***Parent Handbook***



Dear Parents,

 We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School. We offer innovative early childhood programs in a safe, nurturing and caring environment.

Our staff is made up of dedicated, qualified early childhood educators who strive for excellence. Your child will benefit from working with NYS certified teachers who are committed to the care and education of each individual child. Our class sizes are comprised of low teacher to child ratios, which allow the teachers the flexibility to individualize instruction to meet your child’s specific interests and needs.

Numbers, counting, letters, listening, speaking, making observations, writing, drawing, classifying, comparing, sports skills, dancing, respecting one another, following rules and having fun are just a few of the skills that your child will embrace in our program.

Our curriculum nurtures the whole child and supports the child’s social, emotional and intellectual growth. Your child will enjoy transitioning safely, along with his/her classroom teacher, through different classroom settings. These settings include Math/Science/Technology, Literacy/Art/Music, and Gym/Dramatic Play, and our Outdoor play area. In these rooms your child will have the opportunity to work in group settings as well as independently. He/She will enjoy exploring, playing and learning all about the world around them.

We believe that the early childhood years are optimal for providing children with opportunities to learn the skills and building blocks that will successfully carry them throughout their lives. We look forward to becoming a part of your child’s learning and growing experience.

 Thank you.

The Ladybug Playhouse Staff

**Enrollment Calendar and Class Availability**

 The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School program runs from September to June and holidays are accounted for in all of our prices. The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School reserves the right to cancel any class due to insufficient registration and make schedule and classroom changes based upon enrollment numbers.

**Tuition Payment**

**General Registration and Payment Policy:**

***The tuition is based on a full academic school year September – June if you are enrolled in the 10 month program and September – August if you are in enrolled in the 12 month program. Payments can be made in full or on a monthly billing option for your convenience***. ***Please understand that all holidays and vacations are already prorated in the yearly tuition. There is no credit for sick days or days missed.*** At enrollment a one-time non-refundable materials fee and the last month payment is required. Monthly payments are due on the 1st day of each month. If the tuition date falls on a holiday or weekend, tuition will have to be paid before its due date to avoid late charges. If you begin school later in the year you may begin the payments on the month you enroll and pay monthly till the end or you can pay the prorated school year in full. The prorated rate will be based on the yearly tuition minus the months missed (based on the 10 or 12 month billing period).

**Late Payment Fee:**

A late fee of $5 will be added daily to your next month’s payment if tuition is not received by the 5th of the month. We accept checks, cash & credit cards (American Express, Visa, Master Card & Discover).

**Returned Check Fee:**

Any check returned to the Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School for insufficient funds will incur a cash service charge of $40.00. The tuition payment must then be made in cash or by credit card.

**Late Pick-Up Fee:**

In order to compensate staff for additional time at the school, parents will be charged a late pick up fee for every 10 minutes of delayed pick up. A fee of $5.00 will be added to your next month’s tuition payment.

**Emergency Closings & Inclement Weather**

If we cannot open our school we will notify everyone by sending a voice automated broadcast to your home telephone and each parent’s cell phone. We also offer text alerts to your cell phones. If you are interested in receiving these text alerts, please text the word **Ladybug** to **292929** and you will automatically be set up.

If we must close our school early we will call the telephone numbers you have provided us with to make alternative arrangements to get your child home safely.

**Evacuation Site**

In case of an emergency evacuation of the nursery school, the first evacuation site is the Whitting Funeral Home, 300 Glen Cove Avenue, Glen Head. The secondary site is Giordano’s 295 Glen Coe Avenue, Sea Cliff. You will get a call to come pick up your child from one of these sites. It is important to keep all your contact information updated at all times.

**\*PLEASE NOTE THERE ARE NO REFUNDS OR MAKE UPS FOR UNEXPECTED CLOSINGS/EARLY DISMISSALS (i.e. Snow Days etc.)**

**Arrival Procedures**

**Parent/Guardian Drop-Off:**

All classes will be assigned sign in areas where a staff member will be waiting to take your child into the facility. You must sign in your child.

**Late Drop Off:**

If you are late you will need to use the front entrance only. You will sign in your child. Your child’s teacher will be notified of his/her presence and someone will come out to escort your child to the classroom.

**Dismissal Procedures**

**Parents**

Parents must pick up their children at the respective doors assigned to their child’s class and sign their children out.

**Other than Parent/Guardian Pick Up**

***You must notify the teacher if a person other than yourself is picking up your child.*** If you know in advance, please give the teacher a note authorizing this person to pick up your child. For the security of your child, upon arrival the alternate designated pick-up person will be asked to provide a picture ID. In the case of an unexpected situation or emergency, you must call the front desk to notify the teacher and provide the password to identify yourself over the phone. Upon arrival your designated pick-up person will again be required to provide a picture ID.

**Delayed Pick-Up**

If you are delayed please call the front desk to inform us of your delay and let them know your child’s class and the teacher’s name.

If delays continue to occur, an additional fee will be charged.

No child will be released unless these procedures are followed.

**Health & Safety**

**Required Medical Records/Immunizations** All children MUST have a physical exam and be up to date with their immunizations. We require a current statement from your child’s physician prior to the new program year. A standard form is included in your enrollment packet.

This program does however accept children who are not immunized due to religious and or medical reasons with proper documentation, such as, doctor’s note, parish or pastor note, etc.

**Attendance & Absence Procedure**It is important for your child(ren) to attend regularly scheduled classes. If your child is going to be absent, please call and let us know.

**Sickness Policy** To ensure the health and safety of all our children and staff please keep your child home from school if he/she should experience ***any*** of the following symptoms:

* Fever
* Sore throat
* Cough
* Runny Nose (a clear discharge indicates allergies; however, any other discharge may indicate an infection and therefore may be contagious)
* Body Aches
* Headaches
* Fatigue
* Chills
* Vomiting
* Diarrhea
* Cold Sores/Herpes Simplex

Please be advised that your child **should not** return to school until:

* They have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication,
* They’ve been diarrhea free for 24 hours
* They have not vomited in the past 24 hours
* If diagnosed with strep throat, they must be on antibiotics for 24 hours
* They are not experiencing chills or sore throat
* Cold Sores; have crusted over and have healed with no more clear fluid or blood weeping from sores.

**Illness at School:** We will call all parent numbers first before the emergency contact. If you are called to take your child home, please be advised that this is not an option. You must come get yourchild immediately.

**Health and Safety Continued**

**Administering Medications Policy** The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School cannot and will not administer medications. We will accept **Epinephrine Auto Injectors, Diphenhydramine in combination with Epinephrine Auto Inhalers, Asthma Inhalers and Nebulizers** . **All** must be given to us in their original package (box) with the pharmacy label on it and **MUST NOT EXPIRE** during your child’s enrollment period. You must also have an emergency medicine medical form completed by yourself and your child’s doctor. In case of an emergency a qualified staff member will administer as necessary.

**Accidents and Injuries** Members of our staff are CPR and First Aid certified. Our procedure is that our teachers will record/file an incident report and forward a note in the case of a minor injury or call you if necessary. In case of a serious injury, we will contact you immediately as well as 911/local fire department. For this reason, please ensure your emergency contact information is current and on file with us at all times.

**Food Allergies:** Parents/guardians are responsible for alerting us if their child has allergies. If there are any allergies in the classroom, then all parents/guardians are informed and home lunches will have restrictions.

**Daily Snacks**

Daily snacks are included in our program. Examples of snacks include goldfish, cheerios, pretzels, seasonal fruit and cheese sticks. All are nut free. The children have a choice of ½ and ½ combination of apple juice and water or just water. Birthday and holiday celebrations are scheduled individually by class during snack time.

**Children’s Birthdays**

Children are permitted to have a small celebration in the classroom. However, because of the increasing sensitivity of children with food allergies, specifically, nuts, we limit birthday celebrations to a specific list of acceptable choices. Teddy Grahams, Oreos, Chips Ahoy Cookies (Except those with M&MS), Honey Maid Crackers, Keloggs Rice Crispy Treats, Linden Brand Cookies, Shoprite & King Kullen Store Brand :Vanilla and or Chocolate Ice Cream Cups, Ice Pops & Stop & Shop Peanut Free Cupcakes.

\*For the safety of the children- **No home baked Goods or Dunkin Donuts** are permitted

**Biting Policy**

One of our primary goals is to provide a safe and loving learning environment for children. When a biting incident occurs, there are many upset feelings. When it does occur we take it very seriously and try to find the reason why the child bit and try to extinguish the behavior as quickly as possible and assist in developing positive social skills. Parents of the child who was bitten, parents of the child biting, and their teachers all want the behavior to end as quickly as possible.

Biting is not uncommon. It causes more upset feeling than any other behavior in group settings for young children such as learning centers and daycares. Any child has the potential to bite. Although biting may occur in children three and four years of age, most biting incidents occur between the ages of 13mos.-36mos. Children may bite for the following reasons:

* Development issues: teething, oral motor development, sensory exploration of surroundings: learning about cause and effect, developing awareness of space
* Learning through imitation of others, developing autonomy, language development, attention seeking, learning to hold on and let go, developing sensory integration
* Expression of feelings which may include: frustration and anger, tension and anxiety, excitement, reaction to abuse or physical aggression
* Environment: change in home routine or family status

It is difficult to predict who will bite or when a biting incident will occur, but we are ready to help children who do bite learn different behaviors and are ready to give treatment, sympathy and advice to children who are bitten.

When a child bites another child we will:

* Intervene immediately
* Help the child who was bitten, we reassure the child and care for his or her bite. If the skin is not broken we wash the area with soap and water and apply ice to the affected area. If the skin is broken, we wash the area thoroughly with soap and water and will apply a band aid to keep the area clean if necessary.
* We also respond to the child that did the biting. We show the child strong disapproval of the biting using a calm but firm voice. Our specific response varies by circumstances and age of child but our basic message is that biting is the wrong thing to do.
* Reinforce positive behaviors
* Notify parents of all children involved. We will not share names of the children to protect the privacy of all families.

**Biting Policy Continued**

* We complete an incident report for all children involved, which is written by the teachers and shared with the parent at pick up time. The parent will be asked to sign the original, which will be placed in the child’s file and if requested by the parent, a copy of the report will be made.

If the biting continues, we will

* Meet with the parents of the child who is biting
* Assign a person to shadow the child

While using all of these techniques, most children resolve the biting behavior. However, should this continue without improvement, we must take further steps to ensure the safety of the children in our care, therefore, we may require that the child that is biting find another learning environment that will meet his/her individual needs.

**School Curriculum**

The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School’s curriculum nurtures the whole child and supports the child’s social, emotional and intellectual growth. Your child’s teacher has the flexibility to individualize his/her instruction to meet your child’s specific needs and interests.

Your child will enjoy transitioning through different classroom settings discovering different adventures along the way. He/She will learn and do many different things in each of the classrooms.

In the math/science/technology room concepts your child will have the opportunity to work on are as follows:

**During Math**:

* Identifying numbers, counting in numerical order, demonstrating one to one correspondence, exploring the relationships between number and quantities, building his/her math vocabulary, beginning to understand simple addition and subtraction, developing sequencing skills, sorting, matching and classifying common attributes, exploring with and discussing graphing activities, discovering spatial relationships, manipulating and exploring measurement tools, making predictions, developing concept of time using tools such as calendars and clocks, manipulating and beginning to identify different types of money, beginning to understand the concepts of save, spend, earn, using reasoning skills, and developing high order thinking skills.

**During Science:**

* Recognizing the four seasons, developing awareness of the weather, gaining understanding of how weather affects people, plants and animals, identifying living things and explaining their basic needs, exploring the reasons for good hygiene, discriminating between living and non-living things, building awareness of life cycles, developing an awareness of environment, practicing habits of recycling and reusing, experimenting with the structure and property of matter, identifying a variety of forces such as gravity, push and pull, exploring the five senses, manipulating basic science tools (magnifying glass, eye dropper), using the scientific process to investigate.

**During Technology:**

* Expanding use and knowledge of various technologies including Smartboard & computers.

**Curriculum Continued**

In the Literacy, Art & Music Room concepts your child will have the opportunity to work on are as follows:

**During Literacy:**

* Exploring letter/sound connections; participating in rhymes and exploring word families; showing growing awareness of beginning and ending sounds of words; demonstrating auditory discrimination of separate syllables; modeling reading behaviors such as holding the book correctly and turning pages; differentiating between letters and numbers, making sense of print/words, recognizing that a word is formed by a group of letters, incorporating left-to-right and top-to-bottom direction of text, retelling stories and demonstrating comprehension of text, recalling information from stories in sequential order, using picture cues to predict story events, connecting events in literature to real-life experiences, using scribbles, drawings, shapes, and letter-like symbols to represent thoughts and ideas, representing stories and experiences through pictures, dictation, emergent journaling and play, manipulating writing utensils, strengthening fine motor skills, and picture eye-hand coordination to form letters and numbers, begin to match sounds with letters and explore inventive spelling, begin to copy, write and recognize name, attempt to share and read their written work, demonstrate an appropriate attention span, increase ability to attend to and understand conversations, stories and songs.

**During Language:**

* Learning Spanish and sign language: colors, numbers, shapes, animals, family, clothing, small phrases & songs.

**During Art:**

* Participating in a process of planning and creating; exploring color, shape and appearance; investigating tactility using various textures such as water, salt, flour and play dough; discovering an appreciation of the process of creating an artistic project; exploring and manipulating art tools such as glue, paintbrushes, scissors and crayons; responding, observing and demonstrating appreciation of artistic creations; cultivating artistic abilities using various mediums with an increasing focus on detail.

**During Music:**

* Participate in songs, rhymes and poems, use songs, rhymes and poems to enhance language development, develop critical-thinking skills through music exploration, actively participate in meaningful music experiences, explore patterns of rhythm and beat, experiment with creating sounds with everyday objects, explore expression of feelings through music and movement, discover a variety of music genres.

**Curriculum Continued**

In the Gym & Dramatic Play Room concepts your child will have the opportunity to work on are as follows:

**During Gym:**

* To follow two to three step directions while participating in movement activities, practice skills in balance and coordination, strengthen fine and gross motor skills, participate in cross-lateral activities, physically respond to tempo changes such as moving fast or slow, demonstrate ability to move body parts in a rhythmic pattern, basic sports skills in soccer, baseball and basketball, understand basic concepts of nutrition and healthy life choices, develop an appreciation of their body, develop physical growth, strength and flexibility, engage in activities that encourage physical fitness, demonstrate an understanding of how to prevent spreading germs and recognizing underlying symptoms of sickness, practice safety rules in home, classroom and community, develop the ability to differentiate between safe and dangerous behavior, recognize danger symbols and warning signs

**During Dramatic Play:**

* Engaging in various dramatic play activities, utilizing a variety of objects, exhibiting growth in imagination and creativity, incorporating individual ideas, comprehending components of dramatic play and discriminating between reality and fantasy

**In All Rooms:**

* Use appropriate social behavior (self-regulation, interactions with peers and adults, follow rules, respect the property of others and self), demonstrate self-confidence in negotiating new tasks, discover how their actions affect others and begin to accept consequences, negotiate transitions and routines, display satisfaction with completed tasks, demonstrate knowledge of self and others, identify family members and develop awareness of individual roles in family, develop positive classroom relationships with peers and adults, demonstrate appropriate classroom behaviors, participate in classroom community building activities, communicate with others with an increased level of self esteem regarding personal feelings and experiences, politely asking and giving help to peers and adults, developing an awareness of diverse cultures and traditions, beginning to recognize that each person is unique in traits, abilities and personality

**Behavioral Management**

The goal of our school is to help children develop a positive self-image. We hope to encourage children to be self-directed and to exhibit self-control. To do this, children need the opportunity to build self-esteem. Young children, due to their developmental age, are not capable of understanding the ramifications of many of their behaviors. Therefore, they need to be encouraged to make good choices and to be prevented from harming themselves and/or others. This can best be accomplished through close supervision, gentle guidance, and most importantly, redirection.

Remembering that small children are very egocentric and therefore are not yet capable of understanding the concept of sharing and taking turns it is our responsibility to lend guidance through redirection to other activities when conflict occurs.

Another method used is positive feedback. We focus on “Do” rather than “Don’t” For example, “We walk inside” instead of “Stop running inside”. We offer choices; “You can either sit on the rug or at the table for story time.” We encourage children to use friendly words rather than physical acts and we praise positive behavior

Pre-School Aged children in our program are involved in the development of classroom rules and are made aware of safety rules. Each rule will be stated clearly and modeled so as to help the children learn and follow these rules.

At times there is however, the need to remove a child from a situation. He/She will either be asked to take a break in a quiet area in the room or if the child is inconsolable he/she will be removed from the classroom and brought to the director’s office or the front desk until he or she is ready to return to class.

**Our Partnership with our Parents**

The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School has an open door policy. Parents/Guardians are always welcome to join in our program at our school. We invite parents/guardians to participate in special events, special event planning, workshops, fundraisers and conferences. All parents and guardians are encouraged to share personal interests including hobbies, talents, cultural backgrounds, etc. Together we could make your child’s nursery school experience a beneficial and fun one.

**Parent/Guardian/Teacher Conferences**

We offer two parent/teacher conferences a year. The first one, will be in November/December and the second one in May/June. At the Ladybug Playhouse Nursery we feel it is important to take out time from our busy schedules to discuss your child’s accomplishments as well as his/her needs. We feel that conferences give the teacher and the parent the opportunity to discuss your child’s progress as well as giving the parent an inside look of what your child is working on at our school. Notices will be sent out to schedule these conferences.

**Home/School Communications**

At the Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School we feel it is imperative to keep communication open with our parents/guardians. You may contact your teachers via email or we have implemented the use of an app called Hi Mama. With this app teachers are able to send you pictures and info during the course of the day to keep you updated on your child. This app also allows you to communicate directly with your teacher. Please give her time to respond. Any and all communication from the parent will be answered between 24 and 48 hours of receipt of the communication. Teachers may not take calls during class sessions and will not have access to their emails so we do need to give them time to respond. If you have an emergency please call the front desk and ask to speak to the director and she will help you take care of any problems or concerns you may have.

**Staff Qualifications**

The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School prides itself with professional and well-trained staff members. All staff meet the New York State requirements for the position they hold. We have staff with a wide range of degrees from CDA’s. Associates, Bachelors and Masters. References are checked and all staff are cleared by the State Central Registry. Employees are never left alone with children without clearance. The staff is also CPR and First Aid Certified.

**Diversity**

We are committed to diversity. We maintain a policy of non-discrimination with all children, families, employees and applicants for employment. We will not be influenced in any manner by race, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, as well as other classifications protected by applicable national, state or local laws.

**Dress Code**

Please dress your child in easily washable and manageable clothes. If you don’t want to ruin a particular outfit, don’t let your child wear it to school. Our school provides aprons and smocks but these don’t always provide full coverage of clothing. Children should wear sneakers and comfortable clothing that is appropriate for physical activity. Jewelry is prohibited because it is a choking hazard.

\*If your child is not potty trained, you must provide diapers or pull-ups and baby wipes.

**Legal Issues and The Law**

**Responsibility regarding legal court documents:** The Ladybug Playhouse is bound by law and must enforce legal court documents when it comes to the protection of a child. If a legal situation arises, the parent/guardian must provide a copy of the court order to be read by the Director and filed in the child’s permanent record. The Director will inform the staff as to what action they must take in order to comply and keep the child safe.

**Suspected Child Abuse:** The Ladybug Playhouse and its employees are mandated and required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse to the appropriate authorities. Training is provided to its staff to properly identify and report any suspected incidents of child abuse.

**Confidentiality Agreement**

The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School prides itself on being honest and trustworthy. Confidentiality is of utmost importance. This includes, but is not limited to: parents financial records, educational & health records of a child, and personal information. Only staff or authorized state agencies are privy to this information when necessary. We require a signed parental request for information to be released to anyone other than the aforementioned. The parents must also grant written permission in order to include the child on an in-house only class list.

**Rights of Non-Custodial Parents**

Mailings, conferences, emergency contacts and authorizations used in case of accidents will be as directed by the custodial parent. All parent/guardians are encouraged to attend conferences and other functions, but it’s the responsibility of the custodial parent to inform the non- custodial parent of such arrangements.

**Photographs/Publicity Agreement**

Our school provides opportunities for photographs of your child’s participation and involvement, which we would enjoy sharing with others. In signing your parent/guardian agreement enclosed in this handbook, you will be giving permission for The Ladybug Playhouse to take slides, photographs, and videotapes of your child(ren) during their class for use in our program and for publicity purposes. All photography will become the sole property of the Ladybug Playhouse. If there are extenuating circumstances, please see our Director.

**Withdrawing Your Child(ren)/Refund Policy**

Registration Fees are never credited or refunded. **There are absolutely no refunds.** If relocation becomes a factor, one month’s notice, in writing is required. Refunds for relocation will be prorated.

**Make Up Policy**

**CLASSES MISSED FOR ILLNESS, VACATIONS, SNOW DAYS OR ANY REASON WILL NOT ME MADE UP.**

**Our Commitment to You**

The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School is committed to a quality program and parent satisfaction. We have made every effort to cover everything you need to know about our school in this handbook. We do however recognize that issues may arise that are not covered here so as a result open communication is vital between The Ladybug Playhouse Nursery School and it’s families. Should you have any concerns or comments about these issues we will be happy to listen and discuss them with you and make the necessary adjustments.

**OCFS Regulations:**

The Office of Children and Family Services Regulations can be found posted on our bulletin board and on their website: https://ocfs.ny.gov

**Contacting OCFS:**

NYS Office of Children & Family Services

Perry Duryea State Office Building

250 Veterans Memorial Highway, Suite 2A-20

Hauppauge, New York 11788

631-240-2560

**Childcare Complaint Line:**

1-800-732-5207

**Important Reminders/Supplies Needed**

**For all children:**

* Please make sure your child has a regular size back pack (labeled with his/her name) that is big enough to fit a winter jacket inside.
* Please send your child to school with a lidded cup (sip cup) labeled clearly with your child’s name. This cup will go back and forth between school and home so that you could run it through the dishwasher.
* Please have daily in your child’s back-pack a change of clothes; tops, bottoms, underwear and socks in a zip-lock bag labeled with your child’s name. Accidents do happen and not only the bathroom kind. **We will not be collecting the clothing, it will stay in your child’s backpack so it could be changed by you as the seasons change. Please make sure there is always a change of clothing in the bag.**
* Please send in 4 packages of wipes. We use these in the classroom to clean hands. This package is separate from the wipes needed for a child with diapers and pull ups.
* We go outside daily regardless of temperature. Please make sure your child has attire and shoes that are appropriate for the conditions outside.
* Everything that belongs to your child must be labeled with his/her name in a visible place. (Book bag, Lunch Box, etc.)
* Please keep all toys at home; we will not be responsible for lost toys.

**For children who are not potty trained:**

* Please send in **2 jumbo packs of diapers and 4 boxes of wipes** by the first day of school.
* For those children in **pull-ups**, please supply **1 package of pull-ups and 2 boxes of wipes**

**Important Reminders/Supplies Needed Continued**

* If you would like us to apply diaper rash cream please complete the Parent Written Medication Consent Form, supply the cream and label with your child’s name.

**\*All diapers, pull ups and wipes will be stored and shared. We will send home a notice when we need the diapers and wipes to be replenished.**

**For children attending mini day or full day programs:**

* ***FOR CHILDREN WHO NAP ONLY:*** Please send in a crib sheet (fits on sleeping mats) and a blanket in a zippered bag (not plastic, but as small as possible labeled with your child’s name).
* **Lunch:** If you did not purchase a school lunch, please send in lunch in an insulated lunch bag with an ice pack daily. A healthy lunch for this age group consists of **1 grain, 1 protein, 1 milk, 2 fruits or 1 fruit and 1 veggie.** Please make sure your child’s lunch includes all components listed above.

**For children with EPI Pens:**

* **EPI pens** must be given to us in their original package (box) with the pharmacy label on it and **MUST NOT EXPIRE** during your child’s enrollment period. You must also have an emergency medicine medical form completed by yourself and your child’s doctor. No exceptions!