



LITTLE DISCIPLES PRESCHOOL

be the light

Family Handbook 2026 School Year



With us, you're family.

Enroll Now

(941) 924-9290

4835 Beneva Rd
Sarasota, FL 34233



Brittany Lindsey, Director

LDP@benevachristian.com
www.LittleDisciplesPreschool.org



Welcome to Little Disciples Preschool

We are so happy to have you!

It is with so much excitement that I welcome you into our family here at Little Disciples Preschool. Preschool is such a sweet and special time in your parenthood and I am truly honored to get to be apart of it.

At Little Disciples Preschool, we believe that childhood is a time of wonder, exploration, and discovery. Our goal is to create a safe, nurturing, and joyful environment where your children can grow socially, emotionally, spiritually, and academically at their own pace. Through play-based learning, meaningful connections, and immersive experiences, we at LDP encourage curiosity, independence, and a love of learning that will last a lifetime.

We are also devoted to building a strong partnership with our families. You are your child's most important teacher, and we truly value the opportunity to work together in supporting their growth and development. We welcome YOU into our LDP family- whether by participating in school events, volunteering within the classroom, or simply genuinely connecting with us day-to-day.

This Family Handbook is designed to guide you through our policies, procedures, and expectations. Our hope is that it will answer questions, set clear expectations, and serve as a helpful resource throughout the year. Please take time to read it carefully, and never hesitate to reach out if you need clarification or support.

From the bottom of my heart, welcome to Little Disciples Preschool.
We look forward to an amazing year filled with learning, laughter, and growth with your child!



Brittany Lindsey
Director
Little Disciples Preschool
“Be a light for all to see” Matthew 5 14-16

Table of Contents

- Pg. 3 | Hours of Operation, Philosophy, and Curriculum
- Pg. 4 | Fees + Tuition
- Pg. 5 | Requirements for Enrollment, Arrival and Dismissal Procedures
- Pg. 6 | Discipline Policy
- Pg. 7 | Suspension and Expulsion
- Pg. 8 | Toilet Training, Dress Code, Open Door Policy
- Pg. 9 | Illness Policy and Medication
- Pg. 10 | Food and Nutrition Policy
- Pg. 11 | Absence, Quiet Time Policy, Communication, and Emergency Procedures
- Pg. 12 | Biting Policy + Termination Policy
- Pg. 13 | Non-Discrimination Policy, Handbook Revision Policy + Beneva Christian Info

Please Provide Before or On the First Day of School:

- Lunch box labeled with first and last name
- Inside shoes (new/unworn) i.e., crocs labeled with first and last name
- A gallon bag labeled with first and last name and filled with:
 - Extra clothing: Shirt, shorts, socks, underwear
- Reusable, spill-proof Water Bottle labeled with first and last name (will travel back and forth with child)
- Backpack labeled with first and last name and 1 folder of your child's choosing

Optional but recommended:

- Unopened diaper cream labeled with first and last name
- Unopened bug spray labeled with first and last name
- Unopened sunscreen labeled with first and last name

Little Disciples Preschool's Weekly Hours of Operation

Our Preschool Day hours run from 8:00am- 12:30pm. Early Morning Care begins at 7:30am and Extended Care runs from 12:30pm until 5:30pm.

Little Disciples Preschool's Philosophy

At Little Disciples Preschool, we believe that children learn and develop best through play. We believe in providing a developmentally safe and nurturing environment, where all children are given the freedom to explore their natural curiosity and are encouraged to create their own sense of self.

“Be the light” is our guiding principle that emphasizes our ideal of bringing positivity, warmth, and kindness to each of our students. We believe in becoming an extension of your village. A place where your children are eager to learn and grow, and caregivers feel supported and confident in our expertise. *With us, you’re family.*

Our program offers a high quality, age appropriate learning environment, meaningful experiences, a foundation of faith, and passionate educators with a deep-rooted love for early childhood education.

Our Curriculum

At Little Disciples Preschool, we follow the HighScope Curriculum, a research-based program that helps children learn through active hands-on experiences. Our students experience exciting, hands-on lessons that are crafted to build confidence, challenge, and set a foundation for future schooling success.

The LDP Difference

Little Disciples Preschool believes in the magic of toddlerhood.

We believe that the first 5 years of a child's life is pivotal and that the place you entrust to help raise them matters now more than ever. Little Disciples Preschool is more than child care. We firmly believe in the impact preschool has on a child's foundation, their future experiences, and their future success.

We believe in and practice our 4 Pillars of Quality Care that sets us apart from other child care facilities

LDP' 4 Pillars of Quality Care

Immersive + Exciting Experiences
Positive Relationship Building
Quality Communication
Low Class Ratios

Registration Fee

A non-refundable *Registration Fee* is due annually upon enrollment:
\$150/year

Supply Fee

A non-refundable *Supply Fee* is due annually upon enrollment:
\$200/year

Half Day Preschool [8am-12:30pm]

Tuition is posted on the 1st of every month and is due on the 5th of that month.

No exceptions or credit will be given for days missed due to illness, vacation, school holidays, etc.
Tuition may be paid by cash, credit card on the Playground App, or debit card on the Playground app.

Transaction fees are paid for by tuition payer.

*Payments may also be made by check, but is due the 1st of the month rather than the 5th of the month to ensure timely payment as checks take longer to process.

Dragonflies + Fireflies (3,4,5)

2 days/week	\$435
3 days/week [Tues, Wed, Thurs]	\$585
5 days/week	\$810

Butterflies (2s)

2 days/week	\$445
3 days/week [Tues, Wed, Thurs]	\$600
5 days/week	\$830

Caterpillars (18 mo- 23 mo)

Play Day [Tuesday]	\$50/Day
2 days/week	\$450
3 days/week [Tues, Wed, Thurs]	\$620
5 days/week	\$845

Wrap Around Care [7am-5:30pm]

5 days/week	\$999
-------------	--------------

Late Fees

Late Tuition Fee is **\$15 per day** for a max of 3 days.

*If tuition is more than 3 days late, care will be halted.

Extended Care Late Pick Up Fee is **\$25 per 5 minutes** after 5:35 pm

*Continued late pick up from Extended Care may result in the loss of Extended Care privileges.

Requirements for Admittance

Our school is available to children ages 14 months to five years of age. Children in Caterpillar and Butterfly classes do not need to be potty trained. To enter our Dragonfly and Firefly classes at 3 years of age, children must be potty trained. We assist with potty training in October and March in the Butterfly Class (2). Each child must have an enrollment form with emergency information on file. Please advise the school regarding all allergies, as well as phone, address, doctor changes through out the year.

Forms Required by Florida Department of Health

Two Florida Dept. of Health forms will be required upon enrollment: The Florida School Entry Health Report and Immunization Form showing current and up-to-date immunizations.

Arrival Time + Procedure

Our front door opens at 8:00 am and we invite our families to come in and drop their children off in their classroom(s). Please park in the parking lot and walk your children inside. Every child must be checked in every morning through the playground app by scanning the QR Code we have posted on the Parent Board. Please confirm that you've checked in on Playground with your child's teacher. Doors will lock at 8:35 am and will remain locked throughout the school day to ensure your child's safety. To gain entry to the school, please ring the Ring Doorbell.

Departure Time + Procedure

Preschool dismissal time is 12:30 pm. Please be on our campus by 12:20pm in preparation for a quick and easy dismissal. Please have your Smart Phone out and ready to scan the Playground QR Code for check out. Children will be brought out the front door by their teacher(s) and will be given after your confirmed check out. After 12:40 pm, any remaining students will be placed in our Extended Care Program.

Arrival + Dismissal Safety Reminders

This is a school zone, please observe a 10 mph limit.

Park in the parking lot. Do not leave unattended children in vehicles. Do not park in the circular driveway.

Please contact the office at any time if you need assistance.

(941) 924-9290

Discipline Policy

At Little Disciples Preschool, our approach to discipline is rooted in respect, connection, safety, and teaching. We believe children learn best in an environment where they feel secure, understood, and supported. Our goal is to guide children towards positive choices using developmentally appropriate strategies that nurture emotional growth and teach emotional regulation skills.

Guiding Philosophy

We use discipline as a way to teach, not punish.

Staff will:

- Build a trusting relationship with every child
- Model kindness, patience, and respectful communication
- Use proactive strategies to help children succeed before problems arise.
- Honor each child's developmental level and individual needs.

1. Positive Guidance Strategies

Connection Before Correction

Teachers will:

- Get down on the child's level
- Use a calm, gentle tone
- Acknowledge feelings
- Offer comfort and co-regulation before problem-solving

3. Teaching Skills, Not Reacting to Behaviors

We intentionally teach:

- Identifying emotions
- Asking for help
- Taking turns and sharing
- Coping Strategies (breathing, sensory tools, taking space)

5. Safe, Calm Separation (When Needed)

If a child is overwhelmed or unsafe, they may take a brief reset with a teacher:

- This is not punitive
- The adult stays nearby and supportive
- The child returns as soon as they are regulated and safe

2. Redirection + Choices

Children are guided toward appropriate behavior by:

- Offering two positive choices
- Redirecting to a different activity
- Using visual or verbal cues
- Reminding children of expectations in a simple, clear language

4. Clear + Consistent Expectations

Children thrive on predictability. Staff will:

- Give simple, consistent rules
- Prepare children for transitions
- Praise positive behavior

Prohibited Discipline Practices

The following are never permitted:

- Corporal punishment of any kind
- Yelling, shaming, or threatening
- Withholding food, rest, or basic needs
- Isolation without adult supervision
- Physical restraint except to prevent immediate harm

When Behaviors Become Unsafe

While we believe all children can learn positive behavior with the right support, there may be times when a child's behavior repeatedly jeopardizes the safety of themselves, other children, or staff.

Behaviors that fall into this category include (but are not limited to):

- Repeated aggressive behavior (hitting, biting, kicking, pushing)
- Dangerous use of materials (throwing objects, using them as a weapon)
- Running away from the classroom or leaving safe areas
- Severe, unpredictable dysregulation requiring constant one-on-one support

If a child intentionally damages property or acts destructively, families will be notified and billed for repairs. The balance must be paid for the same day for the child to return to care.

Aggression or intentional harm toward other children, teachers, or staff is not tolerated. Any act causing injury, including broken skin, will result in early pickup and suspension for the rest of the day. Severe or repeated incidents will be considered a breach of the tuition contract.

Parents are expected to address these behaviors at home with appropriate discipline and communication. Little Disciples Preschool values a strong partnership with families in guiding positive behavior. Continued disregard for staff or director efforts may result in dismissal from the program.

Suspension or Expulsion

Although we strive to include every child, there are times when continues enrollment may not be appropriate or safe. **A child may be suspended or dismissed from the program is:**

Dangerous behavior continues despite all interventions

The child's needs exceed what our program can safely and appropriately provide

The behavior creates an ongoing safety risk to the child, peers, or staff

Parents are unable or unwilling to partner with the school in required support strategies

If dismissal is necessary, parents will receive:

Written documentation of behavior and interventions attempted

A timeline for the final day of care (except in cases of immediate danger)

Recommendations for alternative placements or supportive services

Expulsion is used only when absolutely necessary to protect the safety and well-being of the classroom community.

Our Commitment

Even when challenging behaviors arise, our goal is always to:

Treat every child with dignity, preserve the child's sense of belonging, collaborate with families, and provide a nurturing environment where all children can learn and thrive

Toilet Training

Little Disciples Preschool will assist with potty training if both your child and your family are ready, typically 2.5 years old and up. Parents will be invited to potty train their child in October and/or February of each school year in the two-year-old classroom, The Butterflies. Parents will be required to supply extra underwear and extra clothes each day that is necessary. Communication between parents and the provider is imperative for a successful transition from diapers to toilet. If your child does not show potty training readiness after commencing potty training, Little Disciples Preschool is at full discretion to discontinue the process.

Dress Code

All children are required to wear clothes that are comfortable, easy to play in, and weather appropriate. Simple t-shirt dresses are allowed as long as there are also athletic shorts worn underneath. Shoes must be close-toed and easy to slip on and off. No tie up shoes are allowed at any time. Jewelry should be limited to items that cannot be pulled or broken off. Little Disciples Preschool is not responsible for broken or missing jewelry items. Students will have an inside pair of shoes and a separate outdoor pair to keep our classrooms clean.

*Please note that students will be playing outside and clothes may get dirty.

Please Provide:

- 2 extra sets of clothes (shirts, shorts, underwear, socks)
- Classroom shoes (crocs or other clogs that have a backing) that will be kept in the classroom.

Open Door Policy

Little Disciples Preschool has an open-door policy, which means parents are welcome to come observe their child. Child custody visits are not allowed at Little Disciples Preschool. Children may be included in classroom evaluations by State Licensing officials, Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota, and other parents observing their right to the open-door policy. Parents are encouraged to participate in scheduled preschool events and other events throughout the year.

Illness Policy

To protect the health and safety of all children and staff, Little Disciples Preschool does not accept sick children into care. If a child becomes ill during program hours, parents will be notified and must pick up their child within one hour. If a parent cannot be reached, an emergency contact will be called.

Children sent home due to illness may not return until they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours. Symptoms requiring removal or exclusion include, but are not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever or chills 99 degrees or more• Cough• Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing• Fatigue• Muscle or Body Aches• Headache• New loss of taste or smell	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excessive irritability or fussiness• Inability to participate in normal routines• Sore throat• Congestion or runny nose• Nausea or vomiting• Diarrhea• Rash, bumps, hives, or unexplained spots
---	---

*Symptoms taken directly off www.cdc.gov

Little Disciples Preschool consults with local health authorities each year to stay informed on current health guidelines and to seek guidance during outbreaks of communicable diseases.

Some illnesses require children to remain at home beyond the standard 24–48-hour recovery period. These include, but are not limited to: hand, foot, and mouth disease; COVID-19; pink eye; chickenpox; bronchitis; pneumonia; and influenza. These conditions typically require a 7–10-day quarantine period, which Little Disciples Preschool enforces before a child may return to care.

Medication

Little Disciples Preschool will not administer over-the-counter medications to children. All medication must be in the original container with the child's name, name of the physician, medication name, and medication directions written on the label. Medication of this type must have designated times, not be labeled "as needed". Medication which has expired or is no longer being administered will be returned to the parent or legal guardian. Parents must replace expiring or depleted medications in a timely manner. Sunscreen, diaper cream, bug repellent, special band-aids, and nasal saline spray may be administered if the parent provides these items, and they must be labeled with the child's first and last name.

Food + Nutrition Policy

At Little Disciples Preschool, we believe that nutritious food supports healthy growth, learning, and overall well-being. We are committed to providing a safe, wholesome, and developmentally appropriate food environment for all children.

Peanut-Free + Dye-Free Environment

*Little Disciples Preschool is a **peanut-free and dye-free school**.*

- No Peanut or peanut-containing products are permitted on campus at any time.
- Artificial food dyes (such as Red 40, Yellow 5, Blue 1, etc.) are not permitted in snacks or lunches.
- These policies are in place to protect children with allergies and to support healthy development.

Snack Time

Little Disciples Preschool provides all daily snacks for enrolled children.

Snacks are thoughtfully selected and may include a combination of:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt, etc.)
- Whole-grain or “snacky” items such as crackers, granola bars, or cereals
- Fried fruit and other minimally processed foods

Lunch Time

Parents/guardians are responsible for sending a prepared lunch box each day.

Each Child's Lunch Box Must Include One of Each of the Following:

- **Protein** (e.g., chicken, eggs, beans, yogurt, cheese)
- **Vegetable and/or Fruit**
- **Healthy Carbohydrate** (e.g., whole grains, rice, potato, multigrain bread, crackers, granola bars, crisps, etc.)
- **Limited Processed Sugar - Candy is prohibited**
 - Please ensure lunches are fully prepared and ready to eat. Staff are not able to heat, cook, or significantly modify lunches.

Special Occasions + Celebrations

We love celebrating special moments with our students while maintaining a healthy and inclusive food environment.

- Any food provided for celebrations must be peanut-free and dye-free.
- Parents will be notified in advance of special occasions involving food.

Snack Donations

Families who wish to donate snacks are welcome to do so.

We appreciate:

- Organic- prepackaged snacks that are peanut-free and dye-free
- Whole fruits and vegetable (please no precut fruits and/or vegetables)

All donated items will be reviewed before being served to children.

Absence

If your child is ill and/or will not be in school, please call the office. In order for your child to return to the classroom, they must be free of fever 24 hours (without medication). Notice will be given to all parents concerning any outbreak of childhood or Communicable Diseases here at school.

Accidents, Incidents, and Incident Reporting

When accidents or incidents occur on our campus, staff members will complete an incident report that will be signed by 1. The Staff Member, 2. The Director, and 3. The Guardian. After the report is signed, Little Disciples Preschool will keep the incident report and upload a copy to the child's account on Playground.

In the event of a medical emergency, Little Disciples Preschool will first call 9-1-1 and request medical services then will contact parents.

Quiet Time

Little Disciples Preschool's nap/quiet time is from 1:00 pm- 3:00 pm. The state of Florida requires that all children under 5 years of age have at least a two-hour rest period every day. No child will ever be forced to sleep, however they are encouraged to remain quiet on their cot during this time.

All nap items are provided and are laundered as needed and on a weekly schedule.

Communication

The Playground App is Little Disciples Preschool's main line of communication. Parents will be required to download and use the playground app to receive all daytime notes for their child. Parents may also call the main phoneline at any time of the day. If a parent cannot reach a teacher right away via playground messaging, they should call the office for any urgent matter. Teachers will do their best to update parents throughout the school day, with a mid-day update being made available each day.

Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an evacuation from our campus, the children will be evacuated to an emergency location, and the parents will be notified as soon as possible.

The emergency location for evacuation is:

Suncoast Technical College (STC) ; 4748 S. Beneva Rd Sarasota, FL 34233

Lockdown

If there is a lockdown in any nearby Sarasota County Schools or if any form of communication is received from the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office to remain in a lockdown, Little Disciples Preschool will be on lock down also until deemed safe by officials. Parents will remain informed via phone call and Playground App. All lockdown pickup and drop-off will be front door only, no parents will be allowed to enter the building.

Reporting Child Abuse

All teachers, staff, and administration are required by law to report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to child protective services at any time without parent or guardian consent. Little Disciples Preschool encourages parents to reach out if they need a car seat, safe bedding, or any other child safety related item.

Biting Policy

For the child that was bitten:

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified.
3. The “Accident” form is filled out documenting the incident.

For the child that bit:

1. The teacher will firmly tell the child “No! Do not bite!”
2. The child will be placed in a safe space away from the injured child for no longer than the child’s age (one year old, one minute).
3. The parents are notified. If skin is broken, the child will be sent home for the day.
4. The “Parent Contact Form” is filled out documenting the incident.

When biting becomes excessive:

1. Parents will be asked to provide appropriate chewing toys to prevent and distract from biting.
2. If the child bites another child more than three times in one day, the parent will be notified for pickup
3. If the child’s biting behavior does not improve by two weeks, termination of care may be considered.

Termination Policy

Parents may terminate the program contract for care if a 2-week paid notice is given. A 2-week bill will be invoiced to the parent when a last date notice is given to the provider. Little Disciples Preschool guarantees care for up to 2 weeks for written notice on ending care. Little Disciples Preschool also reserves the right to immediately terminate care, with or without a 2-week invoice, depending on the severity of delinquencies in the account, behavior concerns, or family situation.

Little Disciples Preschool reserves the right to terminate a program contract for any of the following reasons:

- 1- Unpaid past due fees or charges
- 2- Child’s behavior poses a threat to the safety of children or staff.
- 3- Failure to keep immunization / physical forms updated
- 4- Disregard for child’s attendance period by consistent late pick up, early drop off, or frequent absences.
- 5- Noncompliance with program policies set forth in this handbook.
- 6- Refusal of signing new program contract when new program contract or handbook needs to be revised.

Broken program contracts that go unpaid will be followed up with legal action, in which the parent who signed initially will be responsible for all fees incurred.

Written Permission

A written note is required for the following:

- For a child to leave with anyone other than their parent
- Dispensing (required) medication to a child by a staff member
- Evaluative screenings by outside sources

Non-Discrimination Policy

Little Disciples Preschool does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, marital status, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. Little Disciples Preschool is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of staff, children, and families served.

Handbook Revision

Little Disciples Preschool reserves the right to revise the Family Handbook when changes in the laws and regulations governing child care facilities or changes in the program arise. All changes made are considered effective immediately unless otherwise stated in writing by Little Disciples Preschool.



Beneva Christian Church

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to Little Disciples Preschool. If you do not have a church home, we invite you to be apart of our Beneva Family. We sincerely wish you and your child a wonderful experience at Little Disciples Preschool. We hope your year will be filled with many positive memories. Thank you for the opportunity and privilege to nurture your very special little one. Enjoy and value these years... for they are gone all too soon.

Sincerely,

Beneva Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Our Weekly Events

Sundays | 10:30am | Worship Service

Tuesdays | 5:30pm | Bible Study

Thursdays | 11:00am | Round Table Discussion