



Little Red Apple
Learning CentersSM

CENTER POLICIES



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Please read our policies entirely before you enroll your child into our program.

Little Red Apple Learning Centers reserves the right to modify center policies and tuition rates when necessary. Parents are responsible for maintaining a current copy of the center policies. Copies are available online and at the center. Questions, concerns, and inquiries, should be addressed to the center's director.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Little Red Apple Learning Centers admits children of any race, color, national and ethnic origin. Little Red Apple Learning Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its admission and educational policies.

AMENDMENTS TO HANDBOOK

This handbook is subject to changes/amendments at any time at the discretion of the Center's administration. If changes/amendments are made, parents/guardians will be notified promptly.

MANUAL OF REQUIREMENTS

Our Center is required by the State of New Jersey to abide by the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers, (Chapter 22 of the New Jersey Administration Code), and to act in accordance and fulfillment, with its requirements.

The Manual is distributed by the New Jersey, Department of Human Services', Division of Youth and Family Services, Bureau of Licensing, CN 717, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, (609)292-9220; and is available to the public at a nominal charge.

Should you feel that our Center, or staff, does not act in accordance or is in violation of the Manual of Requirements, you may either notify the Center's director, or a staff member, or you may write or call the Bureau of Licensing, of the Division of Youth and Family Services.

DEAR PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

In keeping with New Jersey's child care center licensing requirements, we are obliged to provide you, as the parent/guardian of a child enrolled at our center, with this informational statement.

The statement highlights, among other things: your right to visit and observe our center at any time without having to secure prior permission; the center's obligation to be licensed and to comply with licensing standards; and the obligation of all citizens to report suspected child abuse/neglect/exploitation to the State's Division of Youth and Family Services, (DYFS).

Please read this statement carefully and, if you feel you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 201-338.3481.

John F. Portscher, Executive Director
Little Red Apple Learning Centers

GENERAL AUTHORIZATION

Upon enrollment at Little Red Apple Learning Centers you are granting permission for your child to:

- Take part in all program activities including the use of all indoor and outdoor equipment.
- Be photographed or videotaped in connection with daily program activities, and have these images displayed in the center, on our website, [www.Little Red Apple Learning Centers.com](http://www.LittleRedAppleLearningCenters.com), social media, (including, but not limited to: Facebook, Instagram), print advertisements, promotional materials, and for the personal use of enrolled families.
- To insure the safety and security of our children, families, and staff, Little Red Apple Learning Centers will not publish/post photographs/videos that include/display personal information relating to the names, addresses, etc. of our children, families, and staff.

- Parent/guardian(s) who do not wish their child(ren) to be photographed/videographed or to appear on our website or social media must submit their request in writing to the director.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

- At Little Red Apple Learning Centers you are not just considered a client, but an invaluable member of our “family”.
- Our centers are a place where you and your family are always welcomed, appreciated, and valued.
- We encourage you to speak to your child’s teacher regularly, and to work together to identify the best possible solutions and strategies for a successful and pleasurable experience for your child(ren), that will have an enduring effect on them, and will foster a lifelong love for learning.
- Parents are welcomed, invited, and encouraged to visit the center at any time, without advanced notification.
- You may participate in our classroom activities, play with your child on the playground, or have lunch together.
- Family members and friends are also welcome to visit the center, however we request that you provide us with advance notification. If the visitor is not listed on your child’s enrollment application, you must provide written authorization prior to the visit, and the visitor(s) must be prepared to provide photo identification, if requested.

COMMUNICATION

- The key to the success of our efforts is to openly speak about any problems, concerns, suggestions, etc., which help to establish the best possible relationship between staff, parents and most importantly, your child. At Little Red Apple Learning Centers we will make every effort to communicate with, and inform our parents/guardians by:
 - Establishing a parent information center, (at the entrance of the center).
 - Maintaining an informative and entertaining website which will provide events, and pertinent information regarding our centers.
 - Publishing a periodic newsletter, (*APPLESAUCE*), which includes happenings at our centers and in the lives of our students and their families, as well as other important child rearing/education, and health topics.
 - Calling for parent/teacher conferences when necessary.
 - Entertaining suggestions, concerns, and inquiries from parents/guardians.

CHANGES OF STATUS

- The Center requests that you immediately contact the staff if any changes of status should occur, (eg. change of address, name, marital status, health condition(s), a recent death in the family, etc.), regarding your child, yourself, or your family.
- The parent/guardian(s) are also responsible to update emergency contact information, pick-up authorizations, and home, work, or cell phone numbers.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Little Red Apple Learning Center respects the privacy of every enrolled child and their family, and will not share information relating them with third parties, with the exception of the *ABCmouse.com* website, representatives of the Bureau of Licensing, (DYFS), local or state health officials, or members of law enforcement with just cause.
- Please note that If your child is involved in an altercation or incident with another child, Little Red Apple Learning Center will not reveal the identity of the other child involved. This policy is consistent with state child care regulations, and we ask all to abide by this important policy and to not interrogate the staff/administration if an incident should occur.

ENROLLMENT APPLICATION/QUESTIONNAIRE

- In order for a child to be enrolled in our program, all parent/guardians are requested to complete an enrollment application/questionnaire. The purpose of this important document provides us with a brief history and background of the individual child and their family unit. The questions should be answered honestly and truthfully to the best of one's knowledge and ability.
- All information regarding personal, family, health, etc. pertaining to your child or your family, will be upheld in the strictest of confidence and reviewed only by the staff members of our center, an agent or representative of the Bureau of Licensing, (DYFS), local or state health officials, or members of law enforcement with just cause. It is very important to update any changes to your child's application, and to maintain a current record of information with the center. Please contact the director or any staff member with any changes. (See: **CHANGES OF STATUS**).

CENTER HOURS OF OPERATION

- The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, 12 months of the year, with the exception of the following holidays:

Labor Day
Columbus Day
Thanksgiving Recess (2 Days)
*Christmas Recess (2 Days)
*New Year's Day
Dr. Martin Luther King Day
President's Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Independence Day

- * The Center will close at 4:00 pm on both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.
- Accounts will not be credited for holidays. This policy is adopted by most child care centers and helps the center to stabilize operating expenses.
- The Center closes at **PRECISELY 6:00 PM**.
- Additional fees will be assessed at \$1.00 per minute of tardiness, with **NO EXCEPTIONS**.
- Late pick-up fees will be **IMMEDIATELY** charged to your account.

Tardiness is unacceptable, irresponsible and highly discourteous to our staff, and creates an uncomfortable situation for all, including your child. If you should be detained and unable to pick up your child on time, please call the center immediately with other arrangements.

- If a child should remain in the center after 6:30 PM, without verbal contact from the parent/guardian(s), the staff will:
 1. Proceed to call the parent/guardian(s) at 15 minute intervals.
 2. Proceed to call secondly, the authorized individual to pick up the child in the absence of the parents/guardians.
 3. Proceed to call the “alternate”, if no response from the parent/guardian, or individual secondly responsible.
 4. At exactly 7:00 PM, proceed to make one final contact attempt, and if to no avail:
 5. Proceed to call the Division of Youth and Family Services’, State Central Registry Hotline, (DYFS), 24-hour child abuse hotline to seek further assistance in caring for the child. (1-877-652-2873).

WEATHER & EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

- In the event of inclement weather the center may not open or have a delayed opening.
- In inclement weather, or other emergency situation, every effort will be made to keep the center open. If the center must close, we will call/text parents/guardians and post notification(s) on our Facebook/Instagram pages, in addition to the *HiMama* app.
- In the event of an emergency, the center director or designee will evacuate the building, (if necessary), and parents/guardian(s) will be notified by phone/text and required to pick up their children A.S.A.P.
- If our center closes due to the weather, utility outage, or other emergency situation, regular tuition charges will apply.

POLICY ON DISCIPLINE

- Our Center will ALWAYS use positive discipline to guide, encourage, and support children.
- Positive discipline helps children learn how to interact with others and develop self control. It begins with adult behavior: good limit-setting and clear communication of these limits. This includes teaching more appropriate behavior, giving cues for new behavior, giving choices, and supporting children in their new behavior.
- Staff will manage typical discipline encounters with helpful, positive solutions such as redirection, distraction, active listening, conflict resolution, and recognizing and helping the child to deal with strong emotions.
- We strive to recognize signs of anxiety and stress and to help children learn calming techniques. Our staff is trained to create a positive, secure, and consistent environment for children to learn necessary social and life skills. Positive discipline is designed to teach children to become responsible, respectful, and resourceful.
- We desire to help children feel a sense of connection and belonging. We are kind and firm at the same time, showing respect to the child. We consider what the child is thinking, feeling, and learning and encourage them through the process. Positive discipline is effective long term because it teaches the child important life skills such as respect, concern for others, problem solving, and how to cooperate with others.
- Effective communication and problem-solving skills focus on the solution rather than punishment. We strive to encourage children by noticing their efforts and improvements, not just their successes. Our goal is to help children develop positive self esteem and learn self discipline.

- Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of the behavior management of children. When children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline.
- In overly aggressive or violent situations, the staff will incorporate the immediate, gentle removal of the child(ren), from the conflict/situation, by temporarily isolating them, to protect the child(ren) from harm, or inflicting harm on another, (in a conflict), until the child(ren) calm(s) down and regain(s) a sense of self-control. The staff is instructed not to talk or interfere with the child, during this “cool-off” period, but to keep an extra careful watch over the child. After the child returns to the group, the care giver will make a special point of noticing and praising acceptable behavior and positive attempts or accomplishments. Children will also be taught that violent behavior is incorrect, unacceptable; and will not be tolerated. They will be encouraged to use words rather than physical means, and to ask for a teacher’s help if provoked or struck. Incidents involving injuries will be discussed with the parent/guardian(s), upon pickup of the child, or by telephone, immediately, if the nature of the incident should be of a more serious nature. Excessive aggressive behavior will be discussed with the parent/guardians and may result in further action(s).
- Our Center **ABSOLUTELY, WILL NOT ACCEPT**, any disciplinary practices that could endanger a child’s health and well being, or that could have a damaging psychological effect on such child: **NOR WILL WE ACCEPT OR TOLERATE** any suspected mental, physical or sexual abuse of any child. Any and all suspected situations of child abuse should/will be reported to the Division of Youth and Family Services’, (DYFS), 24 hour child abuse hot line: 1-800-792-8610. The center reserves the right to dismiss any student who demonstrates repeated patterns of excessive or perilous aggression, or if any child severely harms or injures any child, staff member, parent/adult, or destroys any physical property belonging to the center or anyone.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

- For the health of all of our children, employees, and administration, smoking/vaping is prohibited in the building and on the premises.
- All disagreements/disputes must be handled in a calm and respectful manner, with an ever-present awareness of the presence of young children.
- Lewdness, profanity, and use of obscenities will not be tolerated.
- Verbal abuse, combativeness, or improper comments directed toward the staff or administration will result in expungement and possible law enforcement involvement.
- Verbal communication or physical contact with a child, (other than your own), will result in expulsion and possible law enforcement involvement.
- Weapons, fire arms, and ammunition are prohibited in the building and on the premises at all times, unless the possessor is an identified law enforcement officer.

Children will **NOT BE RELEASED** to anyone, who in the judgement of the staff, appear, to be physically, mentally or emotionally impaired, and/or displays evidence of character which may place a child at suspected risk or peril in their immediate company. (See: *POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN*)

FIRE DRILLS

The center will conduct monthly fire drills in accordance with the guidelines as specified for such, in the Manual of Requirements. Information concerning these exercises are part of the center’s records and are accessible to the parent/guardians, as well as state authorized inspectors, upon request. The staff will escort children to the designated areas outside of the building during an exercise, or away from the building in an actual emergency evacuation. (See: *EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS*)

EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS

In the event of an emergency dismissal, the staff will:

1. Evacuate the premises immediately following a rehearsed plan of evacuation.
2. Escort children away from any hazardous condition(s).
3. Follow an outline of procedures for any injured or sick child.
4. Continuously attempt to contact parent/guardian(s), to inform them of the condition(s) and where they can pick-up their child.
5. Work in accordance with local health and safety officials to insure safe and comfortable quarters/conditions for the children until the children are in the custody of the parent/guardian(s).

FORMS

Our website, www.littleredapplelearningcenters.com includes all of the center's applications forms, and policies. If you are missing any forms or wish to update your status/information, you may retrieve these forms online or request physical copies at the Center's reception area or from any staff member.

PHOTOS/VIDEO

- The center will regularly take photos and video of enrolled children during the course of the school year, especially during holidays, parties, field trips, etc. Duplicate photographs are usually made available to parent/guardians for a nominal charge or free of charge.
- As part of your enrollment package, a permission photo/video form must be completed for your child to participate. These photos/videos may be included on our website or other social media, or displayed "in open view" in our centers.
- All photos/videos are the property of the center and will be solely for center use.

SECURITY

Little Red Apple Learning Centers strives to keep all of the children in our care and staff members, as safe as possible.

- The front entrance doors are equipped with an electronic buzzer entry system in which the staff can visually identify visitors and selectively allow persons to enter.
- An intercom system is also installed to assess visitors' identities and purpose of visit.
- Strategically placed CCTV video surveillance cameras throughout the premises which digitally record, 24-hours a day.

Our Center utilizes an electronic app called *OpenPath*, which parents/guardians can activate from smart phones, tablets or the *AppleWatch*, to gain entry into the Center simply by touching the touch-pad outside of the doors.* The app will accurately and securely record time-stamped entrances to the Center through either the MAIN ENTRANCE DOOR, (North William Street) or at the SIDE ENTRANCE DOOR, (Bradley Avenue).

Your child's teacher or any staff member can provide you with instructions on how to setup/access our system.

Parents/guardians or others that enter are instructed **NOT to HOLD THE DOOR for ANYONE, EVEN IF YOU RECOGNIZE OTHER PARENTS/GUARDIANS** when entering or exiting the center. When multiple

families enter the building at the same time it does not allow the system to individually record (time-stamp) the drop-off times.

*Parents/Guardians must download the *OpenPath* app from the *App/Google Play Store* and register with the front desk.

CCTV VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

- Our centers are equipped with CCTV video surveillance cameras inside the classrooms and outside on the playground. The surveillance system is to monitor center activities by the students, employees and administration.
- At this time, the video images are not accessible outside of the center, but we are working to eventually broadcast them over the Internet in the near future, so that parents/guardians can securely access them.
- Please be assured that in accordance with the law, cameras and video recording is never permitted in the rest rooms or diaper changing stations.

REGISTRATION FEE

- A **non-refundable** registration fee of \$100 per child or \$150 per family (2 or more children) is required before a child enters the program. The registration fee will cover application processing and educational materials.
- Upon registration, and throughout enrollment, parents must notify the center in writing of any special needs, including but not limited to: allergies, medical conditions, dietary restrictions, disabilities or handicaps, as well as any changes in status or other concern that could affect your child(ren).

TUITION

1. Tuition is **DUE IN ADVANCE OF YOUR CHILD'S ATTENDANCE**, and can be paid weekly, biweekly, or monthly as long as it is in advance.
2. Tuition payments are due on Fridays, 1 week in advance.
3. A grace period may be granted until Tuesday of the following week, however, a \$10 late fee per day will be assessed for each day after Friday and added to your account.
4. Accounts that are one week in arrears will be suspended, and the child(ren) will not be able to attend until the account is brought current. The Center reserves the right to place suspended students on a waiting list.
5. Tuition is paid by ***TUITION EXPRESS**, (Auto electronic bank debit), **CASH, CHECK, MONEY ORDER** or **CREDIT/DEBIT CARD**, Credit/debit payments will incur an additional fee of 3%.
6. Checks returned **UNPAID** from your bank will result in a \$35 fee that is **IMMEDIATELY** added to your account.
7. **ABSOLUTELY NO CREDIT SITUATION WILL BE PERMITTED!**
8. All tuition charges are due and payable **REGARDLESS** of holidays, vacations or illness. The director must be informed of any scheduled vacations or extended absence in advance. (See: **VACATIONS**).
9. Tuition payment policies/late fees **ALSO APPLY** to parent/guardian(s) on government childcare assistance/subsidy programs, (eg. Urban League), who are responsible for co-payments.*

- 10. The weekly tuition includes: all educational materials, except workbooks
 - 11. Year-end statements for tax purposes will be made available, upon request.
 - It is strongly recommended that a child attend, at least a minimum of three days, to insure the maximum benefit of the program.
 - The center requires at least two weeks written notice or verbal confirmation before a child is withdrawn from the program. (See: *WITHDRAWING*)
- * Failure to make timely tuition copayments may result in termination not only from our center, but also from the Urban League or other subsidy program(s).

*Parents/Guardians who utilize **TUITION EXPRESS**, (Auto electronic bank debit), will be required to fill out the form on our website: www.littleredapplelearningcenters.com under the "FORMS" tab. A \$1.00 transaction fee will be added additionally to the weekly tuition rate for those uses **TUITION EXPRESS**.

Tuition Rate Schedule



TUITION RATES 2022/2023

Days Per Week	30-48 Months	Part-Time (4 hours p/day)
5 DAYS	\$250	\$200
4 DAYS	\$220	\$175
3 DAYS	\$180	\$140
Days Per Week	4-6 Years Old	Part-Time (4 hours p/day)
5 DAYS	\$225	\$175
4 DAYS	\$200	\$150
3 DAYS	\$165	\$125
Days Per Week	Afterschool	Summer Camp
5 DAYS	\$100	\$175
4 DAYS	\$85	\$125
3 DAYS	\$75	\$110

Tuition payments may be made in cash, check, or through our electronic portal:



FEES

Tuition is due weekly on Fridays and a late fee of \$25 will be assessed if payment is received after the following Monday

TUITION EXPRESS Fee	\$1. p/transaction
Credit/Debit Payments	3% service fee
Return Check Fee	\$35
Late Pick-up Fee	\$1 p/minute
One-time Registration Fee	\$100 (1 Child) - \$150 p/family (2 or more children)
Sibling Discount	10% off lowest tuition rate
School Closings	\$15 p/day (in addition to tuition)
School Half-days	\$20 (in addition to tuition)
Drop-in Care (School-aged)	\$45 p/day (unregistered)

- It is strongly recommended that a child attend, at least a minimum of three days, to insure the maximum benefit of the program.
- The center requires at least two weeks written notice or verbal confirmation before a child is withdrawn from the program. (See: *WITHDRAWING*)

ABSENCES

- Our center policy does not provide tuition refunds or reductions for absences due to illness or other reason. This policy is standard with most childcare centers, in order to maintain operating expenses.
- If your child will have an extended period of absence, (2 weeks or more), we suggest that you dis-enroll and begin anew, provided space is available. (Check with the director. Re-registration fees will apply).
- As a courtesy, we request that you call the center to inform us if your child will be absent. Your notification allows our teachers to begin the daily activities on time and eases our concern for your child's well-being.

VACATIONS

- Although clients are contractually responsible for year-round tuition payments, the center will grant a one week credit to all, for vacations. The credit will be granted at the discretion of the director. All enrolled families are eligible following these guidelines:
 1. The child must be in attendance for at least 12 consecutive weeks.
 2. All tuition, registration fees, etc. must be current.
 3. Only one credit will be issued per calendar year, at least 12 weeks from the child's first day of attendance, and not before.
 4. All credit inquiries require a two week notice and all must fill out a **VACATION REQUEST FORM**.
 5. The director reserves the exclusive right of denial.
 6. All credits to be assigned, will be credited on a pro rata schedule of 5 consecutive weeks.*

*A one week tuition credit reflects a five day school week. You will be credited one day per week, for five consecutive weeks.

Example: If you take a **ONE WEEK VACATION**, and your tuition is \$250 p/week, you will owe 1 week of tuition, (payable before you leave), and receive one week free which will be credited one day per week for five weeks. Thus, you will pay \$200 for five weeks instead of the regular \$250 tuition rate. Upon your return, your tuition rate will be adjusted to \$200 for the next five weeks, to reflect your credit.

We apologize for any confusion, but this policy helps the center to stabilize the center's financial condition when vacation season arrives and many are taken at the same time, which has a substantial impact on the center's finances.

Please note that extended absences will result in re-registration, (plus the fee), and may result in your enrollment status being placed on a waiting list.

ARRIVING AT THE CENTER

- Your child must be escorted into the building every morning, signed in and taken to their classroom, by a parent/guardian, or person at least 18 years of age.
- The parent/guardian or substitute should hang up the child's coat/jacket, book bag/backpack, remove his/her boots, (when necessary), and place their labeled lunch and snack bag/box on top of their cubby.

SIGN-IN/OUT

- A daily sign-in/out book will be made available upon entrance to your child's classroom.
- All parents/guardians or others dropping off/picking up children **MUST SIGN IN/OUT!**
- This procedure is in accordance with a state mandate and **MUST BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO**. Please inform any person(s) other than yourself, who will drop off or pick up your child to abide by this very necessary and most important requirement. Kindly inform the staff if you need assistance with signing in/out your child.

Persons who are not registered or listed on the *RELEASE FORM*, who wish to pickup a child(ren), will be asked for photo identification and **MUST** consent to having their identification photo-copied/scanned and retained in the child's file.

CLASSROOM PLACEMENT

- Upon enrollment, your child will be placed in the appropriate classroom based upon his or her chronological age.
- For brief periods of time in the early morning and late afternoon, certain age groups may be combined.
- Your child's advancement to the next classroom will be based on his or her chronological age, developmental readiness, and availability of space.
- To help children feel comfortable in new classroom placements, they are introduced to the new classroom teacher and visit the new classroom for short periods of time in the weeks preceding the transition.

If, you child's teacher does not feel that your child is developmentally ready for the transition, you will be notified and a conference will be called to discuss further options.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Little Red Apple Learning Centers may exclude children with disabilities from our program if their presence would pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others or require a fundamental alteration of our program; or if their handicap/condition would require special equipment, more individualized personal attention, or additional staff training in caring for them.

Parent/Guardians who suspect their child to have a learning disability or developmental problem or abnormality, or any other disability should consult with their pediatrician or visit <http://www.nj.gov/health/fhs/eis/>, the State of New Jersey's Early Intervention Outreach Resource.

CURRICULUM

- Our curriculum is a thematic,(based on themes), year-round proprietary program, which we call, *AppleCore®*, that integrates math, language arts, science and technology, with a balance of basic skills, arts and crafts, and musical and movement experiences. The curriculum is further enhanced by local outings, field trips and visits from 'special guests' and performers. Students may also assigned workbooks, (at the teacher's discretion), and occasional homework assignments. (See: *HOMEWORK*)

ASSESSMENT

- Daily observation of your child's participation in classroom activities provides us with insight about his/ her developmental growth.

- Observations/progress reports are recorded on monthly checklists, and filed in your child's personal assessment portfolio. This file is kept in your child's classroom and is always available for your review.
- Extraordinary, unusual accomplishments, or behavioral issues will be immediately discussed with the parent/guardian(s).

DAILY SCHEDULE



7:00-9:00	Arrival, Free play (Unstructured)
9:00-9:30	Breakfast/Clean-up
9:30-10:00	Circle Time
10:00-10:30	Outdoor Play/Gym (Exercise)/Gross Motor/Yoga
10:30-11:00	Class 1
11:00-11:30	Class 2
11:30-11:45	Clean-up, toileting, lunch prep
11:45-12:15	Lunch
12:15-12:30	Clean-up, toileting, rest/sleep prep
12:30-2:30	Rest/sleep
2:30-3:00	Clean-up, toileting
3:00-3:20	Snack
3:20-4:00	Outdoor Play/Gym (Exercise)/Gross Motor/Yoga
4:00-4:30	Class 3
4:30-5:00	Class 4
5:00-6:00	Free Play (Unstructured), Video/Computer, Dismissal

FOOD

- The Center will serve Breakfast (9:00 a.m.), Lunch, (11:45 a.m.), and an afternoon Snack, (3:00 p.m.)
- Should you feel, that your child will need a pre-breakfast snack, please feed them at home.
- Parents/guardians will supply all food.
- All children are encouraged to eat but will not be forced or coerced if they should resist or are reluctant to eat something on our menu. Caregivers will do their best to alert parents/guardians of their child's eating habits.
- While we can certainly understand the urge to accommodate your child's likes and dislikes for certain foods and we invite and entertain the idea of sending your child with a home-prepared lunch, we do not recommend including processed or frozen foods which are high in fat and/or cholesterol, sugar and sodium, and are nutritionally deficient and are not the best choice(s) for your child. We also suggest that

beverages which contain excessive sugars or artificial sweeteners or colorings/ flavorings be avoided.

- Soda, sugary drinks, and glass bottled beverages are **NOT PERMITTED**.
- We strongly suggest that all children participate in our food programs and the staff reserves the right to reject any food or beverages which we deem to be unhealthy, nutritionally deficient, or dangerous.
- Please consult with the director or any staff member for any dietary food concerns.

ALLERGENS

- Parents of children with allergies should consult with their physician and with the center director to properly assess the child's needs, and his/her ability to participate in our program. Students with allergies must have an 'Allergy Action Plan' on file. The Center will make a concerted effort in the presence of a nut, shellfish, latex, etc. allergy by immediately informing all staff and parents/guardians.

REST/SLEEP

- It is imperative, and state mandated, that all children in our care, shall rest or sleep, to replenish their energy levels, both physically and mentally, from a complete educational and physical schedule.
- The rest period will commence at approximately 12:30 thru 2:30.
- All students who attend 4, or more, hours daily, will be required to participate.
- Children will be encouraged to rest/sleep, and will **NEVER BE FORCED** to rest or sleep.
- Children who do not fall asleep are provided with quiet opportunities
- The center will provide a cot and sheet.
- We recommend that parent/guardian(s) bring a small pillow, blanket, and a comfort item from home.
- The center will keep a supply of additional blankets and sheets on hand, but not pillows.
- The center will clean and maintain all cots and sheets. Pillows and blankets will be returned on Fridays to the parent/guardian(s), for laundering. (See: *CLOTHING AND BLANKETS*)
- Soft music and dim lights help the children with the transition to the rest period.
- We encourage the parent/guardian(s), to establish and to adhere to a regular, consistent bedtime routine, to insure overall good sleep habits.

POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN

- All parents/guardians of enrolled children will be required to fill out a release form as part of our application for admission. This most important document will secure the release, (pickup), of your child(ren) to whomever you so designate, in your absence. Our staff wholly abides by the contents of this document and will only release your child to persons listed on the form. As a security precaution, our staff reserves the right to ask for identification credentials from anyone who is unfamiliar to them, and also to question the individual(s) at their discretion. Parent/guardian(s) are advised to communicate with the staff in advance if they are unable to pickup their child(ren), and to inform their designated substitute that they are to carry at least 1 form of photo identification, and to expect to be questioned.

The center **WILL NOT**:

1. Release a child(ren) to anyone who is not listed on the release form.
2. Release any child to anyone, including those listed on this form, who can not provide proof of identification if requested by a staff member.
3. Release any child to anyone **UNDER THE AGE OF 18** without a signed request by the parent/guardian and the approval of the director.
4. Release any child to anyone, including those listed on this form, who in the judgement of the staff member(s), appear(s), to be physically, mentally or emotionally impaired, and/or displays evidence of character which may place a child at suspected risk or peril in their immediate company.
5. Children will be released to both parents **ONLY** if both parent's signatures appear on the release form.
6. Substitutions, additions and changes should be made in person, and in advance.
7. Substitutions, additions and changes can be made by phone only if the staff member can ascertain the verbal identity of the parent/guardian.
8. A parent can not delete their spouse from a signed release form without official documentation from a judge, state agency, police department, etc., and Little Red Apple Learning Centers **WILL NOT** be held responsible in custody, separation, and divorce proceedings, without such documentation.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS/ILLNESS

• In accordance with the Health Requirements, (Subchapter 7; 10:122-7.1), of the Manual Requirements for Child Care Centers, and in the interest and for the benefit and protection of your child and all children in attendance at our center, we can not admit/retain, a child(ren), who has/have:

1. An oral temperature of 101.5 or a body temperature over 100.5 degrees
2. 2 bouts of diarrhea or bloody diarrhea
3. Acute vomiting, (two or more episodes)
4. Sore throat or a severe cough
5. Red or pink eyes with discharge
6. Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
7. Skin infection(s) or rashes
8. Difficult or rapid breathing, or severe coughing
9. Untreated skin lesions (bleeding)
10. Swollen joints
11. Enlarged lymph nodes (glands)
12. Stiff neck
13. Blood in urine
14. Mouth Sores with drooling

The Center will also not admit/retain any child displaying the symptoms or possessing the following communicable diseases(s):

1. Chicken Pox
 2. German Measles
 3. Hemophilus Influenzae
 4. Measles
 5. Meningococcus
 6. Mumps
 7. Strep Throat
 8. Tuberculosis
 9. Whooping Cough
 10. Giardialamblia
 11. Hepatitis A
 12. Salmonella
 13. Shigella
 14. Impetigo
 15. Lice
 16. Scabies
- Overall, the center will not retain any child who is not feeling well or is thought to be contagious to other children/staff, in the estimation of at least two staff members. A child who is ill should not be sent to the center until he/she is able to participate fully in the program and is no longer contagious. Parents must remove their infirmed child from the center as expeditiously as possible and insure that they have alternate arrangements if they can not personally pickup their child. Our students will stay much healthier if parents are conscientious and responsible and keep their children at home until symptoms have abated. It is a **requirement/obligation** to notify the center **immediately**, if your child can not attend due to illness. Children who have recuperated from a contagious disease must secure a note from their doctor/pediatrician when returning.

IMMUNIZATIONS/HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

- All children who enter the center, or return after an absence, must submit a copy of their most recent immunization, (inoculation), record and proof of a recent, (within one month), physical health examination. New Jersey state regulations regarding immunizations and health examinations are:
 1. Six months prior to admission , for children who are 2 1/2 of age or younger or one year prior to admission, a child 2 1/2 years of age or older, shall have a health examination performed by a licensed physician.
 2. An up-to-date immunization record, appropriate to the child's age or documentation that the child is under a prescribed medical program to obtain immunizations in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 8:57-4 **MUST** be presented at the time of enrollment.

3. Any child whose parent objects to the physical examination, immunizations or medical treatment for his/her child on grounds that it conflicts with the tenets and practice of a recognized religion of which the parent or child is an adherent member, shall be exempt from complying with such requirements, provided that the parent(s) submits to the center upon admission, a signed written statement that such, interferes with the free exercise of the child's religious rights.*
4. The center shall obtain a written statement from each child's parent/guardian, indicating that the child is in good health and can participate in the normal activities of the center, or any recommendations for needed medical treatment, and/or program or environmental modifications which the center must follow, including special requirements as to diet, rest, allergies, avoidance of certain activities, etc., or any other handicap affecting/limiting the child's abilities.

The center reserves the right to suspend/expel any child for failure to fulfill the immunization or physical examination requirements, (with the exception of those who are granted an exemption as defined above).

*The immunization exemption may be suspended during the existence of a health emergency, as determined by the State Commissioner of Health.

MEDICATION

- The staff will administer prescription medication to a child only with written authorization from the parent or legal guardian, and under the prescription of a licensed medical doctor.
- You must sign a "Medication Release" form clearly indicating the directions for the staff, including dosage amount(s) and frequency.
- The medication(s) must be in the original prescription labeled container(s), prescribed in the name of, and specifically for the child **ONLY**, with the name of the medication and the date it was prescribed, (or updated), directions for its administration, the doctor who prescribed it, and the pharmacy, (if applicable), on the label, and its telephone number.
- **THE STAFF WILL NOT ADMINISTER "OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION(S)." The medication release form is available from the staff member to whom you give the medication.**
- Expired medicines will not be administered without a physician's consent.

Little Red Apple Learning Centers will not be held liable for adverse reactions or emergencies that may arise from prescription medication, issued by a medical professional.

CORONA VIRUS DISEASE/COVID 19

Little Red Apple Learning Centers will work in accord with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the State of New Jersey Department of Health, local Board of Health and the Office of License to follow all mandated policy guidelines concerning Covid 19. The Center will never require/ask/advise parents/guardians to vaccinate their child(ren) unless mandated by the authoritative governing agency nor will the Center inquire as to the status of vaccinated children in our care or their family members. The Center will follow all augmented sanitation requirements from the CDC, as well as any other 'Covid' protocols to keep our Center a safe and healthy environment for our children & staff and the families that we serve. Parents/Guardians are urged to keep their child at home if they are not feeling well, have a fever or exhibit flu-like symptoms. Children who develop a fever at the Center will be isolated and sent home. Children who have 'Covid' or who are exposed to a family member/close acquaintance with the virus, are required to quarantine at home or to bring a doctor's/medical professional's note to ascertain that they are well enough to reenter and do not pose a threat to other children/staff.

BITING POLICY

While biting is a common developmental stage, (particularly for toddlers who may use biting as a form of communication), it is an unpleasant and unacceptable behavior. Our staff strives to minimize biting incidents by providing a safe, supervised environment and by encouraging children to use more acceptable means of communication. However, despite our best efforts, it is possible that your child may be bitten at some time.

- When a biting incident occurs, our first priority is to tend to the needs of the child who has been bitten.
- To help the child who bit better understand his actions, the teachers may include him/her in their efforts to comfort the child who was bitten (i.e., by giving a hug, by apologizing, and/or offering an ice pack or cold compress).
 1. The incident will be documented by the staff member and shared with each set of parents: Immediately if the bite is severe with drawn blood, or a significant amount of bruising/swelling
 2. Or, at the time that the children are picked up (less severe bites)

Little Red Apple Learning Center will maintain confidentiality in all biting incidents, so the report **WILL NOT** include the name of the other child who was involved, nor reveal it to anyone.

If your child bites, or is in a “biting stage” our center will reasonably work with you to try to correct the problem. However, if the behavior does not improve in a reasonable amount of time, termination of enrollment may be necessary.

TOILET TRAINING

When nature calls we will be there with your child all the way!

- Toilet training is a concerted effort and we will work with you and your child if you inform our staff that you observe signs of readiness and are initiating training at home.
- Our staff will encourage and support your child’s independence by assisting them with toileting to ensure consistency between home and the center and we will be patient and complementary of your child in their progress.

DRESS CODE/HYGIENE

- Although the center does not have a formal dress code, it does require its students to be neat and clean in appearance and appropriately dressed for weather conditions. Children should be dressed in comfortable and well-fitting attire that is free of tears, holes and rips, missing or broken fasteners, buttons, snaps, etc.
 1. All children’s nails shall be clean and cut short.
 2. Hair shall be neat and clean. All long hair should be tied back, braided, put in a “pony tail” or worn with a headband or other accessory.
 3. Excessively tight, short or improperly fitting clothing will not be allowed.
 4. Excessive perfume or cologne fragrances are not allowed.
 5. Make-up including lipstick is inappropriate. Make-up that is brought to the center will be confiscated, discarded and **NOT RETURNED**.
 6. Jewelry, (with the exception of non-hanging pierced earrings), is **NOT PERMITTED. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE FOR ANY PURPOSE INCLUDING RELIGION OR CULTURE** (See: JEWELRY).

Parent/guardian(s) who are have difficulty with these policies due to financial distress, should speak with the director.

CLOTHING AND BLANKETS

- Each child must keep a complete set of seasonal clothing, (including underwear, socks and footwear), at the center. The center will not be responsible if your child does not have a change of clothes in the event of an “accident”, and your child will have to remain uncomfortable while waiting for you to arrive.
- Label all your child’s possessions with name tapes, preferable sewed on, or with indelible marker.
- Soiled clothing that has been taken home, MUST be replaced the next day, or when the child returns.
- Parent/Guardians of children who wear pull-ups must provide an adequate supply of pull-ups and wipes.
- It is best to dress your child in sturdy, durable clothing, rather than in their “Sunday best”, remembering, that day care, affords more opportunities to get dirtier than at home and the center will not be held responsible for soiled or misplaced, (lost), clothing.

Some helpful clothing suggestions are:

1. Buy outerwear with large commercial zippers
 2. Look for clothes with Velcro fastenings, especially footwear
 3. Avoid reversible jackets, since they are harder to zip
- Full-time students, must have a blanket/pillow for rest/sleep time. Blankets will be returned on Fridays for laundering, and MUST accompany your child on Monday, or when the child returns the following week.

JEWELRY

- As a safety precaution, the center does not permit jewelry of any kind for any reason with the exception of pierced earrings that do not hang off the ear. Although attractive, jewelry can be extremely dangerous or even fatal as a choking hazard and can also scratch or cut.
- All jewelry will be confiscated and returned to the parent/guardian(s) only.
- The center will not accept responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged jewelry items.

OUTDOOR PLAY

- Outdoor play is a most important part of our educational program, contributing to your child’s health and development, (large motor development), and is state mandated. All children will be required to participate in daily outdoor activities unless the weather is inclement or extreme.
- Dress your child appropriately for daily outdoor play, including sneakers or other sturdy, rubber soled shoes.
- Parent/guardian(s) must supply sunscreen, (SPF 50+) during the summer months.
- Please contact the director if your child cannot participate in outdoor recreation for medical or other reasons.

COMPUTER/INTERNET USE

- Little Red Apple Learning Center utilizes ABCMouse.com, youtube.com, pinterest.com, etc. websites to enhance its
- and as part of the “Technology Center” utilized by the teachers.
- Parents must agree to the terms of the ABCMouse.com Privacy Policy. Parents may view and print the terms of the agreement by visiting <http://www.abcmouse.com/privacy>.
- The Internet provides a plethora of educational opportunities and resources and is greatly utilized by our staff and as part of our teaching programs.
- The staff and administration will consistently strive to make internet security a most necessary priority, however, we cannot guarantee 100% safe access to the Internet.
- You may request in writing that your child be excluded from computer/internet usage by submitting your request to your child’s teacher or the director.

HOMEWORK

The purpose of homework is your child to develop a sense of responsibility and self-discipline. Homework assignments also promote an understanding of your child’s abilities, strengths, and weaknesses and allow the parents to become actively involved in what he/she is learning.

Some guidelines are:

1. Your child’s teacher may occasionally assign homework.
2. Homework is NOT required every night.
3. Homework is NOT a state licensing mandate.
4. Homework is not only designed and assigned solely to your child, but should be a shared learning time/experience for both, parent and child.
5. Homework assignments should be taken seriously as a positive effort to interact with your child and our curriculum.
6. Completed assignments should be returned to the teacher the following day.
7. Attempts at perfection, or completing the work by yourself or another, will only lead to frustration and failure. Let your child do the work to the best of their own ability. Praise positive efforts and allow these sessions to be enjoyable and fun. If your child does not understand the work, is having difficulty, or is tired of the work, **STOP IMMEDIATELY**, and consult with your child’s teacher.

FIELD TRIPS/OUTINGS

- The center will take occasional educational/pleasurable field trips, in addition to local frequent outings.
- Our students regularly take local neighborhood walks.
- All parent/guardian(s) of enrolled children will be required to sign a “Field Trip Permission Form” for field trips, and a “Blanket Field Trip” permission slip for local, frequent outings.

- Staff members will carry a cellular phone and a medical emergency first-aid kit in case of emergencies on all outings and trips away from the center.
- Families will receive advanced notice of all planned field trip along with transportation details, and itineraries.
- Field trip transportation may occasionally be provided by a hired transportation service, such as a licensed and insured chartered bus service.

SHOW-AND-TELL

- Children are encouraged to bring things of interest to their class on Fridays, for a show-and-tell discussion time. Parents are to give items for show-and-tell to their child's teacher upon arriving. Toys, games, books, etc. are allowed.
- Parents are reminded that play items from home are not allowed on other days, except on Fridays for show-and-tell.
- Little Red Apple Learning Centers will not accept responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen items.

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

- The center conducts an annual commencement exercise, (graduation), for all children who are attending kindergarten in September. The center will only graduate children who are five years old, or those who will be, by the cut-off date of the school that they register for.
- The commencement exercises, takes place on the last Friday in June. The program consists of; songs, poetry/rhymes and dance, presented by the graduating class.
- Awards of achievement and merit are presented in addition to the awarding of the diplomas.

BIRTHDAYS AT LRA

A child's birthday is a very special and exciting time for him/her, as well as their fellow classmates. We encourage parents to celebrate their child's special day with a party. The center provides these guidelines to assure a successful occasion for you and your child.

(Please refer to these guidelines or ask for a "Birthday Sheet" from any staff member).

1. All birthday parties must be "cleared" with the director at least **ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE**.
2. A.M. Session parties will take place at 12:00 P.M., P.M./FULL DAY Session parties at 3:30 P.M.
3. Student/class lists will be furnished only upon request.
4. Parents wishing to invite classmates/staff to an outside party should forward all invitations to their child's teacher for distribution.
5. Piñatas, hard candies, small toys, or anything in the estimation of the director or staff that is potentially dangerous or inappropriate, will not be allowed.
6. Some suggestions are: Cupcakes rather than cake and apple or white grape juice rather than soda or sugary drinks.
7. All parents and family members are always welcome. Kindly inform us in advance.
8. You may bring in a clown, magician or other entertainer with prior approval from the center director. The hired entertainer should provide an insurance certificate naming Little Red Apple Learning Center as the certificate holder.

- Birthday celebrations are a joyous but hectic time for the staff and any additional assistance is indeed welcomed.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND TOYS

- Our center sincerely pledges to provide a variety of the finest quality, hazard free educational and play material(s). We also promise to continually update or replace all material(s) that are worn or broken, to ensure constant quality with an ever present adherence to child safety.
- We ask all parent/guardian(s) not to send their child to the center with any toys, with the exception of a “favorite friend,” for rest time(s). Toys brought from home will be confiscated and returned when the child is picked up. The center will not assume any liability or responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items that are brought from home. Confiscated toys could present a stressful situation for your child and it is best to leave them at home.

FUNDRAISERS/EVENTS

Our center conducts various events and fund raisers during the year, and we ask that all participate wholeheartedly to ensure a successful effort. The events range from, a Thanksgiving food drive to a Hop-a-thon for Muscular Dystrophy Association, (“Jerry’s Kids”).

- The fund raising efforts include annual Winter/Spring candy sales, in which prizes are given to all the participants, and bonus grand and runner-up prizes are awarded to the top two sellers. All are asked to participate.
- The center also has a “Picture Day” event with a professional photographer.
- The fund raising efforts help defer expenses for the center, which allow us to keep tuition fees stabilized.
- All events will be announced in the monthly calendars. (See: *COMMUNICATION*).

PARENT’S NIGHT/CONFERENCES

- The state guidelines for child care centers mandate that an annual meeting with parents must be established. In keeping with its requirement, the center has an annual parent’s night to meet and discuss the parent/teacher concerns regarding your child, the center and its policies, etc. This important and necessary meeting will be announced on the monthly calendars.
- Teachers may voice their immediate concerns regarding your child or other issues on a parent/teacher conference form which will be given to you in person by the teacher or another staff member. You may set up an informal meeting with any staff member or the director by calling the center, or in person without an appointment.*
- Individual conferences with your child’s teacher are always available upon request, as are meetings with the center director. They can be arranged by speaking with the center director or your child’s teacher.

PARENT/COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- Our center abides by an “open-door” policy, extended to all parent/guardian(s), of enrolled students. The policy simply states that any parent/guardian may visit the Center at any time without prior consent or notice.* (See: *OPEN DOOR POLICY*)
- We also encourage all parent/guardian(s), to take an active interest in the center by:

1. Assisting in field trips, birthday parties, etc.
2. Making suggestion/comments on the program, staff, facility, etc.
3. Baking for parties and special occasions.
4. Bringing any problems/concerns to the teacher's or director's immediate attention.
5. Consulting the director as to what areas you may avail your services or suggestion/ideas.

*It may be advisable to make an informal appointment if you wish to have a discussion with a specific member of the staff or the director.

DONATIONS/GIFTS

• Our center graciously accepts donations of books, toys, games, educational materials, etc., provided that they are in good "usable" condition. Please contact your child's teacher or any member of the staff if you wish to donate anything. Arrangements can be made for pick up, if necessary.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

Little Red Apple Learning Center is not only a learning place for children but also for the parent/guardian(s), staff, families, etc., also. Because each child in our care is a unique individual, we learn new things everyday as we come to know "their" world. Although it is not our policy to let "our" children do as they please, or enter into "unsafe waters", it is our duty to allow them to develop through safe and imaginative play-learning experiences. It is quite ludicrous for our staff to adopt a "know-it-all" approach to child rearing in general, due to the uniqueness of all children and the complexities of today's intricate world. We fully realize that child rearing can be a most challenging experience for parents, filled with problems, frustrations, guilt feelings, marital/family problems, etc. In order to help educate us all, we have established a resource library of materials that will hopefully answer many questions and concerns on this phenomenon that we call child rearing. These materials are available to borrow upon request from any staff member. Donations and contributions are also most welcome indeed.

REFERRALS

Little Red Apple Learning Center issues tuition credits for parent/guardians who refer family/friends to enroll at our Center. The 'Referral Form' is located on our website: www.littleredapplelearningcenters.com under the 'Forms' tab. Contact the Director with further questions/inquiries about our referral program.

WITHDRAWING

- If you wish to withdraw from our center you must complete and submit an 'Enrollment Withdrawal' form at least two weeks before withdrawing your child from the center. This form is available from the center director. The center director will acknowledge receipt of this form and provide you with a copy.
- If you fail to provide at least two weeks' notice as stated above, you will be obligated to pay your child's tuition for two weeks beyond:
 1. the date we received and acknowledged the 'Enrollment Withdrawal'; or
 2. your child's last day of scheduled attendance if an 'Enrollment Withdrawal' is not received.
- If you withdraw your child from and decide to return at a later time, you may be placed on our waiting list. You will also be required to provide new enrollment information, and a registration fee.

TERMINATION/EXPULSION

• Little Red Apple Learning Centers reserves the right to terminate any child's enrollment immediately, for reasons that we deem necessary.

- As required by licensing, the center will first issue an “Expulsion Policy” which will further discuss the reason(s) and the last date of enrollment.

Usually the “Expulsion Policy” will afford the parent/guardian(s) ample time to obtain other child care arrangements unless the expulsion is immediate, due to:

1. The child’s attendance is disruptive and poses a physical danger or threat to others.
2. The expulsion is based on a non-payment or late payment issue.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE IN NEW JERSEY

- The law says that any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or acts of child abuse shall report this information immediately to the Division of Youth and Family Services, (DYFS).
- From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, reports of child abuse and neglect can be made to the local DYFS District Office. There is at least one District Office in every county. The Office of Child Abuse Control, (OCAC), operates a toll-free 24 hour 7 day a week hotline, (1-800-792-8610), to receive reports of child abuse and neglect. Calls received at OCAC during normal working hours are immediately referred to the appropriate district office and calls received after hour are referred to the Special Response Unit, (SPRU).
- DYFS accepts all allegations of child abuse and neglect by telephone and in person from all sources including identified sources, new media, anonymous sources, sources which have incomplete information and referrals from the child or parent himself.
- Upon receiving a report of child abuse or neglect, A DYFS caseworker shall immediately investigate the allegations and take such action as necessary to insure the safety of the child(ren).

IMMUNITY FROM CIVIL OR CRIMINAL LIABILITY

- Any person who pursuant to the law, reports abuse or neglect, or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report, is immune from any criminal or civil liability as a result of such action.

PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO REPORT

- Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect, pursuant to the law, or to comply with the provisions of the law, is a disorderly person and subject to a fine up to \$500.00 or up to six months imprisonment, or both.