



# HIDDEN LITTLE TREASURES

LEARNING  
CENTER

The Key  
to Unlock  
your Child's  
Hidden  
Treasure

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## PARENT HANDBOOK

**PARENT HANDBOOK  
POLICIES  
AND  
PROCEDURES**

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*Dear Parents,*

*Welcome to a new experience at Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center. We look forward to working with you and your children.*

*In this handbook you will find the school's Philosophy and Mission Statement. Please take time to read these important statements. As educators and caregivers, we are committed to the school's Philosophy and Mission.*

*In choosing Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center as your children's school, we count on your commitment to its Philosophy and full participation in school and parent activities because you are an integral part of your child's education.*

*Success happens when people work together and support one another in an atmosphere of mutual love and respect. Please keep this handbook nearby for reference. It is designed to communicate school information, guidelines and policies.*

*May our year together be a wonderful experience.*

*The Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center Family*

**Each Child Has Hidden Treasures and Gifts Inside Them Waiting To Be Found**

## VISION/MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center is to provide a safe environment and support your child's natural love of learning.

Our mission is achieved by offering:

Caring and dedicated teachers and staff who positively guide your child throughout their daily exploration;

Curriculums that spark curiosity and imagination while teaching meaningful skills;

Classroom environments structured to provide a balance between routine while evolving as the needs of a child change;

Encourage the development of self-esteem and confidence by understanding the unique potential and worth of every child;

Facilitate socialization as your child interacts with their peers and develops problem solving and conflict resolution capabilities.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center provides students with a balanced early learning program within a positive environment that respects individual, family, and community values. Hidden Little Treasures recognizes the value of each student as an individual and structures curriculums to meet the needs of every child. We welcome each child into our program and seek to facilitate their progression through each academic and developmental stage.

## PROGRAMS

Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center provides a safe, nurturing early educational environment that supports your child's natural love of learning. This includes small class sizes, carefully selected, qualified teachers, and excellent curriculums. Our building features a secure environment in which all doors remain locked. Hidden Little Treasures follows a school term that begins in August and culminates in June. Summer camp is offered during the months of June and July. We offer 5, 3, or 2 day a week school year programs, including half and full day as well VPK. Our programs are offered for children ages 6 weeks through 5. We are open daily from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. year round.

## ADMISSION POLICY

All children are accepted at Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center. No child will be denied admission because of race, creed and color or because of certain special needs. It is Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center's responsibility to protect every child in its care. However, if a child's behavior is seen in any way to be harmful to another child, Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center reserves the right to dismiss that child.

## DISMISSAL POLICY

In those instances when a child's behavior is very disruptive or harmful to the child or other children, a conference will be requested by the teacher to discuss a plan of action. If the plan of action does not meet the needs of the child or help him regain self-control, the child will be sent home for the day for aggressive or inappropriate behavior. This will be strictly enforced for the safety and well being of the children. If you will not seek appropriate assistance or we cannot effectively meet the needs of your child, you will be asked to make other child care arrangements.

## HOURS OF OPERATION

The center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## HOLIDAYS

Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center will be closed on the following Holidays:

- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Annual Teacher Conference (tentative)
- Thanksgiving and the day after
- Christmas Eve and the day after

New Years Eve  
Martin Luther King's Day  
President's Day  
Good Friday

Hidden Little Treasures will close early at 3:00pm on the following Holidays:

The day before Christmas  
The day Before Thanksgiving

## SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In the case of severe weather or emergencies, Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center will follow St. John's Public School's Policy for closing the Center. In case the Center is to be closed, you will be notified to promptly pick up your child. Make up days will not be allowed.

(Please see **Payment of Fees** for your responsibility for Childcare payment the days the school is closed)

## REGISTRATION, TUTION AND FEES

Registration fees are payable upon registration and are non-refundable. These fees serve to ensure your child's placement in addition to covering the costs of processing the application for admission, supplies and educational materials. These fees are determined according to your child's classroom needs and additional supplies.

### **August Pre-registration**

Pre-registration is required and paid annually to reserve your child's place in our school for the upcoming year. This fee covers the same items as the new enrollment paragraph above. Upon registration, a classroom space will be reserved for your child. Should it become necessary to remove your child for any reason including the summer months prior to the beginning of the Fall program, your space will be forfeited and filled from our waiting list. Should you require a change later to our half-day Education

program only, you may do so only if a half-day space is available. Your reserved full-day space will be filled from our waiting list.

## **Payment of Fees**

Tuition is paid weekly. Tuition is due every **Friday** for the coming week of services. If your fee is not paid in full by Monday by start of day (7 am) for the current week of services, a \$10.00 late fee will be added for that day and each day thereafter. If tuition is not current, your child will not be allowed to return until a full payment is made. Classroom space cannot be held or reserved without proper payment. Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center reserves the right to increase tuition due to unforeseen circumstances.

Tuition is due in full for the week whether your child attends or not or for the days that the school is closed. This includes weather related/emergency closures. Make up days will not be allowed.

We accept check, money order, cash, credit or debit. A fee of \$25.00 will be charged for a returned check. After (2) returned checks, payments must be paid by cash, credit or debit.

## **All Tuition is Non-refundable**

### **Late fee**

Parents who pick up their children after our regular closing hours are charged \$5.00 for the first minute and \$1.00 for each additional minute per child. The fee is payable immediately to the school upon pick up.

### **Vacation/Absence**

If your child is absent for any reason, tuition remains the same. Your child can be absent and receive one week credit per school

year for the program in which he/she is enrolled. You will need to pay the full cost of any additional weeks your child is absent to keep his/her space. We ask that you notify us at least two weeks prior to your vacation. Your child must be enrolled at Hidden Little Treasures for 3 months in order to be eligible to receive a one week vacation credit.

## ENROLLMENT

The following items must be submitted at the time of enrollment:

- Form 3040 (yellow)-physical examination
- Form 680 or 681 (blue)-immunization record
- Application and Admission Forms
- Registration Fee
- Copy of Parent's Driver's License
- Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Each child must have the required medical forms on file within the first 30 days of enrollment. Per DCF requirements, any child who does not have the proper medical forms on file will not be allowed to drop off until forms are on file and current. Summer camp enrollment begins in March. A registration fee and summer camp enrollment form is required to secure your spot for summer. The school maintains regular hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. throughout the year.

Upon enrollment, parents pay a yearly non-refundable registration fee. This registration fee is utilized for your child's equipment and supplies for the year. Parents must also complete the enrollment packet entirely.

Beginning in the month of January, re-enrollment letters may be sent out. Any student that is not planning to attend the next school year has until March 1<sup>st</sup> of that year to provide a letter of intent. Those that will continue to attend Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center will have auto-enrollment and will be billed accordingly. Hidden Little Treasures reserves the right not to re-enroll any student that is attending the current school year and will notify those by written letter and/or phone call.

## DRESS CODE

Hidden Little Treasures collared shirts may be available for purchase. These shirts may be worn with either khaki or navy blue pants, shorts or skirts. Please keep in mind that although a dress code is not mandatory, it looks nice. You must also have at least two clean sets of clothing for your child including socks in case of “accidents”. These clothes will need to be updated and changed throughout the season.

We ask that all children wear clothes that are comfortable and washable.

Our curriculum includes an outdoor program, so proper shoes and attire are required (no open shoes, flip-flops, “cowboy boots” are permitted). Tennis shoes are preferred. While we attempt to protect their clothes during arts and crafts and play periods, children sometimes have accidents. After all, “kids will be kids”!

Please label your child’s sweaters, jackets, hats, etc.

## TOY POLICY

Children may not bring toys to school as this causes problems. Special toys may be lost or broken. However, appropriate toys of special interest, coinciding with the weekly or monthly curriculum themes, may be brought during these days.

## CHECK-IN AND OUT

For security purposes, we have the doors to and from the center under a locked code. Parents and authorized persons will be issued a code upon registration.

You must sign your child in and out each day. Make sure your child’s teacher is aware when you drop off and pick up your child. We ask that you do not drop your child off or pick them up during naptime. If naptime is the only possible time to drop or pick your child up, we ask that you make prior arrangements ahead of time. In extreme emergencies, anytime is an acceptable time.

**We prefer all children to start school by 9:30 AM. Doors close at 9:30 AM for check-in. Check out is at 6:00 PM.**

**Prior arrangements must be made for any check in later than 9:30 AM.**

Teacher-to-children ratio is very important. We are staffed according to the times you requested. We ask that you bring and pick up your child during the times you requested. In the event that you are not able to pick up your child before closing, a fee of \$5.00 for the first minute and \$1.00 each additional minute per child will be charged. This fee is payable immediately to the school upon pick up.

## RELEASE

Your child will not be released to any person not listed on the authorization pick-up list. Photo ID must be presented at the time of pick-up. In case of an emergency, if a person picking up is not listed on the authorization pick-up list, a written and signed authorization must be hand delivered by the parent before the child will be released. **Phoned in, faxed or e-mail authorizations will not be accepted.** This is to ensure the safety of your child.

## OPEN DOOR POLICY

All parents are encouraged to participate in their child's daily activities. We ask that you do not plan to visit the school during your child's first month. They need that time to adjust to their new surroundings.

Where Family Court or other legal entities have established visitation or custodial rights, a copy of the order must be provided to the school. The orders of any courts will be strictly adhered to unless the custodial parent requests a more liberal variation of the court order in writing.

In cases of parental separation or divorce both parents must be in agreement and sign a consent form when adding an additional person for child pick up.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are our most important resource. We welcome and appreciate your involvement. We invite your participation in sharing careers or hobbies, helping during class celebrations and volunteering in the classroom. Please make alternate arrangements for any siblings when visiting Hidden Little Treasures. Please attend programs and open houses. Please read all newsletters and class calendars. Review your class calendar and participate in classroom activities. Check your child's folder or cubby weekly for any class work or art projects they may have completed. A Volunteer Affidavit and Local Background Check must be completed by all volunteers.

Keep in mind that although we have an open door policy, your child may act differently when in your presence. All parents must sign in at the office before each visit.

## WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Should it become necessary to withdraw your child for any reason, a two week written notice to the Management Staff is required. This enables the office to notify parents on our waiting list that may be interested in filling your child's vacancy.

Pre-paid tuition is non-refundable. No portion of your monthly paid or outstanding tuition will be returned or cancelled in the event of absence, withdrawal or dismissal from school.

We reserve the right to dismiss any student should it be deemed necessary at the sole discretion of the School Director.

## PARENT CONDUCT

When you enter Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center you can expect to be greeted and assisted by friendly and helpful people. Likewise, we expect parents to be equally friendly and pleasant when visiting the Center. We want the children's environment to be peaceful, joyful and free from stress.

In the event that a parent would ever threaten, use loud or abusive language or be harmful to any Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center child, staff member or other parent, it would be grounds for immediate termination for that family from Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center and all its programs.

Parent concerns will be addressed privately by the Director

## GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center believes to develop a good self-image and confidence, proper discipline and guidance is to be used. Discipline is an ongoing learning process.

Children will never be punished in any way, shape or form. Instead children will be redirected in a positive way explaining what happened to the child and find ways to prevent re-occurrence.

At our center, our first step is ***prevention***. Children are kept busy with fun, entertaining activities. They are rewarded with positive attention when seen showing appropriate behaviors.

Our next step is ***positive redirection***. Children who need it are calmly redirected or distracted when inappropriate behavior occurs.

All of our teachers are aware that yelling or speaking unkindly to children is never acceptable.

### **Biting**

Biting occurs mostly when proper classroom management is not maintained. But even with proper precautions, biting can still happen because biting is a normal stage of development that a child goes through. This stage of development can be a little hard for parents to understand, especially if their child was the one bitten. Children bite for many reasons. Some children are tired, need attention or are over stimulated. Others are just teething or

exploring their surroundings. Whatever the cause of biting might be, Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center will handle biting by:

- Talking to and comforting the child that had just been bitten.
- We will talk to the child that bit and explain the hurt that was caused and explain to them the right way to handle the situation the next time.
- Staff will shadow the child that has bitten on more than one occasion.
- We will remove the child if biting continues and a meeting will be set up with the parent and Director.
- If a child breaks skin, first aid will be administered and the parent will be called.

## ABUSE AND NEGLECT

We are by law to report any signs of child abuse or neglect. The school Management Staff and its employees must and will advise all appropriate local and state agencies of any suspected child abuse or neglect of any child attending our school.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

By state law, all students must have a current Certificate of Immunization showing adequate protection against several diseases. Children who have been vaccinated against these diseases need only obtain an updated, validated certificate. You will also need a current physical that can be obtained from your local Health Department or from a private physician.

We must have a current Certificate of Immunization on file at all times. It is our policy, for the benefit of our overall student enrollment, that no student may start unless we have an adequate Certificate of Immunization on file. The admission for continued enrollment of any child may be denied when a child has an illness or disability that the school management, in its sole discretion, deems potentially harmful to any other student or staff member and whose illness or disability is beyond the capacity of the school to

properly handle. No child with a communicable disease will be permitted to attend.

- A health certificate and immunization form signed by your child's physician must be on file at Hidden Little Treasures within **30 days** of enrollment. The state health department notes that a failure to do so will result in your child losing his/her spot in school.
- Shot records must be updated each time your child is due for a new immunization.
- A health check is made every morning from your child's teacher and the Management Staff is notified if a child is thought to be ill.
- Your child must be well enough to participate in everyday activities to be at school.
- If your child has any allergies, special diets, etc., it must be brought to the attention of the Management Staff.

Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center promotes good health habits such as hand washing before and after meals and after playtime and follows simple rules of safety and hygiene.

## ACCIDENTS

We understand that we will be caring for your most valued "treasure!" You can be assured that our top priority will be the safety and well being of your child. First Aid will be administered to minor injuries in case of accidents.

If an accident is such that further treatment is indicated, we will:

- Call you at work or home.
- Call emergency numbers listed on enrollment form.
- Call your child's physician.
- If deemed necessary, call 911.
- A written report will be sent home.

## ILLNESS POLICY

In the interest of the well being of the rest of the children, we can only accept well children. Please do not bring your child if he/she shows signs of illness such as a fever within the past 24 hours, intestinal disturbance accompanied by diarrhea or vomiting, any undiagnosed rash, and/or a communicable disease. Please make arrangements to have your child picked up within 1 hour of our phone call. We do not have personnel on hand to care for sick children.

A child with a fever cannot return until 24 hours after the fever is gone. A child with diarrhea cannot return until they have had a normal bowel movement. Notify us immediately if your child has a communicable condition. Please keep in mind, a sick child will get better faster if they stay home until they are completely well.

Children become ill at some time or another. Unfortunately, that time may be while at our center. You will be called if your child becomes ill during the day. You are expected to promptly pick up your child when called.

### Reasons for calling include:

- a fever of 101 degrees or higher
- a constant cough causing the child to become blue or red in the face
- difficult or rapid breathing
- diarrhea
- stiff neck
- conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- nasal discharge
- yellowish skin or eyes
- vomiting
- severe itching of scalp (lice)
- any other unusual signs or symptoms of illness

Should your child become ill or be involved in an accident while he or she is in the care of the school, we will take proper action

as deemed necessary. If the school finds it necessary to contact medical attention and care for your child, you as parents will assume full responsibility for payments of such medical services. Parents will be notified immediately at the time of accident/incident. If a parent cannot be reached, an EMS will be called. Transportation will only be made by the parent of the injured or ill child or by ambulance.

Parents agree to immediately notify the school office in writing of any changes in telephone numbers, addresses and/or persons authorized to pick up the child, etc., so our files remain current. A Doctor's note may be asked by the Management Staff in order for your child to return.

## MEDICATION POLICY

Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center does not administer medication of any kind, with the exception of life-saving types, such as an epi-pen or nebulizer. If your child is prescribed an antibiotic, please make sure it is prescribed in a manner allowing you to administer it at home.

## NUTRITIOUS MEALS

Nutrition is important for the growth and development of children. Your child will be served a morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack recommended by the USDA foods guidelines. You will need to provide food for your infant/toddler if they are not eating table food. There will be a monthly menu posted. We require that infants have ready made bottles with their name on it.

## ALLERGIES

Due to severe allergic reactions that may be caused from peanut based products, we are a peanut free facility. As a preventative measure, we ask that your child does not bring any peanut based products to school.

## CURRICULUM

We believe that children develop and learn best when you give them many opportunities to explore their environment. While enrolled at Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center, children will participate in activities that encourage growth in all areas of development. That is why each classroom is set up in learning centers. Your child will learn as he/she plays. There will be times during the day where your child will have more teacher-directed learning and other times more child selected activities.

Understanding the different developmental patterns and stages of a child will ensure success later on in life. Choosing the right curriculum is one of the most important factors for ensuring that each child has a positive learning experience.

## SUMMERCAMP

Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center offers a Summer Camp program for a period of approximately 10 weeks. Campers learning experiences include but are not limited to field trips, water fun, special guests, art, music and dance. Information for Summer Camp is available starting in the month of March.

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# **VPK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **CHECK IN/OUT PROCEDURES:**

All VPK students must be properly checked in and out on a daily basis to ensure proper documentation of attendance per VPK Standards. Please follow the following check in/out procedures:

### **DAILY CHECK IN AND OUT PROCEDURE:**

- Parents must sign in and out at the computerized time clock located at the front desk

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

All VPK students must receive 540 instructional school hours per year. We have divided these hours to 3 hours per day 5 days per week.

## **AM STUDENTS:**

### **ARRIVAL:**

- Must arrive and check-in no later than 9:00 am daily and must attend the full 3 hour session.
- Please try to schedule Dr's appointments so they do not conflict with these hours
- Please drop off your child directly in your child's classroom unless otherwise instructed by you child's teacher.

### **DEPARTURE:**

- Must be picked up **no later than 12:00 am.**

## **DROP OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURE**

All students may only be dropped off and picked up by :

- Parent
- Legal Guardian

- Person noted on Authorization List filled out at time of enrollment

Please always be prepared to present Photo ID

### **ABSENT POLICY:**

Per VPK Standards, a child may not miss more than 26 days per year for illness. A child may not miss more than 35 days per year regardless of circumstances. Parents must complete and sign an attendance verification form EACH month.

There must be a valid excuse for these absences. The following are valid excuses:

Upon return after an excused absent an absent note must be turned in to the Front Office.

The note must include the following:

- Date note was written
- Child's name
- Date(s) child was absent
- Reason why child was absent (Valid Excuse)
- Parent/Guardian Signature

### **PARENTAL CHOICE CERTIFICATES:**

Parental Choice Certificates are used by VPK to track your child's monthly attendance. They must be signed at the end of each month. Please check with your child's teacher as to their individual procedure.

### **NON VPK DAYS:**

Wrap-around students may attend on Non-VPK Days indicated on calendar. Since these days are not funded by VPK, an additional fee will apply. This fee must be paid along with the current week's tuition. Please contact Management Staff if you are unsure what the fee is.

## **This does not apply to Part-Time VPK students**

Part time VPK students may attend on Non-VPK days for an extended hour fee. Please contact Management Staff if you are unsure what the fee is.

### **GENERAL RULES:**

- I understand that I must accompany my child at **all** times while on school premises (including parking lot). No child may remain unsupervised at any time.
  
- Please do not allow your child to run in school hallway
  
- Please encourage your child to remain quiet while walking to and from classroom, as there are other classes in session.
  
- Please encourage your child to respect our landscaping by not allowing them to run, walk or play in any of the surrounding flowerbeds
  
- Please refrain from allowing your child to play on any of the school playground equipment before or after their VPK session.
  
- Please always direct any questions or concerns directly to the Management Staff

*[Blank section, intended for future updates]*

## Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form

By signing this form, I, \_\_\_\_\_, approve the following:

- I have clearly read Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center's policies and have asked for clarification for anything that I did not understand or have a question about.
- I understand the child guidance, discipline and biting policy.
- I am aware that my child cannot be in school if he/she shows signs of illness or has a communicable condition.
- I am aware that Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center reserves the right to dismiss a child whose behavior is seen to be harmful to other children.
- I have read, am aware, understand and approve the policies of Hidden Little Treasures Learning Center.
- I have read and understand and approve of the VPK Policies and Procedures. **(VPK only)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Child's Name(s)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent or Guardian's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**