

2019



FAMILY HANDBOOK

"WHERE QUALITY IS STANDARD."

FAMILY HANDBOOK 2018-2019

““From small beginnings come great things!””

Welcome to Learning Tree of Fletcher! We’re delighted you’ve chosen Learning Tree to be a part of your family & we look forward to a great partnership as we provide your child with the best early education experience possible. We’re excited to have this opportunity & want you to know that we’ll provide love, guidance and learning for your child with the highest level of professionalism, quality, and dedication.

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Dear Parent(s),

Welcome to our program; we're excited to have you here! Learning Tree of Fletcher is a State licensed facility that meets and exceeds enhanced standards set forth by the NC Division of Child Development.

This parent handbook provides important information about our policies and procedures; please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. You can reach us by calling our center at (828) 684-2791. We do our best to answer the phone quickly, and we also return calls promptly throughout the day as taking care of, and giving the children the attention they need is our first priority. You can also email the Administrator at info@learningtreenc.com.

You can also look at our website www.learningtreenc.com

Hours/Days of Operation

Learning Tree of Fletcher is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM and we provide care for children ages 8 weeks to 5 years old. If you will be late for pick up, please call ahead so we can notify your child's teacher and make any necessary arrangements. Any pickups after 6:00 pm will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child, per occurrence.

Please note licensing allows Learning Tree to operate only within certain hours. Also, please make sure your child is dropped off by 9:00 AM (unless it is an unusual circumstance, like a doctor's appointment for example). If you know your child will need to arrive after 9:00 am please let the Director and teacher know in advance if possible.

* Any pickups after 6:00 pm must pay a late fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child, per occurrence. These fees will be automatically added to your Smartcare account per the check-out time registered.

If you are unable to pick up your child and will be sending someone else, please inform the teacher or Director ahead of time stating that this person has your permission to pick up your child. Please let the people picking up your child know that we require to see their ID before allowing the child to leave.

Also, please be sure to list all people you approve to pick up your child on your child's enrollment record in Smartcare and update as needed. If you need to call and verbally add an approved pick up person on a specific day we will verify that with the approved pick up person on your list. We want to keep everyone safe in our care.

Pre-Enrollment Procedures

Families and children should visit Learning Tree prior to enrollment and we have an "open door" policy. However, to be sure we can offer you the most amount of time for a full tour of the center and outdoor learning environments please call ahead and schedule a tour. To set up a scheduled tour please call the center phone and ask for the Director or Assistant Director: (828) 684-2791 or email us at info@learningtreenc.com.

During a scheduled tour we like to include a visit of all indoor and outdoor learning areas, an introduction to appropriate teachers and other staff members, time to review policies and paperwork, along with time for a Question/Answer session. It's best to schedule tours between 10:00 -11:00 a.m. any day of the week.

We can also accommodate drop-in tours and will do our best to show you around and answer questions about our program.

Enrollment Procedures

We encourage parents to visit Learning Tree often before enrollment to make for an easier transition.

The following forms must be complete by the first day of care (unless otherwise stated), and must be updated regularly when applicable:

- Children's Medical Report – top half must be completed by parent/guardian and the bottom half and Immunization history must be completed by child's physician (must be received within two weeks of enrollment)
- Application for Child Care
- Child's Identifying and Emergency Information
- Emergency Medical Care Authorization
- Discipline and Behavior Management Policy Form
- Nutrition form/Feeding Schedule (children up to 15 months old)
- Documentation of Safe Sleep Policy Receipt (if applicable)
- Documentation of Receipt of Parent Handbook–Signature indicating you've read and received
- NC Child Care Summary Law Statement –Signature indicating you've read and received
- Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Policy Statement–Signature indicating you've read and received

Emergency Information Request

Important – please provide adequate information on the “Child's Identifying and Emergency Information” form where parents can be reached in case of an emergency. Also, please specify who else can be called in case a parent cannot be reached at that time. It is recommended that as many people as possible be put down on this list.

If you are going to be unavailable, or at a different phone number, please let us know where you can be reached or provide us with an alternate person that should be contacted during such time through the Smartcare portal.

Photographs of School and Students

We may use photographs of children at Learning Tree online for our website or blog, social media, and for advertising purposes locally. We WILL NOT include any names of children in

the images. If you DO NOT WANT your child's photo used online in one of the aforementioned areas, please select the appropriate box on the last page of this document and turn in to our staff.

Daily Activities

At Learning Tree, we provide an environment that allows for learning through indoor and outdoor experiences, exploration and guidance. Daily activities include group activities, reading, writing, music, dance, art, outdoor play, play with manipulative toys/blocks & building items, physical exercise, and dramatic play.

(A copy of the daily schedule is posted in each classroom)

Discipline Policy

Please see Discipline and Behavior Management Policy Form. (attached)

"Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline".

Children at our center will not receive physical punishment. Children who have conflicts or problems with others while at our center will be encouraged to verbalize their feelings and concerns. Our staff members view discipline as guidance to help children work through their feelings, not as punishment.

We want children to value cooperation and teamwork. We help them to learn peaceful approaches as ways to get along. Our spaces are set up with preventative measures in mind. Multiples of toys are provided. Verbalizing feelings, redirection and explaining to children what they may do are some of the techniques we use.

Children who choose behavior that endangers others will be removed from play with others and given time out periods (as appropriate for their age). The child will then be provided with redirection and given a chance to process the problem with a staff member and any other concerned parties. Learning Tree will use short supervised periods of "time out" for negative behavior if a child is emotionally out of control and needs private time to regain composure.

The success of a positive behavioral support approach depends on children receiving similar guidance from both parents and teachers. IF teachers have tried repeatedly to redirect a child using positive behavioral supports and the child continues to make poor choices and/or is hurting other children and/or staff members then the child will be sent home. Our priority is to keep all children and teachers at our center in a safe environment so that positive learning experiences can be provided for all.

In the event a child's behavior is negatively affecting the learning environment or safety of the other children, Learning Tree reserves the right to unenroll the child after 3 behavioral incidents. In extreme behavioral incidents Learning Tree reserves the right to unenroll the child immediately.

Meals & Nutrition Policy

Water is offered to each child at every snack and meal time along with milk. Learning Tree will provide all meals to children beginning at age 1. We will provide snacks to infants unless you prefer to send specific foods for your child.

- Breakfast will be served at 8:30 AM.
- Lunch will be served at 11:15 AM.
- Afternoon snack will be served at 3:00 PM.

If your child arrives after 9:00, please make sure he/she has already eaten breakfast because the teachers are ready to start their activities for the day.

The center will provide cups and water throughout the day so please do not bring water bottles.

Infant Meals

Parents must provide all breastmilk or formula for infants. We will provide snacks, unless you choose to send specific foods for your child.

All bottles must be premade and labeled with the child's first and last name and the current day's date. Please make sure all bottles have lids and fully intact nipples.

We ask that any infants or one year old that are drinking from sippy cups, that each parent send 3 sippy cups each day. You will need to take these home every day and wash them.

If you choose to send baby food for your child, we do have warmers to heat up lunches, if needed. Meals brought from home should include a variety of healthy items for your child; if you would like to review the nutritional guidelines set forth the by the state please see the Meal Guidelines for children in Child Care document (we will happily provide a copy for you).

Healthy eating habits last a lifetime, so it's important to start from the beginning! Please don't be discouraged if your child doesn't try all the healthy foods we offer on the snack menu, or those packed by you from home. Often children must be exposed to new foods several times before they're willing to try.

If you prefer that your child NOT be served certain food items while at school (like dairy, meat, gluten, corn, wheat, or other) then please sign the statement on the last page of this handbook stating that you "opt out" for us to supplement your child.

For any child who does not opt out, then we must abide by the document titled Meal Patterns for Children in Child Care Programs, which was developed by the Child Care Commission based on USDA guidelines.

If you don't opt out then we MUST offer your child 1% milk or whole milk during morning snack and lunch, along with meeting the required amounts/types of food listed in the chart on the document referred to above (even if we have to provide food to supplement your child's meals from home).

If you'd like to send organic milk, skim milk, rice/soy/coconut/almond milk (or any other beverage instead of cow's milk) that is acceptable, but we need to have the "Opt Out" statement on file for your child. Opting out means we will not supplement your child's meals with items, if you're not sending foods from all the groups listed in the meal guidelines/recommendations document. If you have any questions about this, please speak with the director and your child's teachers; our goal is to be sure each child is receiving a healthy meal at school... no matter what your dietary preferences. We realize this can be accomplished in many ways!

Medication

Learning Tree does not administer medication unless necessary (emergency medication).

In this case the Permission to Administer Medication form must be completed with specific times and dosages. Any medication prescribed by a doctor, must have a doctor's signature.

Sunscreen and diaper rash ointment may be used daily after a blanket permission slip is on file. When possible, please arrange to have your child receive medications at home (if the required doses/times can be met with a schedule that allows such).

Injury Reporting Procedures

In the event that an injury occurs while at Learning Tree which requires medical attention, an incident report form must be completed by a staff member and signed by a parent/guardian. When the form is complete a copy will be forwarded to the Child Care Consultant at the Division of Child Development.

Vacation/Holidays

2018-2019 School Year Dates Learning Tree will be closed to students:

10/1 & 10/2 – Teacher Workday	4/15 – 4/19 – Spring Break
11/12 – Veterans Day	5/27 – Memorial Day
11/21 - 11/23 – Thanksgiving Break	6/7 – Teacher Workday
12/24 – 12/28 – Christmas Break	7/4 & 7/5 – Independence Day & Teacher Workday
1/1/19 – New Year's Day	8/19 – 8/23 – Enrollment Break
2/18 – Teacher Workday	9/2 – Labor Day
3/18 – Teacher Workday	

Inclement Weather

For inclement weather-related closings please check for postings on WLOS' website:
<http://www.wlos.com/shared/newsroom/closings/>

On the WLOS web site you may elect to receive text message announcements relaying any delays or closings for our school.

*Holidays and school closings related to inclement weather are not exempt from your child's regularly scheduled tuition.

Tuition & Student Fees Policy

Tuition rates are based on a weekly fee and are dependent on the age of the child. Tuition is based on enrollment, not attendance. We require an annual \$100 registration/supply fee per child. Weekly tuition is due on the Monday of the week for which tuition is due. Parent fees for Voucher recipients are due on the Monday of the week for which tuition is due. Vouchers must be kept current and in good standing to ensure placement.

If fees are unpaid families will receive a late fee to their account. If tuition is not paid one week after the due date, Learning Tree reserves the right to put a hold on your child's attendance to the center until full payment is made. Your child's space will not be saved at this time. Please speak with us if there's a reason you're unable to make timely tuition payments. We do understand that at times there will be circumstances out of your control. Please contact us at the earliest time possible so we can work together to set up a payment plan.

Checks that do not clear the bank will receive a \$30 charge, in addition to any other charges occurred. Continual delinquency may result in withdrawal from our program. Learning Tree reserves the right to change its tuition policy as deemed necessary. If you decide to withdraw your child give us a 2-weeks' notice.

Ages accepted/Maximum capacity

Learning Tree is licensed to care for children from 8 weeks to 5 years old. Learning Tree has a maximum capacity of 78, and we choose to meet enhanced space and teacher: child ratios.

Child/Teacher Ratio (meeting enhanced standards)

Age Range	# of Children	# of Staff	Max Group Size
Infant - 12 Months	5	1	10
12 Months - 24 Months	6	1	12
2 - 3 Years	9	1	18
3 - 4 Years	10	1	20
4 - 5 Years	13	1	25

Clothing

Please dress for fun indoors and outdoors. We will be outdoors every day, so please bring appropriate clothing for the weather. We welcome sun hats and other items that help keep skin safe in the sun. Days at Learning Tree can be messy, so keep at least one extra change of clothes at the center for your child, and also a few items for layering for days that are both cool and warm (especially for changing seasons). A raincoat is optional, as are rain boots, and you may also choose to bring a spare pair of shoes/socks on wet days if your child doesn't have rain boots.

Flip flops will not be allowed at Learning Tree, please be sure your child wears shoes that allow for movement and running while protecting their feet. The best shoes to keep little feet safe while playing will cover their toes and back of the heel, or at least have a strap around the back of the foot to keep the shoe in place.

Curriculum & Services Provided at Center

Learning Tree uses a variety of curriculum models. The Beginnings curriculum is used for ages infants through preschoolers.

We invite a variety of visitors on a regular basis to expose children to a wider variety of educators than those on staff alone, including musicians/dance instructors/story tellers/nutrition consultants/photographers/ dentists and more!

Learning Tree will assist your family in accessing resources when requested to provide specific services for your child. Some of these services include speech evaluation, behavior management consultants, and inclusion consultants.

Toilet Learning

For successful toilet training teachers and parents should communicate frequently. Children will be taken to the potty when they show interest. Often times if one child is being potty trained; other children will be interested and follow along. Please be sure to practice washing hands after each visit to the bathroom.

Children will not be punished for not using the toilet ("accidents"), as body awareness and learning progress at different rates for different children. Your child may be ready around age 2, or not until 3 years old. If a child is in the preschool classroom and struggles with self-toileting we may recommend that parents seek advice from a developmental pediatrician or other qualified healthcare provider. Children in the preschool classroom should be making steady progress in this development to continue successfully in a group classroom environment.

Personal Belongings

Diaper bag – If you choose to bring a diaper bag, do not keep any medications, diaper rash ointment, sun block, or lotion in it. These products need to be given to your teacher upon arrival, so she can keep them in a locked box away from the children. Due to sanitation department regulations we must allow only storage of essential items at the center for your child. Please check with teachers if you are unsure about what’s needed in your child’s cubby. We prefer diaper bags to be left at home.

Please be sure to supply adequate personal items such as diapers, wipes, bottles, etc. At least one extra set of clothes is required on hand.

If your child is using a bottle or “sippy cup” of any type it must be labeled daily with your child’s name & date.

Fire Drills/Playground Safety

Fire Drills and Playground safety checks are performed monthly. In case of fire, children will be taken out the nearest door and away from the center.

Illness Policy

The parent, legal guardian or another person the parent authorizes shall be notified immediately when a child has any sign or symptom that requires exclusion from the facility. Learning Tree will ask the parents to consult with the child’s health care provider and then notify us of any advice received from the health care provider. If your child shows one or more of the following symptoms of poor health, he/she should stay home or will be sent home as soon as possible:

- Illness prevents child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by provider
- Illness results in a greater need for care than the provider can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children as determined by the provider
- Suspicious rash that has not been seen by a doctor
- Any colored discharge from the eyes, nose, or ears
- Fever; accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical professional evaluation finds the child able to be included at the facility
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness until medical evaluation find the child able to be included at the facility. Symptoms and signs include; lethargy that is more than expected tiredness; uncontrollable coughing; inexplicable irritability or persistent crying; difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs for the child
- Diarrhea, defined by more watery stools, decreased form of stool that is not associated with changes of diet, and increased frequency of passing stool, that is not contained by the child’s ability to use the toilet;
- Blood in stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools

- Vomiting illness (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines that the cause of the vomiting is not contagious, and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines that the child is noninfectious
- Head lice, from the end of the day until after the first treatment & no nits visible
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment has been completed
- Chicken pox, until all sores have dried and crusted. (approximately 2 weeks)

Please call ahead of time with questions on policy regarding any illness not listed. We also refer to the guidelines on exclusion related to illness that is provided by the NC Division of Child Development.

Transportation/Field Trips

Transportation is not provided. Learning Tree of Fletcher will not offer field trips.

Abuse and Neglect Reporting Procedures

“Abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. Abuse may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, or discipline, or when a child is abandoned. North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report the case to the county department of social services. In addition, any person can call the Division of Child Development at 919.662.4499 or 1.800.859.0829 and make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect in a child care operation. Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith” (North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules; November 2000).

Staff Training and First Aid/ CPR Certification

All staff is required to receive child care training hours per year, as set by the NC Division of Child Development (DCD). In addition to this, all staff will maintain current education on SIDS and be certified in Infant/Child CPR, First Aid, and other required DCD training.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to be involved as much as possible with the care of their children. Parents are welcome to come to their child’s class to read a story, share a meal with their child, participate in class parties, and bring in special skill set to the classroom such as craft making or sharing special skills that may be of interest to the children. Drop-in visits by

parents are permitted and encouraged anytime your child is in care. Also, feel free to make any suggestions you feel may improve your child's care. We welcome any feedback you have!

Teachers recognize that parents are the primary educators but will help families understand the daily routines of the Village. Parental involvement is critical to the success of every family's partnership with Learning Tree. Throughout the year we often ask families for objective evaluation of our program and staff.

Another way we include our families and keep them in the know is by sending out general center news and updates through our quarterly newsletter.

Teachers will share information daily with parents to provide specific information about your child's day (let us know if certain topics interest you most, like eating habits for example). Any time you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact your child's teacher to schedule a meeting. When appropriate, parent conferences for children will be held and may be scheduled by parents directly with their child's primary teachers or with the director or assistant director.

We care about what you have to say. Please come to the teachers/administrators with any concerns you may have and we will be happy to work together to find a solution. However, if you feel your concerns are not being addressed, you may contact Buncombe County Child Care Resources or the Division of Child Development to place an anonymous complaint. Please know that we value our partnership with each of you and want to do our best to provide each child at Learning Tree with an excellent early childhood education experience.

Please keep this parent handbook for your reference. Please sign the last page of this handbook and return to your child's teachers for storage in your child's file at Learning Tree. Thank you!

Jennifer & Kevin Monroe, Owners

This completed signature page must stay in CHILD'S FILE AT LEARNING TREE:

I have read and agree to the policies and terms in the Learning Tree family handbook, including the policy regarding late pick up for my child and policies related to tuition and fees, and I've read the Positive Discipline Policy for Learning Tree:

Name and Signature of Parent

Date

Name of Child/Children

I have read and received the copy of the North Carolina Child Care Summary Law.

Name and Signature of Parent

Date

I DO -or- I DO NOT give permission for Learning Tree to use photos of my child online on their website, or blog, or in publications used locally for advertising purposes. I understand that Learning Tree will not publish children's names with images, nor will they post these images on Facebook or other social networking sites.

Name and Signature of Parent

Date

Name of Child/Children:

Name of Child/Children