address the matter at the time. <p>3. Investigation of the Concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The investigation of the issue/concern will be initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days, or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. ○ Reasons for any delays will be documented in writing to ensure transparency. <p>4. Resolution or Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Once the issue/concern has been addressed, a resolution or outcome will be provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the concern. ○ If the issue has not been fully resolved, the parent/guardian will be informed of the steps being taken to address it. <p>5. Confidentiality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All concerns will be treated with confidentiality and respect for privacy, and information will only be shared with those involved in resolving the issue or when required by law.

Escalation of Issues or Concerns:

If parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or resolution of an issue or concern, they may escalate the matter, either verbally or in writing, to the Board of Directors.

Issues or concerns related to compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be directed to the Ministry of Education’s Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues or concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies, such as the local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, or the College of Early Childhood Educators.

CONTACTS

Mandi Tang – RECE Supervisor email: littleblessingsns@live.ca 905-655-4534

Joan Emode- President/Chair Board of Directors email: lbnschair@gmail.com

RESOURCES

College of Early Childhood Educators: <https://www.college-ece.ca/en>

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care: Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

[Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS)

[The Children's Services Division](#) (CSD)

Children's Developmental & Behavioral Supports: (provides behaviour supports to children and their educators in licensed child care and to parents of children with special needs.) 905-668-7711 Ext. 2829

behaviouralsupports@durham.ca

[Infant and Child Development Program:](#) (provides service for infants and young children who have developmental concerns or special needs.) 905-668-7711 Ext. 2971

[Grandview Children's Centre:](#) (offers general room and child specific consultation and services to support successful inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care programs.) **Preschool Outreach Program, Grandview Children's Centre:** 905-728-1673 Ext. 2521

[Resources for Exceptional Children and Youth Durham Region:](#) (offers general programs and services to support children two to 12 years of age with an identified need.):905-427-8862 Ext. 357 info@rfecydurham.com

Through [Surrey Place](#), the **Blind-Low Vision Early Intervention Program** provides early intervention and support to children birth to six years with a diagnosed visual impairment. 1-888-703-5437

[Special Needs Resourcing package:](#) (Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) services are administered by the Regional Municipality of Durham, Children's services Division using provincial funding and guidelines. SNR services are provided by five agencies and support the inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care programs at no cost to families).