



Dear Little Creek Families,

This handbook is designed to inform all families about the basic functioning of our school. We ask that you read it carefully and keep it available for future reference.

We appreciate your support of the regulations and standards that are addressed in this booklet. We look forward to working collaboratively with you to assure your child has a meaningful and positive preschool experience.

All of this material will also be available on our website - please visit www.radcliffecreekschool.org, and under the Little Creek menu click on "Student Forms and Info.

Thank You,

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Radcliffe Creek School, Inc. is a non-profit educational institution founded in 1996. Little Creek was established by Radcliffe Creek School, Inc. in 2009. It is a Maryland State Department of Education licensed and approved nursery school and child Care Center serving children from infancy through prekindergarten with Before and After school child care.

Children are our focus and our staff makes up the foundation of our programs. The experience, education, and child centered teachers and assistants ensure continuity of quality programming from year to year. Child/staff ratios and group sizes are kept low to facilitate a child-centered approach.

MISSION AND PURPOSE Little Creek's mission and purpose is to offer a nurturing learning environment that creates avenues for young children to learn and discover. We promote a strong foundational language base for proficient pre-academic skills through an educational program. With a low student to teacher ratio, Little Creek is able to provide customized instruction, utilizing a multi-sensory, hands-on, experiential approach to learning.

- To offer developmentally appropriate early childhood/school age child care programs.
- To provide safe, healthy and reliable child care options for working parents.
- To maintain a dedicated, professional staff through competitive salaries, benefits and ongoing professional development training.
- To develop and maintain partnerships with parents, staff, community, state and national organizations.

Educational Program Little Creek Preschool is an approved nursery pre-school by the Maryland State Department of Education for children 2-5 years of age.

Little Creek Philosophy

Radcliffe Creek School's "Little Creek" is an early childhood learning center that

values and promotes a differentiated learning approach that reaches students of varied cultures, languages and abilities. Little Creek offers a safe learning environment that is designed to meet the developmental needs of each student through play based, multi-sensory activities. Learning opportunities are child directed with options for both large and small group interaction among peers. Little Creek students experience hands-on learning allowing for customized, experienced based knowledge that reaches all developmental areas and needs.

Little Creek and it's parent school, Radcliffe Creek School, employ the belief that as each student develops a positive understanding of self, he/she is able to engage in the learning process *and* grow into a self-regulated and independent learner.

DIVERSITY POLICY Radcliffe Creek School thrives from diversity and embraces people of all beliefs, styles, and backgrounds into our learning community. Intolerant of bias and based on core values of acceptance and respect, Radcliffe Creek School celebrates individual differences in its students, family members, faculty/staff, and Board of Trustees.

STATE LICENSING Little Creek Preschool with its before and after school program is a licensed child care facility, having met or exceeded all requirements set forth by the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Child Care with regard to facility, equipment, program content and staff.

Little Creek Preschool is inspected annually by the Maryland Department of Child Care, the Health Department and the Fire Marshall.

Copies of the reports on the aforementioned inspections are on file in the office.

ADMISSIONS The prerequisites for admission to the Three and Four-year-old rooms are that the child must be three or four years old on or before September 1 of the school year of which you are applying for your child to enter and that the three and four year olds be independent in toileting unless there are documented special needs. For the Twos classroom, a child must be two years old to enter (and turn two before January of that school year). Little Creek has a rolling admissions deadline throughout the year.

REGISTRATION AND TUITION A contract and deposit are required to enroll your child in Little Creek. A place in the class will be reserved once the contract and non-refundable deposit have been received.

ADMISSION POLICY Little Creek has a nondiscriminatory admissions' policy. Little Creek admits children without regard to race, creed, color, disability or gender. Radcliffe Creek School, Inc. complies with all the conditions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992. Priority placement is given to current students and with siblings and five day per week schedule requests. Little Creek offers an MSDE approved preschool for three and four year olds. Children must be three, or four, years of age on or before September 1 of the school year at the ages prescribed by state regulations to be eligible for admission to the nursery school or pre-kindergarten programs during that school year. Children under two years or age are grouped according to age and staff-child ratio requirements established by licensing.

Little Creek meets National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) guidelines for toileting and dressing skills unless a child has diagnosed special needs.

PLACEMENT CRITERIA Children are grouped by age as required by the Maryland State Department of Education [COMAR 13A.09.09.10C.(3)(a) and 13A.09.09.10C.(4)(a)]; MSDE, Office of Child Care; National Afterschool Association (NAA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). For admission to our MSDE approved programs, children must attain the required age on or before September 1 of that school year. Other factors that are considered include licensed capacity, group size and child/teacher ratios. If parents, teacher, coordinator and the executive director or feel that a developmental placement would better meet the child's needs and space permits, a written child care plan will be formulated. Vertical articulation/transition plans are established for each child in preparation for them to move up to the next class program.

INCLUSION POLICY Students with any health, physical, emotional, mental or other needs requiring special attention or accommodations must have all forms completed and a reasonable and appropriate plan developed by parents and Little Creek prior to admission into the program. Little Creek reserves the right to recommend a different staff for students whose needs cannot be met in the group setting.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Schedule a tour of our program and interview for you and your child with the Director of Little Creek.
- Review Parent Packet and other materials. Call Director with any questions or for references.
- To apply, complete and submit the Application with a non-refundable Application Fee.

- After reviewing the application, Little Creek will inform you of an admission decision. Selection for admission will be determined by its ability to meet your family's needs.
- To allow for review and planning and to comply with Maryland law, parents must return the following completed forms at least one month prior to start date. Children will not be permitted to attend without a complete file.
 - Emergency Form/Medical Condition form
 - Health Inventory (Part I- Parent) Health Inventory (Part II- Physician)
 - Immunization Certificate
 - Medication Administration Authorization (Release to administer medication. Must match prescription container.)
 - Student Information
 - Directory Form, Partnership survey and Transportation Safety Restraint Policy
 - acknowledgement
 - o Also families are given the link to review the Little Creek Parent Handbook

PROGRAMMING OPTIONS MAY VARY AS DETERMINED BY COMMUNITY NEEDS

CLASSROOMS

- Infant (starting at 2 months)
- Toddlers (12 month- 24 months)
- Twos (24 mos.)
- Threes Classroom (3 by Sept. 1st)
- Fours Classroom (4 by Sept. 1st)

SCHEDULES Students may attend on predetermined days only. Priority is given to 5 day per week requests. Children can attend a full week (five days), part week (two, three or four days) and for a full day or part day.

Ask director about availability of customized schedules.

HOURS/CALENDARS

7:15 A.M. — 5:15 P.M.

Summer and Year round program options are available.

SCHEDULED CLOSINGS

Independence Day
Professional Days
Labor Day Weekend
Indigenous Peoples Day
Thanksgiving Break
Christmas through New Year's
New Year's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
President's Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
Memorial Day

***** Please visit www.radcliffcreekschool.org to review our school calendar & weather policy. *****

CURRICULUM

THREES AND FOURS PROGRAM Little Creek developed an integrated, exploration, theme-based curriculum which is developmentally designed to enhance physical, emotional, cognitive, and social growth of each child using the MSDE approved "Investigators Club Curriculum" framework. Students are encouraged to explore, experiment, and experience developmentally appropriate activities.

Our staff supports children so that they feel safe and secure, give them responsibility, model empathy and respect for others, and encourage them to explore and discover the world around them. Teacher biographies are distributed at the beginning of each school year and are available from the coordinator.

To assess children's growth and development, Little Creek utilizes a process of obtaining information to plan for and report individual profiles. Each profile chart each child's development over the course of a year and beyond. This system is a comprehensive means for monitoring children's social, emotional, cognitive and physical progress through teacher observations and child work documentation within the context of the daily learning environment.

The seven content areas of the threes and fours classrooms learning will be integrated utilizing theme-based approach. The content areas are: Personal and Social Development, Language and Literacy, Mathematical Thinking, Scientific Thinking, Social Studies, The Arts (includes music, drama, dance, visual arts), Physical Development (including health). Language and literacy experiences will be evident throughout the classroom. Phonological awareness, vocabulary and comprehension development through reading aloud from theme-related children's literature, writing, and creative learning spaces will be evident and experienced by students. Orton-Gillingham systematic sequence of teaching sounds will also be incorporated. This multi-sensory approach emphasizes learning phonemes and the rules of our language so that children at an early age can begin to identify multisyllabic words. Teacher-guided and child-selected learning centers will be available for students to explore, reinforce, practice, and experience new skills. Also, being theme-related, these interactive learning centers provide opportunities for individualized learning styles, interest levels, and social-emotional development skills of children.

INFANT/TODDLER/TWO PROGRAMS Little Creek will concentrate on all developmental aspects of the young child and seven key areas of the "Creative Curriculum" that are critical during this period of brain development—theories of child development, individualization, family involvement, health-safe-stimulating environment, child selected activities, adult interactions, and specialized training for staff. They also use Healthy Beginnings in all three classrooms. The Toddlers and Twos use Frog Street as their main curriculum.

"Play" is probably the most important means of learning. There will be times during the day when children will have the opportunity to self-select activities within the learning environment (inside and outdoors). Getting along with others, decision making and problem solving skills are all necessary for becoming a successful student, adult, employee, employer, and life-long learner.

Our practice in every classroom is for every child to be challenged at a developmentally appropriate practice, supporting every learning, allowing them to work at the appropriate pace. Our program focuses on understanding how children learn, think and develop while building on their strengths.

Enrichment activities— music and movement program is included in the program. Optional programs such as dance, and karate will be available during the day for an additional fee.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00-8:35 Arrival Time, Unpack & Table Activities/Manipulatives

8:35-8:55 Opening (Morning Meeting) Jobs, Attendance, Schedule, Music & Movement, Plan Do Review Process

9:00-10:10 Open Centers, Small group instruction and project table, Projects at the Teacher's tables: Pre-reading, Math, Science and Art activities
Self-selected Learning Centers: Book Area, Manipulatives, Blocks, Computer, Dramatic Play, Lego Table, Special Thematic Centers, Science/Math, Art

10:15-10:35 Bathroom & Snack

10:35-11:00 Circle Time: Stories, Discussions, Phonemic Awareness (Sounds of letters) Numbers, Days of the week, Letter and number of the week , science, etc. Plan Do Review follow-up

11:00-11:10 Bathroom Break

11:15-11:55 Outdoor Play

12:00-12:45 Lunch (Prep & Clean-up)

12:45-1:10 Group Time/Story Time/Activity

1:10-1:20 Bathroom, Prepare for Rest/Nap

1:20-2:40 Nap/Rest

2:45-3:00 Self-selected learning center activity

2:55-3:00 Transition Activity for School Dismissal; Dismissal

3:00-3:15 Snack

3:15-3:30 Bathroom

3:30-4:45 Outside play (weather permitting)

4:45-5:00 End of day transition activities

These times and schedules are subject to change

INFANT, TODDLER, TINY TOTS/TWOS PROGRAM (6 weeks- 3 years) The Infant/Toddler/Two curriculum will concentrate on all developmental aspects of the young child and seven key areas of the Creative Curriculum that are critical during this period of brain development—theories of child development, individualization, family involvement, health-safe-stimulating environment, child selected activities, adult interactions, and specialized training for staff. Little Creek offers carefully designed environments for its youngest children, starting at six weeks of age. Specially trained staff nurture and guide the little ones through these formative years. Continuity of care and secure, loving relationships prepare children for their emerging independence. Little Creek staff will assist with “potty training” for two and three year olds. Staff ratios are excellent and usually exceed recommendations. A 1:3 ratio is maintained in the Infant/Toddler room and a 1:6 ratio in the twos classroom. Staffing for each classroom depends on the ages of the children, the number of children in the group, and the individual classroom size. All teachers maintain current infant/child CPR and First Aid. To help maintain a healthy environment for all, parents must furnish documentation of immunizations, medical conditions, and medication orders as required by the MSDE Office of Child Care and the MD Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. During Little Creek orientation or conferences parents are to become aware of the specific policies.

Staff members are selected according to Little Creek policies, OCC licensing requirements, and accreditation guidelines. In addition to early childhood credentials, all teachers have completed course work specific to children, birth to age three. Each infant and toddler will be assigned a primary care provider who will be responsible for working with parents regarding their child’s activities, growth and development. Every two months, parents need to provide Little Creek with an updated written daily schedule for their child.

The program will be individually developed according to NAEYC child development standards, individual needs, and Little Creek constraints. Developmentally appropriate activities are child-centered, directed toward the natural interests and inclinations of children. The activities are also need-centered, directed toward the physical, emotional, cognitive and social abilities of children as determined by normal expectations. Parent communication will be on a daily basis via the completion of a daily log and through morning and afternoon dialogue between parents

and teachers. Parents are strongly encouraged to share information with staff and should put important information in writing. Staff will complete the log indicating feeding patterns, diapering schedules, sleeping and daily highlights. The developmentally appropriate assessments will be used to document children's growth and development. Parent meetings and workshops will be held periodically to give parents the opportunity to meet with the staff and with other parents who have children at Little Creek.

ARRIVAL PROCESS Parents are asked to bathroom and groom their child when they arrive in the morning and complete their section of the log. As required, a designated staff member is required to conduct at least 1 daily health check of each child when they arrive and document the findings on the log. Other daily health checks will be completed periodically throughout the day.

FOOD GUIDELINES/NUTRITION POLICY

Little Creek requires that parent's follow the following guidelines regarding food:

SNACK

- To provide the children with a nutritious snack, we ask parents to supply the snack. Each family is assigned a snack day each month in our Three's and Pre-K with a different nutritious snacks listed. On occasion, your child's teacher may request a different snack or ingredients that will be incorporated into a cooking project. We also ask for all fruits and vegetables to be fresh. All crackers are to be wheat. This is from the MSDE food guide lines. We are required to serve fresh fruit and vegetables multiple times a week.
- If you are unable to provide the snack during your scheduled time, you may send in ahead of time or please trade with another parent and notify your child's teacher of the change. Each student will bring in his/her own drinks daily. The classroom has a water cooler and children may refill their water bottles at any given time. We also have a water fountain.
- All snacks must be in original, unopened containers.
- All whole grains must be wheat based to meet MSDE requirements.

LUNCH A lunch program is available for children enrolled in Little Creek. Lunches may be purchased. Children may sign up for lunches in the beginning of the school year, in December and again in March by using our online form. The cost of these lunches vary and payment is due in full at the time the order is placed. The lunch period is from approximately 12:00 to 12:30pm. If your child does not order lunches from the school, you are responsible for

providing your child with a well balanced lunch and a drink. **Each child's lunch should be packaged in a gallon ziploc bag as per MSDE sanitation guidelines and will be refrigerated.** The individual food items provided from home are monitored as the items are placed in front of each child. The children will receive additional food if the lunch provided does not meet the healthy plate guidelines. myhealthyplate.com is a wonderful resource for your family.

Parents will be reminded of their responsibilities to provide a nutritious lunch for their children. Little Creek is partaking in Maryland's EXCEL'S Health and Wellness and the staff has been trained in Let's Move! <http://www.letsmove.gov/>

BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL EVENTS Children enjoy celebrating birthdays and special events at school. Parents are encouraged to collaborate with Little Creek Staff to organize a child's birthday celebration. In order to promote and educate children about healthy eating, we want to keep birthday food treats to a minimum and ask that parents bring in a fruit or vegetable to accompany the birthdays and class parties.

Little Creek prides itself in staying a forerunner in the field of early childhood education by promoting health, safety and nutrition. We regularly review current health and safety resources and discuss the requirements and recommendations with the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Child Care/Accreditation and the County Health Specialist. When appropriate and necessary, Little Creek revises old and implements new policies for the safety and well-being of our children.

- Staff will not serve children less than two years of age using plastic utensils or styrofoam containers (choking hazards).
- Parents will provide daily non-disposable serving utensils for each snack or meal for children less than two years of age (a commercial sanitizing dishwasher in an approved commercial kitchen is required to reuse non-disposable utensils for each meal).
- All leftover, perishable food/formula will be disposed of before children leave Little Creek each day. Only non perishable, unopened commercially packaged food will be allowed to leave Little Creek in the child's lunch container. Food will be disposed of after each meal unless parent submits written request to see leftover food at dismissal. At that time the food will be discarded according to policy (all opened food is considered contaminated after 1 hour).
- Parents and staff will develop a feeding plan which indicates the time of the feeding, amounts of food, and the kinds of food to be consumed. All food is to be provided by the parent to accommodate various diet plans. However, health and safety requirements will only allow Little Creek staff to serve food that follows the food service guidelines below.

Food Service

- Label everything and every serving part with child's name (i.e. bottle, all parts of the sippy cup- top and bottom).
- Parents will provide only commercially packaged and prepared food and formula or breast milk to be served. Food and formula containers will not be heated in the microwave but in heated water when necessary. Parents of infants will provide commercially prepackaged, premeasured powdered formula with bottled water, or commercially packaged screw top liquid formula containers.
- Parents will provide breast milk in prepared bottles with nipples for each serving.
- Only single serving bottles and nipples will be used for each meal (i.e.- 3 meals then 3 separate bottles with clean nipples will be accepted- bottles with liners will be accepted but liners and nipples must be changed with each serving).
- Sippy cups used by many toddlers are only to be used for single servings. They cannot be rinsed out and reused. Consequently, a separate sippy cup is required for each serving of juice, milk, water.
- Opened food cannot be re-refrigerated after child has eaten out of the container; has drunk out of sippy cup or served directly from a baby food jar. For the initial serving from a jar of baby food, staff will pour serving into separate container before serving to the child. The last serving can come directly from baby food jar.
- Leftover food/formula will be disposed of daily.
- Developmentally appropriate foods for snack or lunch prepared by the parent and consumed by the child the same day.
- Provides afternoon snack for children 3 years and older after 3:00pm.
- Infant/Toddler food will be heated and or refrigerated as needed.

MEDICAL NOTE: Please inform the teacher in writing of any food allergies.

FOOD ALLERGIES/SENSITIVITIES Little Creek recognizes that food allergies, in some instances, may be severe and occasionally life-threatening. The foods most likely to cause allergic reactions are peanuts, tree nuts, dairy products, eggs, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish. We will attempt to avoid serving foods containing peanut or tree nut products at snack but cannot guarantee that products with nuts or other allergens or products made in facilities that process these allergens will never be present. Parents of children with severe food allergies or multiple food allergies may be required to provide snacks for their children.

Parents and the health care provider must sign and provide written protocols for all students with food allergies/sensitivities. These conditions should be documented on the Medical Condition form, found on the back of the Emergency Form, and on the Physician's Health Inventory (within the previous 6 months). Parents of students with life-threatening or extensive allergies must provide Little Creek with emergency medication and the Medication Administration Authorization form signed by the parent and the child's health care provider, to be kept at the Little Creek and taken on trips in case of accidental ingestion. It is the parent's responsibility to meet with and instruct staff on the proper administration of epinephrine, nebulizers and health care plans prior to the first day of attendance. Information pertaining to a student's allergies will be shared with all staff that may have contact with the child.

Parents of a child with food allergies are responsible for teaching their child at an early age about managing the allergy by identifying safe foods and reviewing the snack menu together each morning. If after reviewing the menu, parents are uncertain about possible exposure to allergy-causing foods, they should provide a snack for their child that day. If the parent of a young child (2-4 yrs. old) is concerned about a documented food allergy, the parent may provide their child's teacher with up to two non-perishable safe snacks to be kept at Little Creek. This policy has been adopted to better ensure a safe and healthy environment for your child

HEALTH POLICY AND POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES

- Little Creek staff will provide a clean, healthy environment for their students at all times.
- Bleach water must be used when cleaning the room, furniture, eating areas, and toys.
- The classroom will be cleaned daily, throughout the day as needed and toys will be cleaned weekly. Hand Washing procedures are placed around the center and must be followed at all times.
- The Little Creek staff will observe all children upon arrival for signs of neglect, abuse and illness and will observe throughout the day for signs of illness. We will follow the Little Creek Sick Policies stated in this Parent Handbook as well as MSDE regulations regarding illness.
- The Little Creek Staff are required to use the curriculum provided and approved by MSDE when planning for the child, to provide age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate activities that meet all students' needs to include children with FSP/IEPS and or special health care needs. The staff is required to ensure all resources provide both on campus and in the community are offered to help assure every child's needs are being met.
- The Little Creek Staff will be informed of all/any special healthcare needs of any students enrolled. Accommodations will be made as needed. All allergies must be posted in the

classroom.

NAPTIME/REST TIME All children are required by law to take naps or rest on an individual mat/cot. Each parent must supply a labeled blanket and, if desired, pillow to be left at school. Periodically, these items will need to be washed by the parent. We provide nap time books and stuffed animals but if your child has a special nap item, he or she may keep it in his/her cubby.

All children have individual cots, mats or cribs. Cribs meet the standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Each crib has Plexiglas ends, snugly fitting sheet and a moisture proof covering. Bulky blankets, crib bumpers or large stuffed animals are not permitted. Soft, non-skid clean shoes or slippers are worn on cots. Cribs are washed daily; weekly for older children. The cleaning of cots, mats or crib coverings is the responsibility of the parents. Furniture and equipment will be purchased with safety in mind. Walkers are not permitted. Ample toys and materials are available to stimulate language, motor, cognitive, and social development. Infant room toys are sanitized daily.

DIAPERING/TOILET TRAINING Each parent will furnish disposable diapers/training pants, diaper wipes, and diaper creams or ointments (with completed medication order). Staff will follow Health Department approved hand washing, diaper changing, disposal, and bleach clean-up procedures which are posted above each diapering table, sink, and toilet. Universal precautions are practiced. Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and put in the child's cubby. All supplies will be conveniently located for easy accessibility. No child will be left unattended in the bathroom or on the changing tables at any time. Little Creek will follow the national standard for diapering procedures which requires vinyl gloves worn on both hands and changed for each child. Adults' hands are washed before and after each diaper change. Child's hands are washed after each diaper change. Toilet training using a toilet (not potty chair) will begin when the child meets the toileting readiness checklist recommended by nationally recognized authorities. Parents and Little Creek staff will develop a consistent toileting plan at home and at school.

SCREEN TIME Infants, toddlers and twos need responsive interactions with adults; therefore Little Creek limits "Screen Time" for children ages 6 weeks-36 months of age. This follows the developmentally appropriate practices as outlined by NAEYC, as well as the American Association for Pediatrics (AAP). Three's & Pre-K will follow the MSDE guidelines for Screen time.

NO SHOE POLICY MSDE and NAEYC Accreditation standards require that in classrooms

containing non-ambulatory or crawling infants and toddlers there is to be a No Shoe Policy. This policy is extended to children, staff, parents, maintenance crew, etc. Shoe covers are provided for parents and other adults. Parents are asked to provide separate non-slip shoes or socks for classroom use. Staff will be permitted to have separate classroom shoes with shoe covers available as needed. Tour visitors and guests will not be permitted into an infant room.

GROOMING Parents are responsible for grooming their child- combing hair, brushing hair, washing hair, cutting hair, cutting toenails and fingernails.

DISCIPLINE The staff of Radcliffe's Little Creek are highly motivated to help each child socialize with his/her peers, to grow physically, cognitively, and emotionally. Age appropriate classroom rules are posted and discussed with children. Discipline will be handled in a positive manner encouraging the children to talk it out, modeling positive choices, and redirection when necessary. The Little Creek staff are SEFEL trained and will use the SEFEL techniques, language and practices.

Parents will be kept informed by email or phone when necessary. Parent conference with the Director and teacher. If necessary a parent conference with the Director and teacher conference will be scheduled.

SICK CHILD POLICY Please keep your child at home when he/she has a contagious condition or is not well enough to participate in normal preschool activities. Children may not attend class if they have, but not limited to, any of the following conditions:

- Fever greater than 99 degrees. (All children are required to have been fever free for at least 24 hours).
- Sore throat.
- Cold or cough persisting more than three days or of a severe nature
- Vomiting/Diarrhea - children may return when he/she has been vomit/diarrhea free for 24 hours
- Skin rash- **must have a note from a doctor to return to school**
- Lice - (Children need to be free of lice or nits to attend Little Creek Preschool)

Please be sure to notify your child's classroom teacher or the director if they are out sick. You can email or call the school to notify us.

It is the teacher's discretion to call a parent for a pick up if the child is suspected of feeling ill. We are unable to provide extended care to children who are ill. Please contact the school whenever your child has a contagious illness. If your child is returning from an absence, please send a note giving the date(s) of the absence and the reason for the absence.

Staff members are only permitted to render minimal and immediate first aid (washing scrapes, applying Band-Aids, etc.). Any serious injury or one of an uncertain severity will be handled as an emergency. Teachers are not permitted to administer any type of medication, prescription or otherwise until the [Medication Authorization Form](#) has been completed and signed by your child's physician. This form is available on our website. Please see the director for specific medical conditions and/or allergies.

When a child is sent home, he/she should remain at home for a minimum of 24 hours or submit a written statement, from the health care provider, approving the return to the program. Parents are advised to arrange a plan for backup care when the child is ill.

If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. A parent/legal guardian or authorized designee should pick up the child within an hour. If the child's condition warrants immediate medical attention, 911 will be called.

The Head of School/ Director may not re-admit a child to Little Creek after an absence of three or more days due to illness, without first receiving a written statement from the physician stating that the child may return to a regular schedule. If a child sustains a serious illness or injury or is hospitalized for any reason, a doctor's readmit certificate is required.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION

In all MSDE and OCC programs, medication will be administered within the guidelines of Maryland law and according to the policies outlined below:

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION FORMS As a health and safety precautions, Little Creek requires that a health care provider and parent sign and fully complete any necessary Health Care Plans and if required, **MSDE Medication Authorization Forms giving the Little Creek permission to administer any prescription and/or over-the-counter medication to include diaper ointment, sunscreen, lip balm and insect repellent that is used as preventatives.** **This form may be done annually as a blanket**

permission for the year for the above over-the-counter items. Parents must supply Little Creek with a calibrated measuring device for the administration of medicines. If your child needs to keep medication at Little Creek for emergencies, your child's healthcare provider must complete *a Health Care Plan and a Medication Authorization Form*. Make certain that the medication authorization form matches the pharmacy container label. Pay special attention to brand or generic names and dosage amounts. [Medication Authorization Form](#)

Emergency injections of epinephrine will be administered by non-health care professionals according to the DHR Medication Order Form completed by a physician. Parents are required to teach staff how to give these injections. Only pre-measured doses of epinephrine may be given. Little Creek staff members are not health care professionals and therefore cannot observe for the development of symptoms before giving the injection.

IMMUNIZATIONS All children must be fully immunized and records on file at Little Creek prior to enrollment. It is the parent's responsibility to provide ongoing documentation of compliance with regulations. Little Creek will furnish a Summary of Immunization Requirements. If documentation is not presented by the due date, children will not be permitted to return until all documentation is on file.

IN CASE OF SERIOUS INJURY First Aid and/or CPR will be given. 911 will be called. Your child may be transported to the hospital along with a staff member. Parent will be called.

HEALTHY PRACTICE **The single most effective way to prevent the spread of disease is to WASH HANDS frequently and thoroughly.** Children will be taught, supervised and expected to WASH HANDS at appropriate times. Please help practice this at home. All persons entering the building must wash hands upon arrival (staff, parents, and children). **Additionally, we encourage you to follow your healthcare provider's recommendation regarding the Flu Vaccination for you and your child.**

MEDICAL/ DENTAL INSURANCE Parents are responsible for their child's health and dental insurance and/or financial liability in relation to illness, injuries and related expenses, which may occur at Little Creek during the normal course of activities.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES Every effort will be made to keep the children safe during school hours. Children are likely to accumulate some bumps, bruises and scratches during their early years. If, in the opinion of staff on site at the time, a child's injury may warrant emergency treatment, 911 will be called. Parents will be notified. For less serious injuries, parents will be notified by phone call at the end of the day depending on the degree of injury.

Evacuation Location – If building is evacuated the students will be walked to the athletic field across from the school until parents can be contacted to pick up their child. If necessary due to weather or gas leak, then students will be taken to the Johnson Offices on Talbot Boulevard or the Dixon Building on Talbot Boulevard.

Lock Down information – Lockdown means that no one can enter or exit the building until deemed safe by safety professionals. Children will be kept in secure locations within the facility.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

PARENT ORIENTATION MEETING/Meet the Teacher An initial meeting of parents, child and teacher is necessary. At your **Parent Orientation** you will have the opportunity to meet the Head of School, Director of Little Creek, and teachers, receive teacher biographies including their educational credentials, get information about curriculum and classroom procedures, and have all your questions answered. The success of your child's development and education depends on cooperation between home and Little Creek. We invite every family to fully participate in Little Creek's programs. Little Creek hosts functions throughout the year. In addition to numerous opportunities within each class, every family is strongly encouraged to complete a parent questionnaire for each child every year. These questionnaires are reviewed by the administration and the voluntary parent committee to help enhance our future programs.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT Little Creek believes that parent involvement is vital to the success of your child's program and subsequent development. Consequently, the relationship between staff and parents must be an integral part of providing an appropriate program for children. Staff demonstrates the value of this relationship by acknowledging:

- The influence of the parent on the developing child as the child's first teacher
- The importance of the family's goals for the child
- The lifestyle of each family and unique styles of child rearing
- The unique beliefs and value system of each family
- The family's ethnic, cultural, and religious background
- The desire of parents to learn about their children
- The pride parents take in their children and their children's accomplishments
- The value of parental input and contribution to the program

Family Engagement Policy Little Creek parents are invited to join the Room Parent Group, Parent Advisory Board, attend classroom events, parties, field trips, be a guest reader, cut items out at home, send in homemade play dough for the play dough club, sign up to send an item that is needed for cooking projects, special event or class parties or other events such as a fundraiser or bake sale. We also host a community event every year that is open to our families as well as the community at large. Our families are invited to participate or volunteer at the Run for Radcliffe, The Annual Auction, Our Wreath Sale, our Parent Teacher, Friends Organization and each classroom has multiple events to include Thanksgiving Lunch, Dad's Day Breakfast, Mother's Day Tea, Christmas Around the World and our end of the year Little Creek Picnic which parents are invited to be a part of the planning, making items, and volunteering and or attending the event. All of these events are listed on our parent calendar, online calendar, monthly and weekly newsletters, and weekly reminders sent by email and Kid's Report.

Events throughout the Year: Meet Your Teacher/Parent Orientation Room Parent Meet and Greet, planning and meeting Parent Night, (Back to School Night) Spirit Days monthly, Halloween Party and Special Centers, Little Creek Fundraisers, Parent Conferences(fall & spring) Fall Soiree, Thanksgiving Program, Christmas Around the World, PJ Day and Visit from Santa ,Dad's Day Breakfast, Guest Speaker for Parents, Scholastic Book Fair, Holiday Program, Advisory Board Meetings, (4 per year) Little Creek Open House, (two per year, open to the community at large) Valentine's Day Party, Spring Egg Hunt, Saturday All Community Event, (often, but not always crafts, music and movement activities) Earth Day Celebration, Saturday Community Playground Clean Up, Mother's Day Tea, Run for Radcliffe, Play Day Play Dough Club, and Guest Reader Club

PARENT/LITTLE CREEK COMMUNICATION Communication forms the basis of any relationship. Our partnership with families is dependent on the sharing of information. Little Creek encourages all parents to become involved with school. There are many ways to be an active parent! Suggestions are as follows:

- Encourage your child to tell you about his/her day. Ask about the projects your child makes – regardless of what they may look like. Little Creek places emphasis on the process taken to complete the projects and not the end product, necessarily. All children are unique individuals and therefore there is an acceptable range of development.
- Help on class trips.
- Make educational games or help with the prep work for any upcoming art projects (cutting out).
- Visit the classroom to share an area of expertise that you may have!
- Participate in class events.

- Serve as room parent or participate on the parent/teacher exchange group which meets periodically or join PTC (Parent, Teacher, Community group).
- Complete annual survey to give information to assist in planning our programs.
- Greet teacher at drop off and pickup.
- Make written entry in child's Kid Report.
- Call us and leave a message or email to ask questions and share thoughts.

LIFE CHANGES KEEP EMERGENCY INFORMATION AND PHONE NUMBERS UP TO DATE! READ THE PARENT HANDBOOK!

If a serious change in your family should occur, please notify the school as soon as possible. Even though you may not have talked openly with your child, he/she probably senses what is happening. Real changes in behavior or work patterns can be observed and it helps if the staff have some idea of the changes. The staff can help your child more effectively if the communication is made with the school. All information will be kept confidential.

What we do to keep parents informed:

- Meet and greet families at arrival and departure.
- Post monthly plans, menus, newsletter, parenting tips, schedule, field trip/party notices, etc.
- Place notices, tuition receipts, accident reports, completed "projects," etc. in child's cubby.
- Place and return phone calls and emails.
- Offer Parenting information educational articles and resources available.
- Schedule parent/teacher conferences annually and more often as necessary.
- Provide written student assessments twice a year.
- Maintain community resource information board and parenting media collection.
- Schedule parent and student orientation visits for new and continuing families.
- Coordinate parent visitation days, back to school nights, etc. family functions
- Invite parents to participate in Little Creek's Parent Teacher Exchange Committee and PTC liaison.
- Have an open door policy — parents of registered students are welcome to visit anytime.

Radcliffe Creek School sends out an online newsletter via Constant Contact every Thursday. All Little Creek parents receive the newsletter so that they, too, are aware of the happenings at the

school and a weekly blurb. Little Creek Parents are included in all social engagements of the school (Fall Open House, Winter Dance, etc.). Little Creek is also represented in the PTC (Radcliffe's Parent-Teacher Group).

Little Creek also has its own monthly Newsletter and Calendar. This information is kept on the Little Creek website which is not available to the public. Little Creek shares this link with parents at the beginning of each year.

CONFERENCES, STUDENT EVALUATIONS AND SCHOOL-PARENT COMMUNICATION

Parent/teacher conferences to discuss your child's progress will be scheduled in November and April. If you wish to initiate a conference at any other time, please call or email your child's teacher and Little Creek Staff will gladly work to set up a conference at a mutually agreeable time. Student Reports are as follows:

- All Students are assessed in the first thirty days using Developmental Screening tools such as Ages and Stages Questionnaire.
- Individualized Goals & Objectives are selected for each student in September. They are emailed to the parents in mid-Fall.
- Interim Report is generated in March. These will be emailed to parents as soon as they are completed.
- Progress Reports, which provide more in-depth reporting, are created in December and again at the end of the year in June. These will be mailed or emailed to parents.

PROBLEM SOLVING WITH PARENTS

What to do if you have a concern:

- Schedule an appointment to discuss the concern with your child's teachers.
- Observe the class. Little Creek has an open-door visitation policy for parents of enrolled students.
- Develop a plan of action with the teachers. A written monitoring and evaluation time frame will be established and signed by the parents and teachers.

Not satisfied?

- Contact Director of Little Creek to set up a conference to discuss the concern with parents, teachers and director.

If Unresolved?

- The Director of Little Creek will contact Head of School to discuss the issue with parents and address the concern in the most appropriate and professional manner. Outside professionals may be contacted for assistance in developing the best plan for a successful relationship.

Still not satisfied?

- Parent will be invited to present the concern to the Head of School.
- If it is a Little Creek-wide concern, parent may wish to present their concern at the next Parent Committee meeting.

Little Creek is happy to work together with families to address concerns; however, we must take into consideration the impact any decision will have on other children, families, staff and program integrity.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES Little Creek shares community resources with families when their is a need, at parent/teacher conferences, and upon request. There is also an information bulletin board in our entrance with community resources listed, such as our local Child Care Resources Center, Judy Center, Family Center and all of their community activities. Our parent resource list is maintained by our Director, Head of School and the Special Education Coordinator from our K-8 program. This information is accessible to all Little Creek staff at anytime through a google doc with the various local organizations names, numbers and contact person. Our list is updated every school year, mid year and whenever new resources become available. We list everything available in our county and neighboring counties, as well as, the private sector. Our Director works with each family as a liaison/advocate and helps with necessary paperwork and attends meetings, shares information with all team members that work with the child who needs services or is receiving services.

Little Creek uses Child Find, and Infant and Toddlers to come in and help assess students. Our in house therapists come in for classroom observations, take students out for direct therapy and provide staff and parents with feedback and mini trainings. The Family Center and The Judy Center offer opportunities for families to come for workshops, trainings and events to attend with their children. This information in on our parent information board in the front hall and share by flyers and e-mail.

Little Creek utilizes the Kent County Library in the following ways the teachers/staff check books out to read to the students, use a as teaching references and to put out in the reading centers. Little Creek also advertises age/developmentally appropriate activities the library hosts such as story time, arts and crafts as well as special events.

DRESS CODE Send your child to school in play clothes appropriate for the day's weather and for messy activities. The clothes will probably be dirty by the end of the day. Please do not reprimand children for this, as it will inhibit future participation. Every child should have spare clothing in their cubby. All extra clothing must be plainly marked with the child's name. Please return any emergency school clothing your child wears home so that we have it available for the next time. Safe and sturdy footwear is needed for climbing, running, and jumping.

OUTDOOR PLAY Little Creek recognizes the importance of giving all children the opportunity to play outside daily. We will go outside in cold weather. Hats and gloves are necessary. Only heavy rain, ice or severe heat or cold will keep us inside. During hot weather, a sunhat, light tee-shirt, and sunblock will help protect your child.

TOYS & VALUABLES FROM HOME Unless it is a designated sharing day, please send your child to Little Creek with a naptime snuggly only. Personal items can be disruptive to classroom activities and may be unsafe. Little Creek can not assume responsibility for the replacement of items that are lost, stolen, or broken.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS Little Creek requires that ALL arrangements for any social function involving children from the school be made through home contacts. Please do not send invitations to school unless the entire class is invited. A class list will be printed shortly after enrollment is complete and will be distributed to school families so that invitations may be made by telephone, mail or email.

BIRTHDAYS Children enjoy celebrating birthdays at school. Parents are encouraged to collaborate with Little 20
Creek Staff. In order to promote and education children about healthy eating, we want to keep birthday food treats to a minimum and ask that parents bring in a fruit or vegetable to accompany the birthdays.

ITEMS FROM HOME On Show & Tell days **ONLY**, your child may bring in any item. The teachers will send home information regarding Show & Tell, the first month of school. We ask that you do not send any small items that can be swallowed or items that are fragile or valuable. Children may not bring live animals unless approved in advance by the Director and classroom teacher.

On other school days, we request that you do not permit, candy, food, money or toys to school. Little Creek also asks that, at the beginning of each school year, each family send in

the following:

- Lysol Disinfectant Wipes
- Napkins
- Paper plated (large and small)
- Tissues
- Backpack for 2-4 year olds.
- Change of clothes each season
- Rest /Nap time– crib size sheet, blanket, laundry bag for storage

FIELD TRIPS Field trips provide an excellent first-hand experience. Field trips are always planned in conjunction with topics that are studied in the classroom. A signed permission slip for each field trip is required. All trips will be approved in advance by Little Creek's Executive Director. Children may be transported in staff cars for these events. Parents are encouraged to volunteer to drive for field trips. All children must use age appropriate child safety restraints. Staff will take emergency medical release forms with them on all field trips.

Professionals who live in our community (e.g. police, firefighters, librarians, etc.) may be used as resources from time to time and may be invited to the school.

Regardless of the size of the group, the school will have at least two adults present when children are away from the building (large groups will maintain staff/child ratios).

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE Annual parent surveys are used to validate program components that are meeting or exceeding expectations as well as to make annual recommendations that address any significant issues.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION Little Creek will not, without written permission, give out or discuss information about a child or their family to anyone other than appropriate staff members and representatives of certain health, safety and welfare agencies as required by federal and state law. Other exceptions that allow disclosure without written consent:

- Little Creek will share health and safety information regarding students with the appropriate elementary health and safety officials, to protect the health, safety, and learning of this student and others.

- Representatives of a public agency in a safety or health emergency.

- Authorized government officials
- Judicial order or subpoena
- Accrediting organizations carrying out accreditation functions.
- Financial aid personnel, if needed to determine eligibility for financial aid.

Upon written request from a student's parent or guardian, the director may be authorized to release copies of a student's records to a specified recipient. Cumulative records are maintained for each student enrolled.

- These are retained for two years after the student has left the program and will be destroyed at that time.
- Records are confidential and kept in a secure location.
- Additional copies of individual student records are available at a cost of \$1.50 per page.

Photographs of program activities are taken and may be used for educational research or publicity (web, brochures, mailings, flyers, etc.).

Early Childhood Education majors from area schools, such as Washington College, may be placed at Little Creek for supervised training and observation.

PETS/ANIMALS Little Creek will meet the OCC licensing requirements pertaining to pets and animals in the classrooms. Regular classroom pets will consist of mainly fish aquariums. As part of the educational curriculum topics visiting pets such as cats or dogs will have current rabies certificates. Allergies of the students will be considered prior to pets visiting. Professional companies that provide animal education programs and exhibits may be present at Little Creek. Parents will be notified of these special events.

SECURITY Safety and security is of utmost importance for our children and staff. Radcliffe Creek School will employ video surveillance in order to monitor activity on school property and to further protect the health, welfare, and safety of students, staff, and visitors. This system will not replace the need for ongoing vigilance by staff members. School administrators will ensure that all staff members exercise due diligence in order to maintain general campus security.

Camera Location, Operation, and Control

- Placement of cameras is restricted to public areas.
- Areas chosen for surveillance must be places where surveillance is a necessary and viable deterrent.

- Cameras will not monitor areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy (restrooms).
- Only authorized personnel may access the video monitor or system controls.
- The video camera surveillance system will be in operation 365 days per year and 24 hours per day.
- Only those authorized by the Head of School, Director of Little Creek, and IT Manager may have access to the recordings.
 - Recorded video will be retained for at least thirty (30) calendar days for security purposes unless a decision has been made it is appropriate to maintain some recordings for a longer period, and once disposed of, shall no longer be accessible or retrievable. Our goal with the cameras is to insure safety and use them for best teaching practices with our staff.

Key Pad

The Key Pad is to be used by the Little Creek Staff and Families in attendance of our program. The Director will change the code as necessary and the code will be shared with the appropriate RCS staff and the Little Creek families. The Keypad will only work during the hours of operation.

CARPOOL PROCEDURES

To drop off and/or pick up your child from any of the Little Creek Programs, please drive around to the front of the building at the Little Creek Entrance (second door to the right if you are facing the building). Parents are to park in the designated LITTLE CREEK PARKING spots and escort their child into his/her Little Creek classroom. Once in your child's classroom, a staff member will be present to assist your child in putting away his/her belongings.

LITTLE CREEK INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY Please note: The Little Creek inclement weather policy differs from the Radcliffe Creek School inclement weather policy.

Little Creek follows the weather closings for Board of Education. On days when Radcliffe Creek School is closed due to inclement weather, Little Creek will be open from 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. unless there is a state of emergency issued by the State of Maryland. Little Creek also reserves the right to close for the day and/or early for inclement weather if it's deemed in the best interest of the safety of our students and staff.

There will be no snow make-up days at the end of the school year.

Closing information can be found on WBAL or WCTR radio, as well as on Radcliffe

Creek's website and Facebook page. Little Creek parents will be notified by e-mail of any closings outside of this policy. If conditions in your area make travel unsafe, please use your own discretion in making a decision as to whether or not to transport your child.



I _____, have read and understand the policies and procedures listed in the Little Creek Parent Handbook. It is located on the school website and can be accessed at any time. <http://www.radcliffecreekschool.org> under Little Creek (Forms & Info.) Please sign and return to school Monday. Thank You

_ Signature Date