



little panther
DAYCARE & PRESCHOOL

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**PARENT INFORMATION
&
POLICIES**

Revised January 2023

Welcome to Little Panther Daycare & Preschool

About Our Company

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool is a privately owned 509(a)(1) non-profit corporation governed by a volunteer board of directors. The daycare facility provides childcare that meets the minimum licensing standards in administration, parental participation, personnel, record keeping, health and safety policies, physical facilities, activity programs, and food services as set by the Iowa Department of Human Services and the Code of Iowa, Chapter 9.

Mission Statement

The mission of Little Panther Daycare & Preschool is to provide high quality, safe and affordable child care in a loving, nurturing and stable environment.

All staff at Little Panther Daycare & Preschool will meet the minimum qualifications and training as outlined by the Iowa Department of Human Services.

Children

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool provides services for children ages 4 weeks through 12 years. Each room will be designed and staffed with the specific needs of the various age groups. Age appropriate and developmentally appropriate curriculum will be designed for each group. Children will be given the chance to develop as an individual as well as a part of an age group. We will strive to provide experiences that will use each child's creative ability and develop their social, emotional, physical, motor, intellectual, and language skills.

Classroom Ratios

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool has six classrooms and is currently licensed for 95 children:

Caterpillars: ages 4 weeks – 1 year	4 children to 1 staff	Licensed for 10
Cubs: 1 year olds	4 children to 1 staff	Licensed for 8
Pandas: 2 year olds	7 children to 1 staff	Licensed for 17
Butterflies: 3 year olds	10 children to 1 staff	Licensed for 17
Cheetahs: 4 year olds	12 children to 1 staff	Licensed for 24
Panthers: school age	15 children to 1 staff	Licensed for 19

Special Needs Children

An individualized assessment will be made by the director for each child up to through age 12 with special needs to determine whether we can provide the quality of care needed for each individual child. The director must conclude that in caring for the child the center will not need to alter any of its daily programs, hire extra help, and that the child will not pose any direct mental or physical threat to the other children or staff members.

Parents

All parents have unlimited access to their children being cared for by Little Panther Daycare & Preschool, unless this right is restricted by a court order. For more information see Supervision and Access.

As an important part of the Little Panther Daycare & Preschool family, parents are encouraged to maintain open communication with staff members at all times. Open communication will not only benefit the individual needs of the children, but also the ability of the staff to understand each child and their individual needs.

All parents will be given the opportunity each year to sign up for various volunteer projects. Each family is asked to help with at least one project during the year.

Attendance Policy

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool offers several options for enrollment to the daycare: full time; 3 days a week; 2 days a week and before/after school age. These options allow us to make sure we are staffed accordingly for the day. Weekly tuition will be charged according to which enrollment is chosen. If your child will not be attendance due to illness, vacation, appointments or any other reason, parents need to notify Little Panther Daycare as soon as possible. Parents can call the daycare directly; if it is before or after hours leave a message on the answer machine or they can always email the Director at littlepanther@netins.net.

Discharge

All parents, guardians, and children are required to comply with the policies of Little Panther Daycare & Preschool. If policies are not being followed, parents will be expected to meet immediately with the director to discuss the issues at hand. If a mutual resolution cannot be made or policies are being broken on a regular basis, the director has the authority to dismiss the family from the services of Little Panther Daycare & Preschool.

HOURS:

Monday – Friday

6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

RATES:

Full-time Care (4 days or more per week)

\$185.00 per week – Infants (4 weeks – 24 months)

\$175.00 per week – Children 2 years – 3 years

\$167.00 per week – Children 3 years – 6 years – September thru May

\$162.00 per week – Children 3 years – 6 years – June thru August

\$157.00 per week – School Age (summer break)

Before & After School Care (children who are enrolled in school on a full-time basis)

\$95.00 per week

\$123.00 per week during Christmas/Winter Break

Permanent Part-Time Care (3 set days per week)

\$146.00 per week – Infants (4 weeks – 24 months)

\$136.00 per week – Children 2 years – 3 years

\$131.00 per week – Children 3 years – 6 years

\$116.00 per week – School Age (summer break)

Permanent Part-Time Care (2 set days per week)

\$111.00 per week – Infants (4 weeks – 24 months)

\$106.00 per week – Children 2 years – 3 years

\$101.00 per week – Children 3 years – 6 years

\$97.00 per week – School Age (summer break)

Drop-In Care

\$50.00 per day – Infants (4 weeks – 24 months)

\$45.00 per day – Children (2 – School Age)

\$25.00 per day – Children (2-School Age) for ½ day (4 hours)

\$25.00 per day – School Age Before & After School

\$17.00 per day – School Age Before OR After School

Temporary Care (contracted for periods of 1 week or more)

\$195.00 per week – Infants (4 weeks – 24 months)

\$170.00 per week – Children (2 – 6 years)

MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNT:

If you have 3 or more full-time children enrolled you can receive a 15% discount on your total tuition due for the week.

This does not include school-age children except during summer break. If you have 4 or more children the 15% discount applies including school-age children.

OTHER FEES:

Registration Fee

\$50.00 per child

Annual Supply Fee

\$50.00 Single Child

\$70.00 Two Children

\$90.00 Three Children

Registration Fee

There will be a registration fee of \$50.00 per child, for children starting more than 7 days after registering. If starting in the next week, a registration fee is not required. With receipt of the registration fee, it ensures Little Panther Daycare you are interested in enrolling your child, and your child's name will be added to the waiting list. At the time the registration fee is paid, the current enrollment situation will be discussed. Registration fees will be credited to the amount due the first week your child receives care. Registration fees will not be refunded.

Annual Supply Fee

The supply fee will aid in the purchase of new materials including crayons, paint, toys, paper, arts and crafts, books, cots, equipment, etc.

The annual supply fee will be due on the first day your child attends daycare and will be due by January 31st every year after. Parents entering children into daycare after October 1st of each year will not be charged the supply fee until January 1st the following year. Supply fees are not refundable under any circumstances.

Hours and Late Fees

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool is open Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Parents should plan to be at the center no later than 5:50 p.m. This will assure that all parents have time to check in with the teacher about the child's day and to make the transition easier for the child.

We ask that all children be picked up by their scheduled time. We require that a courtesy call be placed if you are going to be arriving close to the closing time of 6:00 p.m. However, calling to let us know you will be late picking up your child (after 6 p.m.) does not void the late fee. **Parents who do not have their child signed out of Little Panther Daycare & Preschool by 6:00 p.m., will have an automatic late charge of \$10 per child for each 5 minutes they are late, rounded up by 5 minutes applied to their next week's tuition.**

Parents will also be charged a minimum late fee of \$10 per child for children who are sick. Within one hour of notification the child needs to be picked up and/or the center is informed of an appropriate pick up time (not to exceed 2 hours of first notification by the center). In the case that a parent cannot be at the center within the time limits, parents need to make the appropriate arrangements to have their child picked up by someone on the authorized list.

In the case of bad weather late charges will be assessed strictly on a case by case basis. In the case of adverse road conditions, please consider the extended traveling time to ensure your arrival before 6 p.m. Our first priority is to keep everyone safe, especially all who are commuting great distances. We ask parents not able to have their children picked up as soon as possible make arrangements to have their children picked up by an authorized contact.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

All parents will be asked to give us their scheduled times that each child will be dropped off at the center and picked up. The center will do its best to accommodate your schedule; however we ask that you be flexible with your schedule so that we can make sure to have the appropriate number of staff in the center. Licensed childcare centers have to maintain children to staff ratios and are limited in the number of children present.

All children must be signed in and out of the center on a daily basis. When arriving at the center, children cannot be dropped off earlier than their scheduled time unless it is prearranged with the Director, Assistant Director or On-Site Supervisor. Parents should notify the daycare if children will be dropped off late or not attending at all for the day. This will allow us to adjust staffing and plan for meals. Children must be picked

up within 15 minutes of their scheduled pick-up time or no later than 6:00 p.m. or late fees will apply (see Hours and Late Fees). If you are aware that you are going to be late, please notify the center immediately.

If children are not picked up by 6:10 p.m., staff will attempt to call emergency contact personnel. If no emergency contacts are available, the appropriate authorities will be called.

Supervision and Access

Constant supervision of children in a daycare setting is a requirement per DHS rules for all daycares. At LPDP, no child is to be left unattended.

All staff / volunteers who are directly responsible for the care of LPDP kids are required per DHS rules to have a record check. Any staff / volunteer at LPDP who has had a record check and approval is allowed to have unrestricted access (meaning that the person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care). Any parents or visitors of the center without unrestricted access will not be allowed to be alone with any child with the exception of their own.

Any parent, guardian or custodian who is on the Iowa Sex Offender Registry is only allowed on the property of LPDP for the time required to transport their own child to and from the center. This time is limited to 10 minutes for drop off and pick up times. During the time the sex offender is on LPDP property a staff / volunteer with unrestricted access will be with that parent, guardian or custodian at all times. At no time will the sex offender be alone on LPDP property. Under no circumstance will the parent, guardian or custodian be allowed at LPDP except to transport their own child to and from the center.

With the exception of a person on the Iowa Sex Offender Registry, all parents, guardians, and/or custodians have access to LPDP anytime during business hours of operation. Occasionally it is necessary for children to be picked up by someone other than a parent, guardian or custodian. For the safety of the children, LPDP will release a child only to parents, guardians, custodians or to persons authorized on the child release form which is included on the annual enrollment forms. If a child is being picked up by someone other than the parent, guardian or custodian, ID will need to be shown at the door before entry into the building to prove their identity.

If at any time, changes need to be made to the child release form, you must do so personally by informing the Director and making the changes. Parents (only) may call the center to make changes in who will pick up the child(ren). Emails, texts or faxes will not be sufficient in notifying LPDP that someone besides themselves will be picking up the child.

If only one parent has custody of the child, the custodial parent must instruct Little Panther Daycare & Preschool of the fact, and must provide the Director with a certified copy of the court order showing that the other parent does not have visitation rights. These custody papers will be kept in the child's LPDP file. In the event of a change in custody, a certified copy of the court order must be given to the Director.

LPDP is a business and occasionally we will have visitors come to the center. At any time if an unknown person comes to the door they will not be let into the building until their identity can be verified. These visitors will not be allowed unrestricted access and therefore will not be alone with any child at the center.

Payments

Payments are to be paid Monday morning of each week for that week of service. For children who do not attend on Mondays the payment is due on the first scheduled day of care during the week. If payment is not received by Friday, the children will not be able to return to LPDP until the balance owed is paid in full. There

will be a late fee of \$10 charged if tuition is received after the week of service and \$10 weekly thereafter. The only exception to these late fees / payments will be if a child is gone due to illness, vacation or weather and it is excused by the Director. In the event that the center is scheduled closed on Monday, payment is due the first day of the week the center is open.

LPDP does have ACH available. Please ask Director for a form if not provided at the initial meeting. The payment will be withdrawn from your account on the Thursday of the week of service.

All rates include any days children are not at the daycare center due to illness, vacation, preschool, etc. All rates include any days the center is closed due to holidays or inclement weather. Full payment is required regardless of how many days the child is present.

All NSF checks will be charged \$20.00 handling fee the first time, \$25.00 for the second occurrence, and cash only payment thereafter.

If your family is in need of financial assistance to pay for daycare costs, please contact the Director. Little Panther Daycare & Preschool is dedicated to helping families in need and will direct them to the appropriate agency.

Holding Fee

Full time families who decide to pull their child/ren out for the summer (or for any extended period of time) will need to pay ½ the regular tuition per week to hold and guarantee a spot when the child/ren returns. This payment is required to remain current and paid weekly or we cannot guarantee a spot. A contract specifying dates and fee will be agreed upon and signed. If there is no one on the waiting list, a holding fee will not be required.

The same applies if you are expecting a child and you are on the waiting list. If you are not ready to start your infant and an opening becomes available with others on the waiting list, ½ the regular tuition per week to hold the spot will be required. If you decide not to pay the holding fee you will be moved down one spot on the waiting list and again have the option when a spot is available. A contract specifying dates and fee will be agreed upon and signed.

Current families, staff, and full-time families currently enrolled have priority on the waiting list for all age groups.

Changing to part time status will not guarantee a future full time spot. A holding fee can only be paid for a maximum of 3 months and cannot be used for vacations or periods of absences four weeks or less. All holding fees paid are NON-REFUNDABLE.

Enrollment Forms and Contracts

All enrollment forms and contracts must be completed, signed, and returned on the first day your child attends LPDP. Enrollment forms will be renewed in August/September of each year unless changes need to be made during the year. This is a DHS state licensing requirement. Contracts will be renewed in January or any time new rates take effect.

In the event that there are changes in fees or hours, parents will be given 30-day written notice before the new rates or hours would take effect. All other changes, especially those that may affect the health, safety, or well being of children and employees will take effect upon written notification.

Before/After School Care

This is a set amount per week and covers any days that Little Panther Daycare & Preschool is open when there are early dismissals, conferences, snow days, etc. Regular rates will be applied during summer break.

Before/After school care does not include sick care of any type. If your child is sent home from school or cannot go to school, they cannot attend LPDP.

Weather

During severe inclement weather, we will make every attempt to open the center on time (as safety, availability of staff, and the severity of the weather permits.) We will open the center as staff arrives. Because we must follow Iowa Department of Human Services regulations for staff-to-child ratios, we will only be able to allow as many children in the center as ratios will allow. This is for your child's safety. Please call ahead during severe inclement weather to see how many staff are here.

If the center will be closing early due to inclement weather, we will notify parents by phone at least 2 hours before the early closing time. If parents cannot be reached, we will attempt to call people on the authorized list.

Snacks and Meals

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool does participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). We do have written information available if you have any questions about the CACFP.

All snacks and meals will be served in a family style manner. Children and staff will sit together at the table and staff members will provide leadership through good nutrition, manners, and eating habits.

Four nutritious meals are served daily and are included with regular tuition fees:

Breakfast is served from 7:00 – 7:30 a.m.

AM Snack is served at 9:30 a.m.

Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m.

PM Snack is served at 2:30 p.m.

- Infants will be fed on demand and may not have this schedule.
- **Children who are brought to the center after 7:30 a.m. will not be served breakfast, and will need to have breakfast before they arrive at the center.**
- When children arrive after school they will receive a nutritious snack and drink as soon as possible.

Meals and snacks are allowed to be brought into the center from home. It is encouraged that they be nutritious and follow the CACFP meal patterns. If meals brought into the center do not follow these guidelines, meals will be supplemented to comply with CACFP. Snacks that may not meet CACFP nutrition guidelines may be provided by parents for special occasions such as birthdays or holidays.

It is common for the center to have a child with a particular food allergy. The most common food allergies are to milk, egg, soy, peanut, tree nut, wheat, and shellfish. If you are planning to bring snacks to share with other children in the center, please check with the teacher to see if there are any food allergies in the classroom.

Special Diet Grievance Procedure

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool is fully committed to meeting the needs of all participants on special diets for medical reasons. Little Panther Daycare & Preschool is required to follow specific meal patterns as outlined by the United States Department of Agriculture. If we can accommodate the special diet request while staying within the meal pattern, no special authorities or signatures are required. If we are unable to accommodate the request while still serving all the required food items, the medical need must be documented by a recognized medical authority. Recognized medical authorities in the State of Iowa include Medical Doctors (MD), Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine (DO), Physician Assistants (PA), Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners (ARNP) or Dentists. The decision to accommodate a special dietary request will be made by the Assistant Director and Head Cook.

While Little Panther Daycare & Preschool goes to great lengths to accommodate special dietary requests there may be times when a special diet request is denied. Should this happen, follow the procedures below to appeal the decision.

When a verbal or written grievance related to the denial of dietary accommodation is received, the following actions will be taken.

1. The individual filing the grievance will be asked to put their concerns in writing. If this poses a problem for the individual, a verbal complaint may be accepted, but should be documented in writing by the person receiving the complaint. The individual filing the grievance must be given the opportunity to review the written complaint to ensure it has been accurately recorded.
2. The information about the complaint will be immediately shared with the Director:
 - a. This notification will be done confidentially and will not be shared with other staff.
 - b. Note that the complaint must be communicated to this individual even before the written format is received (if first complaint was made orally).
 - c. The Director will contact the Bureau of Nutrition and Health Services at (515)281-5356 for guidance.
3. The decision to deny the special diet request will be reviewed by the Director within 1 calendar week of the date that the complaint was received. A final decision will be made within 15 calendar days of receipt of the complaint.
4. Notice of the final decision will be issued in writing to the person filing the complaint. The decision may involve collecting additional documentation from a recognized medical authority should the decision be made to accommodate a special diet request that had previously been denied.
5. Should the decision be to deny the special diet request, the Director will explain to the person filing the complaint of their right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the procedures for filing a complaint with the USDA. The current procedures can be found on the "And Justice for All" poster that is on display on the wall in the entry.

- a. The Director will alert the Bureau of Nutrition and Health Services at (515)281-5356 about the complaint and the potential of a civil rights complaint being filed.
6. Pending a civil right complaint that may be or may have also been filed, this is the final decision.

Discrimination Policies

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by: 1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or 2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or 3. email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Naps

All children will be given a nap or rest time each day after lunch. Children may bring a small blanket to keep at the center. The child's name must be on the blanket and it must be washable in hot water.

Infants will not be placed on a set nap schedule and will be allowed to rest according to their individual schedule.

Infant Safe Sleep Policy

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at Little Panther Daycare & Preschool follow the safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death (SIDS). SIDS is the sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age, which remains unexplained after a thorough investigation. The following practices will be followed...

- Infants will always be put to sleep on their backs.
- Infants will be placed on a firm mattress, with a tight fitted sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements CFR 1219 for full-size cribs and CFR 1220 for non-full-size cribs.

- No toys, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, quilts, sheepskins or loose bedding will be in the crib or draped over the crib.
- Devices such as wedges or infant positioners will not be used. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe and their use may increase the risk of suffocation.
- Sleeping areas will be ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed

adult.

- If extra warmth is needed, sleep clothing such as a sleep sack will be used as an alternative to blankets.
- Only one infant will be placed in a crib to sleep.
- No crib toys, mobiles, or musical/night light crib attachments will be used in the crib.
- Infants may use a pacifier during sleep. It may not be attached to the infant's clothing by a string, cord, or other attaching mechanism that might be a strangulation risk.
- If the infant falls asleep anyplace other than a crib (i.e.: bouncy chair, while being held, or arrives to care asleep in a car seat) the infant will be moved to a crib immediately.
- Our child care program is smoke free and smoking is not allowed in Iowa child care businesses.
- Sleeping infants will be actively observed by sight and sound.
- When infants are able to roll back and forth from front to back, the infant will be placed on their back for sleep and allowed to assume a preferred sleep position.

Potty Training

When children reach the point that they are ready, the staff of Little Panther Daycare & Preschool will be committed to helping parents with this task. Parents need to provide diapers, pull-ups, and wipes as well as two extra changes of clothing. For sanitary reasons, children will be allowed to wear underwear (no diapers/pull-ups) only after they are consistently dry. Under no circumstances will a child who is in the process of training be punished for accidents. Children will need to be fully potty trained and in underwear before they can move up to the Panther room due to not having changing table facilities in the Panther room.

Illnesses

If a child is ill, he/she cannot be brought to Little Panther Daycare & Preschool. We do not provide sick care of any kind. If a child becomes ill during the day, we will contact the parents or other emergency contacts and the child must be picked up as soon as possible. All sick children need to be removed from the center within 2 hours from the time the call is made. If sick children are not picked up in the allotted time, late charges will apply (see Hours and Late Charges).

Children who have had any of the following symptoms may not attend daycare:

- Temperature of 101 degrees or more (within the last 24 hours)
- Upset stomach (diarrhea or vomiting within the last 24 hours)
- Complains of unusual pain
- Rashes or skin sores
- Suspected impetigo, scabies or ringworm
- Head lice – including nits (May return with proof of treatment and all lice/nits gone)
- Pink eye or any unusual eye drainage
- Sore throat with fever
- Earache with fever

If a child was sent home with any of the above symptoms, **the child cannot return to the center for at least 24 hours.** In addition, the child cannot return until all symptoms have been absent for 24 hours without the use of medication.

Children must feel well enough to participate in all activities as well as be able to play outdoors.

Any child missing three or more days of daycare due to illness, must have a doctor's slip to return to the center and it needs to state the name of the illness, necessary treatment, and that the child is no longer contagious.

If your child has a communicable disease, they must remain home until all symptoms of illness have disappeared, even if this is after the legal internment has been fulfilled. Any outbreaks of a communicable disease within the center will be announced immediately. All children who are suspected of having a communicable disease must bring a doctor's slip to return to care. Examples of communicable diseases are pink eye, impetigo, RSV, and chicken pox.

Little Panther Daycare's Covid policy is if child has a positive result they have to be out of daycare for 10 days (with positive test date or first symptoms being day zero). If the child is in the Panther room or old enough to wear a mask responsibly then they can return to daycare on day 6 as long as fever free and symptoms have improved. If a child cannot/will not wear a mask is exposed to Covid they need to be out of daycare for the full 10 days from date of exposure.

We realize that during times such as teething and allergy season that many children may display some of the symptoms listed above. Children may be brought back to the center if the diagnosis is non-contagious, they are not running a fever and they are well enough to participate in the daily activities of their classroom and center. All children being brought back to the center after displaying such symptoms must have a written doctor's slip stating the name of their illness, necessary treatment, and that it is non-contagious. However, a doctor's note will not necessarily guarantee your child can return to the center.

Field Trips

We plan to make field trips a regular part of our curriculum. Parents will always be asked to sign a permission slip if children will be transported in vehicles provided by staff / parents or by an outside agency. All parents are welcome to attend field trips with the children and staff.

Emergency Plans

We will have a severe weather plan and practice monthly tornado drills.

We will have an evacuation plan and practice monthly fire drills.

All emergency plans are posted in the appropriate locations in the center.

An emergency disaster kit will be kept in the daycare center.

Medical and Dental Emergencies

Information regarding where emergency medical and dental services should be obtained for each child is included in LPDP enrollment forms. Parents need to authorize a doctor and hospital within the proximity of the center (within the community or nearby town) that can be contacted in the event of an emergency. Both address and phone number is needed for medical emergency services.

Even very young children can sustain injuries to the mouth that can require dental care. If a family does not have a dentist or the parent has not yet secured a dentist for the child, the parent needs to authorize a dental office within the proximity of the center (within the community or nearby town) that can be contacted in the event of an emergency. Both address and phone number is needed for dental emergency services.

In the event, that a child incurs a minor injury (not requiring immediate professional medical care), first aid will be administered by LPDP staff. If the injury does not require professional medical care but is severe, we will contact a parent to let them know of the situation. Through the discussion, parents and staff will then

decide if the child needs to be picked up by the parent. An injury report will be completed and signed by the staff who witnessed the injury. The injury report will then need to be signed by the parent at pick up and returned to the Director to be placed in the child's LPDP file.

In the event, that a child incurs a major injury (requiring immediate professional medical care), first aid will be administered by LPDP staff. Another LPDP staff member will call the appropriate medical professionals. Parents will also be notified. An injury report will be completed and signed by the staff who witnessed the injury. The injury report will then need to be signed by the parent and returned to the Director to be placed in the child's LPDP file.

An injury report will be completed for ALL injuries (minor or major) incurred at LPDP. The report will be completed and signed by the witnessing staff. It will then need to be signed by the parent at pick up and returned to the Director to be placed in the child's LPDP file.

Biting Policy

It is important to understand that biting among young children is developmentally normal behavior. The staff at Little Panther Daycare & Preschool (LPDP) understand this and therefore act accordingly in the event of a bite. Biting is a form of communication usually in response to frustration caused by the inability to communicate in a verbal form. Other causes for biting are: teething, other need for oral stimulation, over-tired, being overwhelmed for any reason, experimenting to see what will happen, or the child's needs are not being met.

LPDP responds to biting the same as any other type of discipline. The child that is bitten will get the needed care and concern receiving most of the attention. The biter will simply be told "NO Bite" and be removed from the situation. Depending on the age of the biter, he/she may be redirected or placed in "time-out". Before returning to play, if the child has been placed in "time-out", the teacher will talk to the child about why not to bite. If the situation occurs again, the consequence is the same. The child who is biting will be monitored closely to help avoid any further incidents.

If biting occurrences are common in a classroom, an assessment will be made by the director and classroom teacher to identify possible causes. Classroom organization, schedule and/or supervision will be assessed. If changes are necessary they will be made immediately.

LPDP will notify both the "biters" parents and the parents of the child who is bitten. An injury report will be completed for the child who is bitten. It must be signed by the staff and parent and filed in the child's LPDP file. If a parent requests a copy, a copy will be made. An incident report will be completed for a child who has bitten. It also will be signed by the staff and parent and filed in the child's LPDP file. Again, if a parent requests a copy, a copy will be made. The names and sex of each child involved will be excluded from both reports for confidentiality reasons. In addition, if there are verbal communications between staff and parents, no names will be discussed in order to maintain confidentiality.

If the bite is very severe (a bite that breaks the skin) both parents will be notified immediately by phone and then again by an injury/incident report form when the child is picked up at the end of the day. If a child bites and breaks the skin of another child more than once in a day; the parent will be called and asked to take the child (biter) home for the rest of the day.

First aid for bites will be as follows (if skin is NOT broken):

- Clean area with soap and water.
- Apply ice pack if needed.

- Lots of TLC

First aid for bites will be as follows (if skin IS broken):

- Stop the bleeding by applying pressure.
- Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water.
- Apply an antibiotic cream to prevent infection.
- Apply a clean bandage.

Confidentiality

All information shared between parents and the director or other employees of Little Panther Daycare & Preschool is completely confidential. Employees of LPDP are not allowed to share information about the children enrolled, families or other staff. Please do not encourage employees to break this confidentiality by asking questions in regards to the families or staff members of LPDP. It is expected that all parents and caregivers respect this policy.

Mandatory Abuse Reporters

All employees of LPDP are Mandatory Abuse Reporters by law. Each employee is required to take a Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse Training every five years. This means that employees must report any suspicion that someone may have purposely hurt your child. Any suspicions must be reported to the Department of Human Services (DHS). Then, trained investigators decide whether or not abuse actually took place. We know that all children get bumps, bruises, and scrapes as part of growing up. Therefore, it is important that you tell your child's teacher about any unusual injuries or conditions.

Holidays

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool will be closed on the following holidays: New Years Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the Friday following Thanksgiving, and Christmas. If any of the holidays listed fall on a weekend, LPDP will follow the following schedule:

- If the holiday is on a Saturday, LPDP will be closed the previous Friday.
- If the holiday is on a Sunday, LPDP will be closed the following Monday.

All fees are based on a weekly basis and include all holidays.

In addition, each year that Christmas Eve falls on a weekday, the Director will survey all families approximately 2 weeks prior to Christmas Eve to see how many children will be attending daycare on Christmas Eve. If the majority (85% of children currently enrolled) will be absent then Little Panther will be closed. New Years Eve we will close at 3:00 p.m.

Transportation

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool will not be able to provide transportation to and from activities not sponsored by Little Panther Daycare & Preschool. Parents need to make arrangements ahead of time for any transportation of children.

Occasionally LPDP employees will transport children on field trips. DHS requires that all children transported in a motor vehicle be secured by a safety belt, safety seat, or harness, in accordance with federal motor vehicle safety standards and the manufacturer's instructions.

When transporting children on field trips:

- Children under the age of six shall be secured during transit in a federally-approved child restraint system.
- Children under the age of 12 shall not be located in the front seating section of the vehicle.

- Drivers of vehicles shall possess a valid driver's license and shall not operate a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription or nonprescription drugs that could impair their ability to operate a motor vehicle

Physical Examination & Immunization Records

All children, who are not enrolled in elementary school, must have a physical examination upon enrollment. A physical form and Certificate of Immunization form must be signed by a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, physician's assistant or advanced registered nurse practitioner. The physical examination shall be no more than 12 months prior to the first day of attendance at the center. State licensing requires physicals be updated annually and immunization cards be current, therefore a new physical examination shall be required each year. If you fail to provide an updated physical after three reminders then your child will not be allowed to attend daycare until physical is current. All children are required to be immunized unless a signed waiver from your doctor for medical reasons or a notarized waiver for religious reasons.

School-age children, who are enrolled in school full time, shall, prior to admission, have a statement of health status signed by the parent or legal guardian that certifies that the child is free of communicable disease and that specifies any allergies, medications, or acute or chronic conditions. A new statement must be signed each year. School age children who have a Certificate of Immunization on file with the Panorama School district do not need to file one with Little Panther Daycare & Preschool.

Medication

All medication, prescription and nonprescription, requires a written parental authorization. Each medication shall be clearly labeled with the child's name, physician's name, name of medication, dosage, and time medication is to be given. All prescriptions and over the counter medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name. For long-term medication, please do not send more than a one month's supply.

A few things:

- Without doctor's written authorization, we must give recommended dosage per age/weight as directed on the medication label.
- If possible a prescription must be given at home rather than Little Panther.
- Please ask the pharmacist to fill a Rx container for the daycare and home with the above information on the container. This enables you to leave the Rx here and not transport back and forth so it isn't forgotten or misplaced.
- Medication forms must be completed monthly for ongoing medications such as diaper cream.

OTHER:

Parents must provide the following for:

Infants:

- Bottles, nipples, and liners
- Diapers, pull-ups, wipes, creams, or powders
- Two changes of clothing
- Formula and baby food if not using food program supplied food

Toddlers through preschool age:

- Diapers, pull-ups, wipes, creams, or powders
- Two changes of clothing

- **Small blanket for naptime**

During potty training, parents must provide pull-ups and diapers for the child. Due to sanitary reasons, we ask you to refrain from using training/plastic pants and or underwear until your child is verbalizing their need to go to the bathroom.

Children should not bring toys or videos from home except on show-and-tell days. Please make sure items brought are marked with child's name. Little Panther Daycare & Preschool will not be responsible for lost or broken items.

During summer months parents should provide sunscreen and/or hats for all children to wear outside. All parents will be asked to sign a permission form allowing us to apply sunscreen.

During months when mosquito counts are high, parents may be asked to bring bug guard for their children. All parents will be asked to sign a permission form allowing us to apply bug guard.

Parents are responsible for checking their child's cubby each day for dirty clothes, take home items, notes, etc.

DEVELOPMENTALLY BASED CURRICULUM

At Little Panther Daycare & Preschool, our curriculum will be based on Developmentally Appropriate Practice. It is our job to create a classroom that follows the interests of the children. The Lead Teacher will set up the environment to facilitate development of skills, to pique interest, and to allow for independence. The teacher is not the focus of the classroom, but rather, observes, asks probing questions to challenge the children to think at a deeper level, and provides security and comfort.

Each classroom will have a schedule that meets the needs of that classroom. This schedule will balance times of the day that children are allowed free-choice in the classroom and some times, when developmentally appropriate, that are teacher directed. Children feel more secure when they know what to expect in the course of a day. By following a schedule they become used to that routine and feel comfortable and happy.

The physical environment is an important factor when encouraging learning and play experiences. Our classrooms will be set up in interest areas called "centers" that group specific learning areas together. Some examples of centers include blocks, dramatic play, science & discovery, books, small motor & manipulative and large motor. These centers will invite children to explore and learn through play.

The Lead Teacher of each classroom will complete a lesson plan weekly and post it on the Parent Board of their classroom. The lesson plan will have age appropriate activities and experiences for several areas of learning. Often the lesson plans follow a theme for the week or for as long and the children show an interest in that theme.

During "center time" the children are given the opportunity to choose the centers they play in. They follow their own interests and create their experiences. The teachers in the classroom use this opportunity to expand the children's thinking and ideas in a non-obtrusive manner. You will find teachers on the floor with the children playing with them. In a successful classroom, this time is organized chaos. It is busy without being disruptive.

Circle Time or Group time is a time when the class gathers and sings songs, reads books, or discusses the activities the children participated in. The length and structure of this time is very dependent on the age of the children.

Learning Centers provide opportunities for many types of creative play. Below are descriptions of some of the learning centers and the skills and experiences they help promote.

Language - Language Arts is an integral part of every activity during the day. We will use a whole language approach to promote verbal and written contexts in all aspects of the curriculum. Children are encouraged to tell stories about their art work, their activities and their feelings. Teachers fill the classroom with pictures and words to encourage language association.

Art - In the art center children will find a variety of materials to encourage the kid's creativity. At a young age, the process of creating is just as important and fun as the final product. Each child is encouraged to use the available materials and their imagination to express themselves.

Blocks - In the block center, children engage in constructive play to create structures while they develop concepts of size numbers, shape, and weight. Also fostered in this area are eye-hand coordination and a sense of accomplishment.

Science/Discovery/Sensory. The science center encourages children to explore, examine, question, and take risks. Incorporated into this center is sensory development. Children will be exposed to not only sand and water in the sensory area, but also items such as pasta, rice, beans, packing peanuts, leaves, snow, the list is endless... Children learn about the physical world through pouring, comparing, measuring, and experimenting.

Small Motor. These activities allow children to develop manipulative skills, fine motor control and hand-eye coordination. Some small motor activities include playdough, lacing cards, cutting, stringing beads, puzzles and legos.

Dramatic Play. In dramatic play children are encouraged to use their imagination and express themselves in many ways including dressing up, social role playing, and storytelling. This center will promote cooperative play among the children and helps them increase their verbal skills.

Books. This area provides a place to relax. During the quiet time allowed by reading a book, the child develops cognitive listening and language skills.

Music. Music activities are designed to help children explore sound and experience enjoyment through singing, listening, and moving music. Auditory memory and discrimination are increased while using instruments, recordings, and voices enhance language development.

Outside Play/Creative Movement. Children will play outside daily when weather permits. Large motor and social skills are promoted during this time. Children also practice taking turns and sharing equipment.

Math. Math activities give children the opportunity to become familiar with numerical concepts such as counting, number recognition, one-to-one correspondence, more or less than, and grouping objects into sets. Projects are designed using concrete objects to ease understanding of concepts that prepare children for future math learning.

Cooking. Cooking activities allow children to practice a large variety of skills. Children learn counting, measuring, and to follow directions. It also promotes social skills because it is often done in small groups and language flourishes as the children talk about the process of mixing ingredients and the cooking process itself. Cooking in the classroom is also a wonderful opportunity to introduce new foods and cultures. **Note:** Due to licensing regulations children are not allowed in the kitchen. Much of the cooking experience revolves around preparing the ingredients to be cooked or the creativity of the teacher to find and use recipes that can be completed in the classroom.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY AND STRATEGIES

As stated earlier, Little Panther Daycare & Preschool's mission is to provide a high quality, safe and affordable child care in a loving, nurturing, and stable environment. In following this mission, we strive to allow children freedom and decision making opportunities, but do so within a structure that offers reasonable guidelines and boundaries.

We train our teachers to understand that discipline is not the same thing as punishment. Rather, discipline equals discouraging undesirable behavior and promoting good behavior through guidance, teaching and role modeling. Discipline is an ongoing process integral to our program and its curriculum. It is our ultimate goal to foster self-discipline and self-control in the young children we affect.

The following techniques and strategies are used in our teachers' discipline and guidance approach:

1. Children who are kept involved and introduced to a variety of activities are less likely to have discipline problems. Creating intriguing activities along with planning for a flow and structure of the daily routine allow this variety.
2. Teachers constantly model desired behaviors. They speak respectfully and politely to the children and each other, and exhibit appropriate conversation and behavior as they play, eat, and model sharing with the children.
3. Teachers promote and respond to good behavior when they see it, sincerely praising those children exhibiting such behavior.
4. Teachers instill a sense of responsibility and ownership in their classrooms and its contents by giving the children duties within that environment. Such duties include setting the table for meals and snack, picking up after learning centers and meal times, and being the teacher's special helper in a number of other ways.
5. Children engaging in inappropriate behavior will be positively redirected to another activity, location or friend to play with in order to stop the behavior and to engage them in a constructive behavior.
6. Arguments or physical confrontations between children are discussed with the teacher modeling appropriate ways to verbalize anger or frustration and assisting the children to problem solve between themselves.
7. Certain areas are used to assist in calming children who are acting out inappropriately. Quiet, soft library or quiet areas, and tactile/sensory areas are examples.
8. If the need arises, and with parent involvement, specifically designed incentive programs may occasionally be used with individuals. Ultimately, we want to create the intrinsic desire to behave well.
9. Time out is used only as a last resort with those over the age of 2. The child will sit in a designated spot for approximately 1 minute per the age of the child. Time out is used mainly those situations where a child is harming himself or others and other methods have failed.
10. Children are taught that they are responsible for their actions. Teachers utilize logical consequences whenever possible. This allows the child to better associate the affect of behavior they choose.

- 11. In the event the above strategies are not working or the child is causing harm to self, staff or facility the child will be removed from the room by the Director or on-site supervisor and the parents will be called immediately. If Director or on-site supervisor feel the child will not comply with expectations and is showing violent or aggressive behavior the Director will require the child picked up immediately.**
- 12. If for any reason the child runs out of their classroom the lead teacher will follow the child and try to stop the child. If the child actually gets out the door of the Center then the police will be called immediately. In the event we are at the elementary the same rolls apply; the lead teacher will follow the child and try to bring him/her back to the classroom but if the child would leave the elementary building the police will be called immediately. If possible (meaning that there is other staff to watch children in room) the teacher will follow any child that actually leaves the building but will not force/carry a child back.**

Little Panther Daycare & Preschool expects parental involvement and cooperation in all aspects of discipline. Failure to comply may warrant termination. We reserve the right to discontinue services at any time. If a situation occurs where a child's behavior causes damage to LPDP property parents will be held financially responsible for the damage.

Discipline will not be administered through corporal punishment (hitting, pushing, grabbing, spanking, etc), humiliation, scare tactics, verbal abuse, or threatening or denying of food or drink. Staff are expected to use professional behaviors and attitudes at all times. Staff are also expected to provide guidance and set well-defined limits for the children to follow.

As professionals, we know that children need the rules and guidelines we provide to function with a sense of safety and confidence. Children without such concrete limitations continually test the boundaries of acceptable behavior.

We wish to make it very clear that we have reasonable but specific expectations about the children's behavior. Our rules and guidelines are based on strategies that work best in group settings to promote socially desirable behavior. We will expect children and their parents to take responsibility for these behaviors and the consequences of them.

We wish to acknowledge that you are your child's best teacher and we will act as partners in the process of teaching discipline to your children. We promise to support and cooperate with you as we share a common goal to have the child develop and grow both socially and intellectually.

We also acknowledge that our environment is certainly not suited for every personality, nor will it meet every child's individual needs. With that in mind, we will honestly and forth-rightly tell parents when it is our professional opinion that their child's needs may be better met in a different setting.

Family/Employee Relationships

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to speak freely to each other about concerns and suggestions. There is a reciprocal responsibility of the family and caregiver to observe, participate and be trained in the care that each child requires. Involved, non-custodial parents have access to the same developmental and behavioral information given to the custodial parent if they have joint legal custody, permission by court order, or written consent from the custodial parent. Caregivers should informally share with the family information about their child's needs and activities. Children's experience in child care will be most beneficial when parents and caregivers develop feelings of mutual respect and trust. In such a situation, children feel a continuity of affection and concern which facilitates their adjustment to separation. A family enrolling a child with special

needs will need to provide the center with a copy of the child's Individual Family Service Plan to assist the center and teachers.

If a parent or guardian has a concern or need not able to be met by the classroom teacher, they should see the office to speak with a supervisor or Assistant Director. Situations that can't be addressed by a supervisor such as tuition questions will require a meeting with the Director. Parents can see the Director regarding any questions or concerns at any time via a meeting, phone call or email.

Parent Code of Conduct

1. Parents or designated pick up persons are expected to be respectful to our staff and children.
2. Matters that are not resolved by teachers must be addressed to the Director.
3. Shouting is not allowed.
4. Profanity is not allowed.
5. Persons shouting, using profanity or engaged in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave and may be dismissed from our center. This may result in the dismissal of the child.
6. Keep children safe! No car audio should be heard outside the vehicle while in our center's parking lot. Music from radio and personal audio may be inappropriate for young children and it is necessary to hear adults and children walking around you.

Violation of the parent code of conduct may result in termination of care without notice.

Translator

If a translator is needed then we will make arrangements to have one available.

PARENT HANDBOOK - AGREEMENT

I, _____, acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook dated January 2023. I have read the handbook and understand LPDP information and policies. We will follow LPDP policies as included in this handbook.

Date: _____ Signature: _____