

Introduction and welcome:

Three Little Birds Preschool is a state licensed family child care home which provides high quality childcare. We are licensed for 10 children and enroll ages 6 weeks through 5. This program has passed an initial state inspection and an annual inspection for fire safety, water test, and complies with laws and regulations governing space, cleanliness, storage of toxic substances and weapons, and the qualifications of the provider. In complying with provisions under 10-148 C.M.R Ch. 34, I have been fingerprinted and background checked with the State of Maine. I currently rate at level 4 for QRIS and am a member of Maine Roads to Quality NAFCC, NAECY and on the board of directors for FCCAM. I'm working towards accreditation which requires classes and educational development throughout the year. I recently obtained my Maine State Infant and Toddler Credential. I provide nutritionally balanced meals and snacks, enrolled in the USDA Child Care Food Program and a member of 5-2-1-0 Let's Go! Program where we are recognized as Gold Star. Our program is also Nature Certified, one of five programs in the State of Maine.

Three Little Birds Preschool admits/enrolls children without regards to gender, race, ethnic origin or disability while being responsive to the individual learning needs. All activities are made available to children in the program with appropriate modifications as needed. We are a mixed age group program, this provides children with a good variety of contact patterns and group feelings. Our program is based on the learning and education for children aged 6 weeks -5 years, or until the child reaches kindergarten. Our program does not work off a commercially purchased curriculum. Learning here is play based and child directed as possible. The projects that are done during our days are developed around interests and skill level of children participating. Kindergarten Readiness and Educational Standards (Maine Early Learning and Development Standards & Maine infant and Toddler Learning Guidelines) are used in lesson planning. Physical activity is part of our play and takes place outdoors as much as possible, If the weather does not permit children to have the opportunity for yoga, dance, creative movement and games.

Rights of Children and Parents/guardians

1. Each child has the right to be free from emotional, physical, sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation
2. Each child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the child's welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the child.
3. Each child has the right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in the Family Child Care Provider rule.
4. Each child must be provided services without regard to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex or family composition.

5. Children must be treated with dignity, consideration and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of Developmentally appropriate practices by the provider and staff.
6. Each child has the right to implementation of any plan of service that has been developed for that child in conjunction with community or state agencies by the provider
7. Each child has the right to developmentally appropriate activities, materials and equipment
8. Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications to the providers policies and practices

Parent/Legal guardians

1. A child's parent or legal guardian must be fully informed of items or services which are included in the rate they pay for childcare services.
2. A child's parent or legal guardian has the right to be fully informed of findings of the most recent inspection conducted by the department. The provider must inform children's parents or legal guardians that the licensing inspection results are public information and inspection results must be posted in a prominent place on the premises.
3. Parents or legal guardians must be notified by the provider within two business days of any actions taken against the provider by the department, including but not limited to, decisions to issue a conditional license, refusal to renew a license or to impose fines or other sanctions.

Sample of our daily schedule

9:00am Drop off (Breakfast is served at 9:00am and cleaned up by 9:30am)

9:30am -10:30am Supported play and Morning activity

10:30am -11:00am Morning snack and bathroom breaks (Diaper Changes)

11:00am- 12:00 Outdoor exploring and adventures

12:00 - 12:30 Handwashing and Lunch

12:30 -12:45 Story time

12:45 - 2:00 Rest time, If your child does not sleep that is ok, but must remain Quiet and not distract those who need sleep

*We are open 9:00am to 2:00pm Monday thru Thursday and closed Fridays. Please do not arrive prior to 9:00am, as this is time I spend with my family and preparing for our school day. The door will remain locked until business hours. **We close promptly at 2:00pm.

**Drop off should be no longer than 15 minutes so we can transition all children into learning and activities. I know goodbyes can be hard for some children, but I promise you that they are happy and involved in play moments after parents and guardians leave.

(School calendar and vacations are listed on website: www.3littlebirdspreschool.com and a copy of will be provided at enrollment)

We follow the same schedule as the Scarborough School Department (Closed for Christmas Break, February break and April break, one week at the end of the summer and all federal

holidays) We are open during the summer break. Tuition does not change during scheduled closures and failure to pay on time will result in termination.

Tuition

Three Little Birds Preschool is open 9:00am to 2:00 pm Monday through Thursday weekly, closed on Fridays. Tuition for our program is \$250 and due in full Monday mornings at drop off, or care will not be provided (late fees begin immediately: \$10 late fee per day until paid in full) Part time care is not offered at this time. All payments are made with our Brightwheel app and must be set on Autopay.

If you choose to terminate at any time a written two weeks notice must be received as well as two weeks tuition paid in full, regardless if your child attends or not.

(Please refer to our signed contract with tuition, late fees)

Waitlist

Should there be a need for a waitlist of children due to ratio limit, children are added to the list on a first-come-first serve basis. Siblings of currently enrolled children will receive priority placement on the waitlist when possible. Families will be called according to the list when a spot opens. We will not hold spots for enrollment, if you are ready to enroll when your name moves to the top of the list you can either be moved to the bottom or choose to be removed.

Records Retention

Three Little Birds Preschool will create, maintain and store all records following the State Of Maine Childcare licensing requirements and best practice standards. Will hold records for enrolled, previously enrolled, staff and volunteers and childcare itself. These records are protected by privacy and confidentiality procedures and securely stored with lock and key. Records are kept from time of enrollment until the child reaches the age of 21. Parents or legal guardians may request and receive access to their child's records at any time.

Withdrawal and termination

I reserve the right to discontinue care for any reason, at any time, upon reasonable notice to the guardian. I will provide a two week notification except when immediate termination is warranted per this agreement. To voluntarily withdraw from this program a parent/guardian must provide written notice stating their children's last day in care. All tuition fees are due at time of withdrawal whether your child continues care for the 2 week period. Parents/guardians may not provide a notice of withdrawal when the provider is on unpaid vacation. If the parent/guardian chooses to withdraw during that period two week notice/tuition is still due.

I reserve the right to terminate our contract *immediately* for any of the following reasons (But not limited to)

1. Non-payment or continual late payments
2. Lack of compliance with Handbook policies
3. Lack of Parent/guardian cooperation, disrespect
4. Failure to complete and return forms
5. Physical or verbal abuse of any person on property
6. Continual disciplinary problems
7. False information given by parent/guardian either verbal or written

A child will NOT be terminated if a child's parent/guardian/relative did any of the following:

1. Made a complaint to licensing regarding alleged violations of licensing rules
2. Made a complaint to licensing regarding alleged violations of the law
3. Reported alleged child abuse or neglect at the child care program
4. Questioned the child care provider regarding policies and procedures

Drop-off, Sign-in, Sign-out and Pickup procedures

Please be in control of your child during drop off and pick up times. This is a time of testing when two different authority figures are present and children may test to see if rules still apply. The moment your children walk in the door until the moment they walk back out they are expected to follow all the house rules. I ask that you help enforce these rules while you are here.

*Please keep me updated on any changes to Drop off and Pickup. Each family must sign a consent form stating who is allowed to dismiss their child from care. I must receive written consent (Via Email, Text message or note) If it is not a parent pickup.

House rules:

1. All food and drinks must be kept in kitchen/dining area
2. No playing in the bathroom
3. No coloring on anything but paper
4. Name calling and foul language or yelling is allowed
5. Hitting, Kicking, pushing, pinching, biting, spitting or hair pulling is allowed.
6. No running in the house
7. All kitchen and bathroom cupboards are off limit to children
8. Climbing to jumping on all furniture, including couches is not permitted
9. No throwing toys

Please show your child that you respect me and my rules by reminding them and enforcing the rule while you are in my program and on my property.

Please sign your child in as soon as you arrive, with time and date. If you know your child will be earlier or later than normal I ask that you text or call to notify me.

Please sign your child out at pickup (unless we are outdoors, I will document dismissal after hours). Once you arrive on the property your child is your responsibility. Children are not allowed back in the house if pickup is outside and I ask that you not allow your child to exit the yard or house without your supervision. Vehicles (either parents or delivery) are in and out of the driveway at all times. (Children are not to unlock doors, or play area gates ever, this is to protect all children)

YIKES

Emergency evacuation plan is on site in case of an emergency evacuation. In the case of an injury or severe illness emergency when you can not be reached I need written consent to obtain medical treatment. (This is part of your enrollment forms)

*In the case of an emergency as a group we will walk the path on the back side of the grounds to Station 5 Fire department where phone calls/texts will be sent to parents. We have an emergency backpack ready to go with first aid, diapers/pull-ups, wipes, snacks, bottled water, a list of contact numbers and a blanket. Since our evacuation plan takes us to emergency management officials we will follow up with the police department once relocated.

*We have a double stroller which is stored in the backside of the yard in a shed: This will be used in the case that we have a child with special needs.

*If our program must go into lockdown for any reason the children will be guided into a safe area if need be (the bathroom or basement) All parents and guardians will be contacted and will be notified of the next steps and plans as we make them. (all doors will be locked and no one will exit or enter freely)

*These procedures will EACH be practiced twice yearly and are documented on our fire drill sheet. Before we practice these drills I give the children a heads up and assure them that we are just practicing and they are safe. All staff and children enrolled trained and familiar with these procedures.

Open Door Policy

We are excited to have all families participate in our program! Since we are a small school I believe it's such a bonus to come together as a group and get to know everyone, in my eyes we are a family. Keep in mind if you visit your child may want to leave with you or have a hard time saying goodbye. If you wish to plan a time to come read, play or adventure with us let me know and we can set that up!

Drop ins are always welcome, but please try to refrain from popping in at lunch or rest time. We have an open door policy, but that doesn't mean the door is always unlocked. We have a coded door and ask that you use the side entrance only (unless we are outback)

5210 Policy

Our program is committed to helping raise a healthier generation. We made our policy to follow the Five Let's Go Priority strategies for healthy eating and physical activity.

1. We limit unhealthy choices for snacks and celebrations
2. We do not provide sugary drinks
3. We prohibit the use of food or good behavior
4. We provide opportunity for physical activities very day
5. We do not have screen time in our program, unless specified educational and under 30 minutes (rarely occurs)

**Please do not bring food from home.

*The Federal Food Program sets guidelines for nutrition that we must follow and enables us to provide nutritious snacks and meals for children enrolled

We never force a child to eat foods they do not like, but do encourage children to try new things. If I'm preparing meals I know your child will not eat there is ALWAYS a second choice.

We can accommodate most allergies and family/cultural preferences. Please sign a Medical information form for known allergies.

Assessments

Assessments completed by me are meant to be positive indicators of normal development and growth in our program.

If the need arises where we feel outside assessments would be beneficial to your child I partner with Child Development Services to offer screening on site. A CDS referral can be initiated by myself or you (Parents)

Contact:

CDS Reach

1011 Forest Avenue

Portland, ME 04103

P: 207-781-8881

F: 207-781-8855

Health and Illness Policy

The State of Maine requires I keep record of children's up to date immunization records, and these must be provided within 30 days of signed enrollment forms. Per State of Maine Law, effective September 1, 2021, exemption from immunization requirements is limited to medical reasons only.

Please provide me with all new and updated immunization records.

The family Child Care Provider must maintain a list of all unimmunized persons, regardless of age. In the event of a disease outbreak as defined by the CDC reporting standards, a child not immunized must be excluded from the Family Child Care in accordance with CDC guidance or until the child receives the necessary immunization or proof of immunity record.

For the health and safety of all children in the program, please do not bring your child to our program if they are sick (Or if a family member is sick, we are still strictly following Covid Guidance) A sick child will not do well in a group setting and it is difficult for staff to give a sick child the attention they need and still continue to keep others healthy and teach. We realize that this may be a hardship for working parents, but we must think of the welfare of all the children enrolled.

Your child may not attend with the following symptoms:

1. Fever of 99.9 or higher
2. Green or yellow runny nose (or constant runny nose of no color)
3. Persistent cough
4. Difficulty breathing
5. Diarrhea
6. Vomiting
7. Mouth sores
8. Rashes
9. Eye irritation
10. Head lice

If you are unsure if your child is well enough to attend, please call me and we can discuss. If your child becomes sick while in care you will be contacted immediately to pick up your child.

*Note: Once your child has left due to illness they may not return until symptoms are nonexistent and a negative covid test has been received.

The child must be void of any contagious disease, unless accompanied by a doctor's note stating the illness in question is not contagious, and the child is well enough to participate in daily activity without worry. Tuition is due regardless of the time your child is out due to sickness.

Please make other arrangements if your child is sick and respect my decision if I feel your child is too sick to be in care. "Dose and Drop", Wherein you administer fever reducing or symptom masking medication to your child at home before bringing them to childcare, is strictly forbidden.

Any parent/guardian found to be doing so to circumvent the illness policy will be issued an immediate termination notice for all childcare.

Medication administration

Three little Birds Preschool sickness policy state: No child shall attend with symptoms or after being medicated (This is ground for termination) If your child requires a prescription medication medical documentation is required containing the following information:

*Name of medication

*Reason for prescription

*Storage and dosage

*Possible side effects

*Duration of prescription (EpiPen, Allergy meds, Nebulizer etc.)

*Medication must come to us in the original container with your child's correct Name and Date of birth listed.

Under no circumstances will I give a child cold or flu medication!

Infectious Disease/Viral outbreak policy

If your child has traveled to/or been exposed to an individual who has traveled to an area where community transmission is high, please contact your family doctor (pediatrician) for advice and covid testing. I will require a negative covid test before your child may return to care.

Should your child or anyone who lives in the same household as the child(ren) in care (to include other parents/guardians or household members) begin to show symptoms of the virus:

1. All symptomatic children will be asked to get tested
2. Children may not return until negative results are received, -or-
3. Children may not return until 14 days after all symptoms are gone following a positive result.

(If you have a child home from school/or another program due to symptoms I ask that you do not bring your child to care in the case that they are carrying the virus and not showing symptoms yet: If you are not feeling well the same guidelines are in place)

Should my children or anybody who lives in my household begin to show symptoms of covid-19:

1. The affected person will get tested
2. Preschool will shut down as we wait for results: (If Positive results are received we will follow the guidance of the CDC and remain closed for the duration of the quarantine period.)
3. If we should shut down because of a preschool/community outbreak or positive test and are required to close per CDC guidelines I will close for the CDC advised quarantine periods for ALL families including my own. (tuition is due regardless to hold your spot in the program)

4. CDC is continuously updating their isolation/quarantine and incubation periods, so please let me know if you have any questions as I will continue to work closely with Maine State Childcare Licensing and the CDC to ensure we are all kept safe and healthy.
- Since we are unable to distance children and keep them masked during meals/snacks and rest time we must continue to follow the 10 day per positive Covid-19 results. Allowing children/families back in prior to the end of their quarantine periods could result in an extended program closure.

If your child is absent from preschool due to their illness, due to following a quarantine period, or due to waiting on a covid test result: Full tuition will still be due. If Preschool is shut down by CDC or Child Care licensing instructions during a global pandemic, I will work with each family to ensure payment is received so your spot will be held upon reopening.

When Can I come back to care?

Fever: You must be fever free and medication free for 24 hours

Vomiting: Episodes must have stopped for 72 hours prior to care

Diarrhea: Episodes must have stopped for 72 hours prior to care

Pink Eye: 24 hours after treatment has been initiated

Strep throat: 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and fever free

Vaccinations: ANY Vaccination requires 24 hours out of care

Taking Antibiotics: Any illness requiring an antibiotic child must remain out of care after the first dose is received, AND fever free

*If a child has been out due to vomiting and/or diarrhea they can return after 72 hours symptoms free and eating and drinking normally.

Doctor's Note required:

Chicken Pox: At least 6 days after onset of rash or until all sores have crusted and doctor note

Pertussis: 5 Days of antibiotic treatment AND a doctors note

Mumps: 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling AND a doctors note

Hepatitis A Virus: 1 week after onset of illness AND when passive immunoprophylaxis has been administered AND doctors note

Measles: 6 days after the onset AND doctors note

Rubella: 6 days after the onset AND doctors note

Mouth Sores with Drooling: Doctor note required

Rash with fever or behavioral changes: Doctor's note required

Tuberculosis: Doctor note required

RSV: 8 days after onset of symptoms, Fever free for 24 hours and doctors note

Covid-19: 14 day quarantine after onset of symptoms, fever free for 72 hours and doctors note with proof of negative test.

If your child visits doctors/walk-in care/ER for anything other than a routine well check they will need a doctor's note to return to ca, even if it is just the sniffles, no exceptions.

Injuries & Emergency Procedures

Emergency information is kept on file at Three Little Birds Preschool. In case of an illness or injury this information will be used to notify the person designated by you, of your child's status. If your child is injured while in care first aid will be administered following the knowledge I have obtained as part of my Adult, Child & Infant First Aid & CPR classes. If treatment by a doctor is necessary, we will make every attempt to contact you or the doctor you have chosen to treat your child. In all cases, an injury report is completed, and a copy is given to parents/Guardians as well as a copy kept for the Department of Childcare Licensing.

Authorization for emergency treatment must be signed at the time of enrollment to ensure that in the event of an emergency, we can make sure your child received the necessary emergency treatment he/she needs. If it is very important the information is kept up to date and correct. Please inform us immediately if you have any changes. Parents/Guardians are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment including transportation. In case of a serious accident or sudden illness requiring immediate medical attention, the following procedures will follow:

1. A phone call to 911
2. Child's parent/guardian will be contacted
3. Child is separated from other children and properly cared for
4. Parent/Guardian or ambulance takes child and health records to doctors or hospital

Monthly Fire drill and safety drills will run with your children and participation is mandatory: to include "Stop, Drop and Roll"

Reporting Serious injury

Maine Law requires child care providers to report serious injuries that require medical treatment by a healthcare professional or emergency room occurring during childcare. Serious injury or illness is an event that occurs and is observed during regular business hours while on site, during an off-site facility-sponsored event. (Serious injury or death will be reported to child care licensing immediately)

Serious injury or illness is defined as the following:

An injury or illness which requires medical attention from medical personnel, including but not limited to : ER or hospitalization

Any reportable illness listed as a noticeable disease or condition by the Maine Center for Disease control.

Accidents resulting in serious injury involving transportation to or from a facility sponsored event

Three Little Birds Preschool will use a serious injury/accident reporting form to report accidents as required by licensing #5.C.11.H. A copy of the completed form will be kept in the child's file and provided to guardians.

Serious injuries will be reported to the Child Care Licensing unit at 207.827.9300 within 24 hours

Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures

Three Little Birds Preschool's goal in discipline is for children to develop inner controls leading to self-discipline. Only positive methods which encourage self control, self direction, self-esteem and cooperation are used. No form of physical punishment is ever used. A child who damages a toy for example may be prohibited from using that toy for a period of time. A child who intentionally spills or throws food will be required in assisting to clean up the mess.

The following standards and rules apply to children when in our care:

1. To prevent unacceptable behavior from occurring, the provider will
 - A. Model appropriate behavior
 - B. Arrange the environment to enhance the learning behaviors that are acceptable
 - C. Use descriptive praise when appropriate behavior is being used (e.g "Look how high you are building those blocks! Let count them")

2. When unacceptable behavior is about to occur or is occurring in to the above the provider will use:
 - A. Redirection: Substituting a positive activity for a negative
 - B. Distraction
 - C. Active listening
 - D. Separation from group (this will only be used when all other methods have not worked)

Children in my care will be taught and expected to share with others, play cooperatively, express themselves verbally, clean up when asked, follow directions and most importantly treat themselves and others (including parents and guardians) with respect.

Parents/guardians will repair or replace any item their child intentionally breaks (Other than normal wear and tear) in or around the house: Including but not limited to: Equipment, toys, electronics, landscaping, windows, doors etc. I will communicate to you immediately if your child is frequently and deliberately causing harm to others and/or frequently and deliberately destructive. This behavior is unsafe and not allowed- Immediate termination will ensue if the behavior persists.

We also ask that your child does not bring any toys from home. In the past items have been broken or lost, or children seem to become overstimulated and unable to share causing unnecessary chaos. If for any reason items are brought from home and lost or broken, Three Little Birds Preschool is not responsible for replacing or repairs.

YOU are responsible for making sure your child understands the house rule before starting care, so long as they are old enough to understand. Please have a conversation with them about respecting others and peoples property. (Disrespect will not be tolerated on any level)

Child abuse and neglect

The Maine office of Child and Family services (OFCS) operates the statewide hotline for child abuse and neglect. Highly trained staff is available to guide callers through the process of making a report of suspected abuse or neglect. Anyone who suspects an individual of child abuse or neglect is urged to call .

CALL: 1800-452-1999

Deaf/hard of hearing call Maine relay 711

As a mandated reporter any provider suspecting abuse or neglect immediately reports this information to Child Protective intake services. 1800-963-9490, 1800-452-1999

Please let me know if you would like any additional information on this topic!

Toilet Training

I will work with each family case by case basis regarding toilet training. I will not however force their child to train if they are not ready. Some common signs to look for in a child who may be ready are:

- *Express interest in coming into the bathroom with you to see find out what is happening in there
- *Understands what the toilet is used for, and what it means to have a wet or soiled diaper
- *Can stay dry for at least 2 hours at a time
- *has regular bowel movements with soft, formed stool
- *can and will follow simple directions of washing hands

*can pull his/her pants up and down

*Is willing and receptive

*Seems to recognize at least a few seconds ahead of time that she is about to go, and can tell you before it happens.

*demonstrates desire for independence

If your child meets most of these criteria they are ready to try, if not we can wait a couple weeks or months and try again. Potty training should begin at home for at least a week, or long weekend before we try here. We will move from diapers to pull-ups. Under no circumstances will your child be able to train in only underwear. This is for sanitary reasons, Regular underwear can not hold urine or feces to prevent the spread of germs. Please let me know when you start training at home and I will work with your child here as well. Number one factor is that your child can communicate to me (or staff) that they need to use the bathroom.

Staff:

All Staff and student teachers work directly with me (owner/head teacher/ director) to support the program. We meet NAFCC standards for staff and assistance credentials.

All adults who provide care for the children within the program have to undergo federal background checks and must take CPR and AED first aid training. All staff need a letter of eligibility/background check prior to working with children as well as a High School degree, GED or be in a pursuit of this education. All staff documentation is kept on file.

Minimum requirement for assistant teachers/staff working alone with children is 18 years of age. They will complete CPR/AED training and complete MRTQ Healthy and Safety training.

Per State (DHHS) rules and regulations any one who lives in the home who is 18+ has also undergone federal background checks.

**Please let me know if you would like a copy of our staff handbook*

Confidentiality

During the course of your association with Three Little Birds Preschool you may see and hear things about other children or the child care business. Such information is confidential, protected by privacy law and must be treated as strictly confidential.

Information about your child's health, behavior, family or anything else of personal nature will not be shared without permission. This included written information you provide on forms, any notes we have both written and verbal. My DHHS licensing specialist may ask to view children's files to assure the program is in compliance and delivering the highest quality education and care.

