



LITTLE WONDERS PRESCHOOL

FAMILY HANDBOOK AND POLICIES

2017/2018 SCHOOL YEAR

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Email: Preschool@viewroyalosc.com or admin@viewroyalosc.com

Email: attendance@viewroyalosc.com
(to advise when your child will not be attending class)



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PHILOSOPHY OF LITTLE WONDERS PRESCHOOL

Choosing the right preschool for your child is a big decision. At Little Wonders Preschool, our goal is to provide a safe, supportive, and stimulating environment that will help prepare your child for a lifetime of learning. We recognize each child as a unique individual. With this in mind, our program is designed to meet the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of each child. We believe in the value of play and provide open-ended activities that encourage creativity, exploration, and personal growth through the development of effective communication skills and cooperation with peers and adults. Each day, we provide a balance of quiet and active play, individual and group focus, and free play and adult-initiated activities. Most importantly, we learn to share and have fun!

MISSION STATEMENT OF VIEW ROYAL OUT OF SCHOOL CARE SOCIETY

We believe in providing a safe and fun environment in which children may develop positive social skills such as responsibility, respect, and cooperation through communication. This environment should stimulate growth and provide opportunities for children to make choices that satisfy their individual needs. We believe that working as a team with parents and teachers is essential in order to provide consistent care and guidance to each child. We welcome your involvement, suggestions, and support.

WHO WE ARE

View Royal Out of School Care Society was established in 1993 and its members are composed of parents and/or guardians of children enrolled in the Out of School Care or Preschool programs. All parents/guardians of children participating in our programs are members of our Society.

The Society is governed by a Parent Board of Directors, comprising parents whose children are attending, or have attended, our programs. The Parent Board meets each month and all members of the society are welcome and encouraged to attend. The Parent Board holds an Annual General Meeting each fall, notification of which will be emailed to families and posted on our Parent Information Board at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.

It is important that the Parent Board hear your comments, including, for example, requests for policy changes, suggestions for enhancing the program, ideas for fundraising, and comments regarding staff performance. If you cannot attend a Parent Board meeting, please voice your comments/concerns in a letter or email. Please see the Manager of Operations or Program Manager for meeting dates and times.

OUR RULES

BE SAFE

- Always be aware of your surroundings. Are you safe? Are those around you safe?

BE RESPECTFUL

- Always be respectful. Listen to your friends, parents and leaders. Take turns and share.

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Take care of possessions belonging to yourself and the Centre. Use problem-solving skills to resolve disputes with friends. Ask for help when needed.





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HOURS OF OPERATION

Little Wonders Preschool operates from 9:00am to 12:00pm noon, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Parents/guardians are asked to wait until 9:00am to enter the Preschool. This allows staff to set up the program for the children. In inclement weather, you are welcome to wait in the foyer. Please allow enough time upon pick-up for your child to make the transition out of the Preschool (i.e. collect personal affects, put on jacket, speak with the teachers, etc.). Though parent/guardian participation is not required, should you wish to participate in any way, please speak to our staff.

DAYS IN SESSION

Little Wonders Preschool will run every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from September through June. We will not be in session on statutory holidays or between Christmas Day and New Year's Day; however, we may open on School Professional Development days and during the School District's Spring Break. Families will be notified of any days on which the Preschool will not operate.

Weather Conditions – If the School District chooses to close View Royal Elementary School due to extreme weather conditions, the Centre will also be closed. If the District announces that the school will open later in the morning, we will also open at that time. Should schools be open in the morning but, during the course of the day, weather conditions deteriorate, the Centre shall reserve the right to close. Every attempt shall be made to give parents as much warning as possible. Please be aware that, should the decision to close the Centre be made, it is solely for the safety of children and staff.

OUR STAFF

We have an incredible group of individuals working with your child each Preschool day, including a certified Early Childhood Educator (ECE) with approximately 30 years of experience. Each member of our team is either an ECE or an Early Childhood Education Assistant (ECA) and each brings varied interests, skills, and experience to our program. Further, in accordance with our Society's requirements and Island Health's licensing standards, each staff member possesses the following:

- A medical practitioner's statement indicating that they are physically and psychologically capable of working with children.
- Standard First Aid and CPR C
- A clean Criminal Record check

REGISTRATION FOR LITTLE WONDERS PRESCHOOL

Registration is available for 3 days per week. Registration for Little Wonders Preschool will be available on an ongoing basis, spaces permitting. September registration opens each year in February or March - please check our website for current dates. Please note that each child must re-register every school year, and that waitlists from one year do not carry over to another year.

UPDATING OF REGISTRATION INFORMATION

It is **IMPERATIVE** that the program be notified of any changes to your home or work phone number, address, allergies, custodial arrangements, authorized pick-up persons and emergency contacts, as well as any other changes that may affect your child. It would also be beneficial if you would notify the program of any situation that may affect your child's behaviour or wellbeing (i.e., separation/divorce, illnesses, death, etc.). The utmost confidentiality will be maintained.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All staff and Parent Board members are to ensure the protection and privacy of personal information received from parents/guardians and children. We will collect only that information necessary for the delivery of services, and information will be treated as confidential and securely stored to ensure privacy. No information will be released without first receiving permission from the parent/guardian, unless required by law (reporting abuse, legal investigations, etc.), during medical emergencies, or when necessary to collect debt.

CARE PLANS

As a licensing requirement, Care Plans must be created if your child requires extra support or has specific needs that may affect participation in the program. These needs or conditions may involve dietary restrictions, allergies, medications, behavioural considerations, behavioural diagnoses, physical restrictions, etc.

Staff and management will work with families to create a Care Plan. Once developed, a printed draft of the Care Plan will be given to you, as parent/guardian. You will have one week to request any changes. The final document will be presented to you, to be signed and returned within a specified time period, usually one week. If the document has not been received within this period, you will be contacted and advised that your child will not be permitted to attend until the document is duly signed and returned.

Parents of a child with **known special needs must disclose and discuss** their child's needs with the program prior to enrolment. **Failure to do so may result in termination of services.**

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM AND DAILY SCHEDULE

The Preschool program is designed to provide a sense of structure, but it will always remain flexible enough to meet the needs of the group and to encourage a sense of spontaneity and fun! Please note that all times listed below are approximate.

9:00am - Free Choice Time

Children arrive and are welcomed to Preschool. There are hooks and shoe cubbies in the Preschool room – children should hang up coats and change into their inside shoes.

A variety of play options are provided, some of which are listed below:

- Play and pretend in the dress-up area



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- Build on the block carpet
- Play in the sand/water/rice table
- Explore at the science table
- Create in the art area
- Master a puzzle or game in the learning centre
- Share a story with a teacher or friend in the circle time area

10:15am - Clean-up time

We all work together to tidy up the Preschool!

10:30am - Circle Time

After clean-up, the group will meet together on the carpet for stories, songs, music, show and tell, and other discussions. Circle time can be as short as 15 minutes or as long as 45 minutes, depending on the groups' attention span, mood, and interests. Circle time generally gets longer as the children get older!

11:00am - Transition to Snack Time

Children take turns using the washroom and washing their hands.

11:10am - Snack Time

Children sit at the tables and eat a snack provided from home. After this time, the children have quiet time to read books or do puzzles.

***** Important *****

If your child has a food allergy, it is important that you note it on the registration forms and bring it to the attention of staff immediately. Thank you.

11:30am - Outside Time

Children get a chance to burn off energy and explore outside in our fenced playground and sandbox. If the weather is poor, we may extend the indoor playtime; however, please plan on your child having outside time and ensure that they are dressed accordingly. A pair of rain pants (thin nylon pants) will help keep your child's clothes clean and dry.

12:00 pm Noon - Home Time

Please ensure that you leave enough time to collect belongings, say good-byes, and communicate with staff about the happenings of the day.

DROP OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Parents/guardians must sign in their child when dropping them off at Preschool. You are welcome to spend a few minutes with your child, helping them settle in for the day.

Please advise our staff if your contact number for the day will be different than usual. This will ensure that staff will be able to contact someone quickly in case of emergency. Further, please ensure that your child uses the washroom before they begin to play.

Children will only be released from the Centre into the care of their parents/guardians or an adult at least 19 years of age specified on the Authorized Pick-Up list. An authorized adult (i.e., adult specified on the Authorized Pick-Up list) must sign the child out upon pick-up. At any time, should you wish to add/remove a person to/from the Authorized Pick-Up list, you must do so in writing (letter, fax, or email). No verbal requests will be accepted. Please make sure to advise those persons authorized to pick up your child that they will be asked for photo identification.

We are required to have you record the time that you drop your child off and the time that you pick them up.

MISSING CHILD PROCEDURE

In the unlikely event that a child goes missing from the Centre, our staff will follow the following procedures to find the child:

- Search the Centre
- Search the perimeter of the building, including the field, playground and parking lot
- Search the school, talk to teachers, and check the office
- If the child has not been located, the child's parents/guardians will be called. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, staff will attempt to contact a person on the Emergency Contact list.
- Should parents/guardians and Emergency Contact persons not be reached or cannot verify the whereabouts of the child, we will contact the RCMP and a full search will be launched.

CUSTODY AND SEPARATION AGREEMENTS

Information about custody arrangements provided by the enrolling parent/guardian is the advice followed by our staff and management. Our staff members rely on this information to make sure that your child is released into the care of an authorized person. Staff cannot deny a parent access to his or her child unless we have a copy of the court order denying or limiting the parent's access. Should you have a court order, it is your responsibility to provide us with a copy upon registration.

FIELD TRIPS

On occasion, the Preschool group may go on short walking field trips. There will be a minimum of two leaders present, and a cellular phone and first aid kit will be carried with them at all times.



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WHAT TO BRING TO CLASS

Please ensure that your child brings the following items:

- Inside shoes, to be kept at the Centre. These shoes should be runners with non-skid soles.
- Extra set of pants, underwear, socks, and shirt, to be kept at the Centre.
- A healthy snack.
- Earthquake comfort kit (more information will be given to you at the beginning of the school year).
- Appropriate shoes/boots and coat for outside play. If it is sunny, please apply sunscreen before class begins and send a hat – time is not built into the daily schedule for staff to apply sunscreen to all children in the class.

Please note that your child's backpack, snack bag, extra clothes, shoes, coat, etc., should be labeled.

SNACKS

The snacks that you send with your child should be simple and healthy. Food should be ready to eat without preparation, refrigeration, or reheating. Please send your child's snack in a small lunch bag or lunchbox, if possible, as these are far more manageable at the table than a backpack.

Good choices include cut-up pieces of fruit and veggies, yogurt, half-sandwiches, etc. Please do not send pop, gum, candy, or other high sugar snacks. We ask that you avoid sending foods that may become choking hazards (i.e., whole hotdogs, whole grapes, marshmallows, popcorn, etc.).

Safe drinking water is available for all children at all times. If you prefer to send other beverages, please consider sending juice or milk in a non-spill sipping container that can be resealed.

Please note that our Centre is nut aware; therefore, we ask that you do not send foods with peanuts or other nuts. If a child has other allergies, we will contact families to advise them of additional items to avoid bringing into the Centre. Children will only share snacks on special occasions such as birthdays and/or holidays. Please talk to Preschool staff before bringing in snacks to share.

Lastly, please encourage your child to eat a healthy breakfast before attending class.

PERSONAL TOYS AND ITEMS

We encourage children to properly label all items brought to Little Wonders Preschool. Any child that brings a personal toy or piece of equipment brings it at his or her own risk and will be asked to leave it in their cubby. Any reading material that your child wishes to bring must be appropriate for all the children to view (ages 3 – 5). Preschool staff are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged belongings. Lost items will be placed in the "Lost and Found", which will be emptied at the end of each month.

SCREEN TIME

As per licensing policies, children who are in attendance for a program that is 2 hours or less in duration will not have access to computers, tablets, or movies. Children who are in attendance for a program that is 3 hours or longer may have access to computers, tablets or movies as per the leader's discretion. On average, we play around 4 movies per school year.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Please notify staff if your child will be absent from Preschool. Call our Centre at (250) 744-2718 and, if no one is available to take your call, please leave a voicemail message. You can also send an email to attendance@viewroyalosc.com.

Please be considerate of the other children and their families by keeping your child at home if he or she is not well enough to attend. Remember that your child should not be in class if they are not well enough to play outside or participate fully in activities.

Hand washing plays an important role in staying healthy during the cold and flu season. Staff members will model appropriate hand washing and ensure that children properly wash hands with soap and water before snack time.

All children must be toilet trained and capable of using the toilet on their own.

BEHAVIOURAL GUIDANCE

Our aim is to help each child develop self-confidence and self-discipline in a warm and supportive environment. Every child and staff member in the class will be encouraged to show respect for themselves, others, and their surroundings.

To help meet these objectives, staff will provide the following:

- An environment that welcomes and values each child.
- An atmosphere that fosters self-help skills, builds self-confidence, and promotes acknowledgement of and responsibility for one's own behavior.
- Recognition that each child is an individual and, therefore, that his or her behavior is influenced by many factors including his or her developmental abilities.

In order to build a safe and positive environment, our staff at Little Wonders Preschool will:

- Provide daily routines with clear and consistent limits
- Reinforce appropriate behavior



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- Acknowledge feelings and treat each child with respect
- Model respect and open communication
- Promoting self-esteem

When conflicts arise, children will be reminded of group guidelines and limits. Our staff will model problem-solving skills and encourage children to contribute suggestions of their own. Our staff may also offer appropriate choices or state the natural and logical consequences of the behaviour. If necessary, they will redirect a child to other activities. The emphasis will always be on providing children with positive strategies that foster effective problem-solving and the ability to interact thoughtfully and successfully with others.

Every child at Little Wonders Preschool should always feel safe and comfortable in class. If a child displays behaviour that endangers the safety of other children, staff or themselves, we may have to ask that the parents/guardians withdraw that child from the program.

If your child is experiencing any difficulties that might affect behaviour in class, please mention it to the Preschool staff. Changes at home, such as the addition of new baby, moving, illness, or a parent that needs to be away for an extended period of time, etc., can all affect the way your child interacts with others.

MONTHLY FEES

Monthly fees are due on or before the 1st day of each month.

We offer several payment options for your convenience.

Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) - With your authorization, we will debit your account automatically on the 1st of each month. Should you wish to make a change regarding your PAD, we require notification prior to the 20th of the month. Requests received after the 20th may not be updated until the following month.

e-Transfers – payments are due on or before the 1st of the month, even if the first falls on a weekend. Procedure for e-Transfer:

- Confirm with your bank, credit union etc., that they offer this service. There may be a service charge at your end. For example, Coast Capital charges approximately \$1.50 per transaction.
- When you set it up at your end, you'll be asked to set up a password, which you will need to advise the Manager (admin@viewroyalosc.com) so that they can complete the transaction at our end.
- If there is a memo or re: line, please type in your name and what the payment should go towards (i.e. monthly fees, pro d day, etc.)
- Use only the following email address for email transfers:
admin@viewroyalosc.com
- If you use a different email address, be advised that your email could become lost and your payment may not be reflected on your account with us.
- Once we've accepted the transfer, our understanding is that you will receive a confirmation email. Please keep this email - if your payment needs to be traced, this will speed up the process.

The Parent Board monitors all accounts on a monthly basis: failure to keep your account current could result in the loss of your space in the program.

Please note that we will only accept Pre-Authorized Debit, Interac payments or money orders. We do not accept credit cards, personal cheques, or cash payments.

GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIZED FEES

For families eligible for Provincial Subsidy funding, it is your responsibility to ensure that your forms have been forwarded to our office by the 15th of the month prior to date that your Subsidy is to begin. For example, if your authorization starts on January 1st, our office must receive all documentation by the 15th of December.

All families are responsible for payment of the first month's fees, unless you can supply us with your Subsidy Authorization beforehand. Once we receive your authorization, we will send in our claim and your account will show a credit, which will be used as your parent portion.

Parents receiving Subsidy must speak to the Manager regarding the parent portion, if applicable, and make arrangements regarding payment of these fees.

Please note that we DO NOT send reminders, as renewals are the responsibility of parents/guardians.

REFUNDS

Should your child be absent from the program due to illness, holiday, withdrawal without a month's notice, etc., refunds or reimbursements will not be granted.

Should we discharge your child from the program without notice, you will be reimbursed any balance of fees paid for that month, based on the date that your child was discharged.

If, at the end of the school year, your account has a credit balance, you have the options of receiving a refund or of using the credit toward Summer Camp or the following year's registration.

In the event that you give notice to the Society for your space and your account has a credit, we will forward you a refund cheque.





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LATE PICK UP FEES

Without exception, you will be charged \$30.00 per child for every 15 minutes, or portion thereof, that your child remains at the program after 12:00pm. You will be billed accordingly.

If, 30 minutes after closing, we have not been able to contact someone on the Authorized Pick-Up/ Emergency Contact list to pick up your child, we will call Emergency Day-Care Services, who will take the child into their custody until a parent/guardian is located.

Late pick-ups are monitored by staff, and repeated instances are reported to the Parent Board and could result in the loss of your space in the program. If payment has not been received in 10 business days, your account will be billed \$25.00 per child every 30 days thereafter.

In the event of an unexpected delay (e.g., flat tire), please call the Centre as soon as possible to notify staff.

LATE PAYMENT FEES

If we have not received your payment by the 2nd business day of the month, your account will be charged a \$10.00 per day late fee. This will be billed on your next statement and you will be required to pay the balance in full the following month. An invoice for the charge will be emailed to you. If we have not received your monthly fees by the end of the 5th business day, your space will be frozen as of the next day and your child may not attend our programs until payment has been received in full. The late fee of \$10.00 per day will continue to be charged until payment has been received.

Once we have received your payment, you will be required to complete the Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) form and all future payments will be processed in this manner.

If payment has not been received by the 10th business day of the month, the Society will advise you in writing of the status of your space in the program. The Society reserves the right to terminate your space in this instance.

In the event that one parent/guardian fails to pay their monthly portion, the other parent/guardian listed on the registration documents will be responsible for payment of these fees. For further information, please contact the Manager.

TAX RECEIPTS

Receipts will be prepared no later than the last day of February each year. There is a \$25.00 charge for preparation of any duplicate receipt.

WITHDRAWING YOUR CHILD FROM THE PROGRAM

We require written notification of any request to withdraw your child from our program. This notification must be received one month prior to the date on which you would like to terminate care (for e.g., on or before February 1st if you would like to terminate care effective March 1st).

Should insufficient notice be given, you will be billed one month's fees.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

The Parent Board may revoke your child's program space due to:

- 3 or more late payments, late pick-ups and/or returned payments;
- Non-payment of fees;
- Inability of the child or family to follow policies, procedures and rules of the program; or
- Inability of the program to meet the needs of the child or family.

If a child or family is facing the possibility of termination due to an inability of the child or family to follow policies, procedures, or expectations of the program, or if the program is unable to meet the needs of the child or family, the Manager will notify the family of this possibility as soon as possible. The Parent Board will give one month's notice, in writing, when terminating services. However, if termination of services is due to non-payment of fees or the safety of children or staff, no notice is required. The Centre retains the right to terminate services immediately and without notice should the safety of the child, other children, or staff be compromised.

PARENT INFORMATION BOARD

While we primarily use email to keep our families informed about Centre happenings, we also post information, notices, and sign-up sheets on the Parent Information Board. It is your responsibility to ensure that you read this information as it is posted. Should you have any questions or concerns, we invite you to contact the staff or management.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

We require immunization documents for each child, unless indicated on your registration forms. If your child is not immunized, you must remove your child from our programs if there is a suspected or confirmed outbreak of a communicable disease. Your child may return to our programs once we receive a written medical note stating that the child can return safely.

MEDICATION

Prescription or non-prescription medication required by your child may be administered by program staff. Medication must be in the original container, labelled with your child's name, and accompanied by a completed and signed Permission to Administer Medication or Permission to Self-Administer Medication form, available from the Centre. Staff are not permitted to give medications in dosages that exceed those on the physician's prescription or manufacturer's label, even if the parent indicates such on the permission form. Staff may refuse to accept the responsibility of administering medication if they do not feel capable of doing so safely.

All medications are to be stored in our medication box, which is kept out of the reach of children.



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ILLNESS

Staff will contact you should your child arrive, or become, ill while at the program. If your child exhibits severe cold symptoms, fever, vomiting, suspicious rash, or diarrhea, you will be contacted and required to pick up your child immediately.

Parents/guardians are required to inform Preschool staff if their child has contracted a communicable disease (for example, chicken pox, impetigo, scarlet fever, head lice). Children returning to the program after having had a communicable disease must have met the criteria for treatment as prescribed in the Island Health booklet 'Communicable Diseases'. A copy of this booklet is on file at the Centre. In some instances, a note from the child's doctor may be required before the child is permitted to return to the program.

ACCIDENTS OR INJURIES

In the event that a child is injured while at the program, Preschool staff and/or management will assess the severity and nature of the injury. Minor injuries, such as bumps, bruises, and small scrapes or surface cuts, can and will be tended to by the staff and brought to the parent's/guardian's attention upon pick-up. If staff and management believe that an injury requires emergency medical attention, an ambulance may be called or the attention of a physician sought.

Any injury requiring emergency medical care will be reported to the child's parents/guardians immediately and to Island Health within 24 hours.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Techniques such as redirection, discussion, and taking time away from the group will be implemented to help children understand and follow rules and expectations.

If a child displays behaviour that endangers the safety of other children, staff or themselves, the child may be asked to move themselves to a safe area. Physical behavior towards any child or staff member is not tolerated and could result in immediate dismissal from the Preschool without notice.

We make every attempt to work with children and families to manage and resolve behavioral issues. Our staff will observe the following process:

1. Parents/guardians will be verbally notified of their child's inappropriate behavior.
2. If problems persist, the child and parent/guardian will meet with program staff to discuss concerns and solutions.
3. If, after the aforementioned discussion, the child is still having difficulties functioning safely in the program, parents/guardians will be contacted in writing by the Program or Operations Manager, with a copy of the letter going to the Parent Board.
4. Should problems persist, the Parent Board may remove the child from the program.

CHILD ABUSE

Staff are not permitted to subject children to any form of physical punishment (shaking, shoving, spanking, hitting, etc.), verbal or emotional abuse (belittling, degrading, humiliating comments, etc.), or to deny physical necessities as a form of punishment (food, toileting, etc.).

Any staff member or volunteer suspected of abuse will be immediately removed from the facility and investigated accordingly.

Any incidence of suspected child abuse will be documented and reported to the managers and Ministry of Children and Family Development: Child Protection immediately and without reservation.

SUSPECTED IMPAIRMENT

Little Wonders Preschool will take every reasonable precaution to prevent any person unable to provide care from gaining access to a child. If staff members believe that a child's safety may be at risk due to suspected impairment of a pick-up person, they will offer to call a taxi, or contact a relative or friend of the family to pick up both the person and child. As required by law, our staff may call Child Protection Services and/or the police in the event that a child is taken off premises by a person suspected of being impaired.

SMOKING AND SCENTS

By law, smoking is not permitted on the grounds of View Royal Elementary School or inside our Centre.

Due to health concerns arising from exposure to scented products, the View Royal Out of School Society and Little Wonders Preschool have instituted a policy to provide a scent-free environment for all children and employees. Please refrain from wearing personal care products (e.g., perfumes or lotions) that are heavily-scented.

STAFF-PARENT CONTACT OUTSIDE CENTRE HOURS

Little Wonders Preschool and its staff operate to provide a safe and fun environment to children attending our program. Any contact, either business-related or personal, between families and staff members outside of our Centre is strictly between these parties and should remain outside of the Centre's operations.

We look forward to spending time with your child as well as getting to know each family!

We have an open door policy and welcome any questions or comments that you may have.

Welcome to Little Wonders Preschool!



It takes a community to raise a child