



LEAP Parent Handbook 2021-22

Welcome to LEAP! We are very glad to have you join our family! LEAP focuses on teaching children prekindergarten skills and language (Spanish and English) through hands-on experiences and activities. Our program fosters the intellectual, emotional and social development of your child in a gentle and nurturing environment. Our students are guided in a morning circle, group activity, cooperative play, and also individual work sessions with their teachers. Through adult modeling, children gain an understanding of classroom expectations, and their learning follows a continuum stretching from observation to independence. Our day includes time for exploratory play both inside and out, with a specific time set aside each day for focusing on the joys of the natural world and the exploration of the beauty outdoor spaces provide. A wonderful year is in store for your child, filled with opportunities for learning, friendships and joyful play experiences!

The first day of school for all children will be Thursday, September 9th, 2021

SCHOOL HOURS/CALENDAR 8:45-12:00

Arrival to school is between 8:45-9:05.

It is very important that children arrive at school with enough time, so they don't feel rushed at the beginning of the day. Each morning, we will check children's temperature and ask a few questions outdoors. Please make sure that you and your child are wearing a facial covering at all times. If you need a mask for your child, please let us know and we will provide you with one.

The teacher will be ready to greet your child each day, as this morning connection and one-on-one time is very important to both child and teacher. The teachers will wait for the children outside and accompany them to the classroom, to wash hands and get ready for the day.

LEAP generally follows the Durham Public Schools' calendar; you will receive a hard copy of this calendar to keep.

PICK UP PROCEDURES is at 12 pm

If an emergency prevents a parent from being at school to pick a child up by 12 pm, please call the Executive Director immediately and indicate when you will arrive or who will pick up your child. Only adults listed on the emergency contact form will be allowed to pick up children, even in cases of emergency. Please be sure they bring a picture ID.

If parents are more than 10 minutes late, they will be charged \$5. If parents are late multiple times, the director will have conversation with the parents and possibly withdraw the child's spot at LEAP. It is very important that children be picked up on time.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

If it is necessary for your child to be absent from school, please call your child's teacher prior to 8:00 a.m. on the school day to be missed. It is very helpful for the teachers to know in advance when a child will be absent, so that waiting doesn't disrupt the daily flow.

HEALTH

Healthy children learn better. Please do not send your child to school sick.

COVID-19 Guidelines

If your children have a fever, cough, headache or body aches, please don't send them to school. If you or your child have been exposed to someone with covid-19, please don't come to school. If you or someone in your family has tested positive for covid-19, please don't come to school.

If your child becomes sick at school, you will be called and asked to come and pick up your child immediately. Please make sure that your child is free from illness or fever for 24 hours before returning to school. Please keep your child at home he/she has:

1. Heavy nasal discharge
2. A constant cough
3. Symptoms related to a highly communicable illness (flu, chicken pox, stomach virus) – reddened eyes, throwing up, sore throat, stomach pains, etc. Please inform the school if your child has any of these symptoms so that we may alert other families.

If your child gets head lice, he/she must be thoroughly treated, following LEAP procedures, before returning to school. PLEASE notify the school immediately if you suspect your child has lice. Lice is not dangerous but is highly contagious among children and is much easier to treat if caught quickly.

Medication

Any student who requires medication at school must have a medication authorization form completed by a physician. This form must be completed for prescription as well as over-the-counter medications.

INJURIES AT SCHOOL

If your child scrapes his or her knee or has a bump or scratch, the teacher will attend to the child with ice and/or a Band-Aid, if necessary. No medication will be administered at school without a doctor's note.

If there is a serious medical emergency, the teacher or a staff member will contact the parent and, if necessary, other individuals listed on the emergency form. If needed, the child will be taken to a hospital via an ambulance.

Staff will complete an "Incident Report Form" describing any accidents that happen at school and parents will be given a copy.

DENTAL HEALTH

It is very important to see a dentist at least once a year. If your child hasn't seen a dentist yet, please let us know so that we can help you find a provider.

SNACKS AND NUTRITION

It is very important that your child eats nutritious food on a regular basis. We know that children who eat well, exercise and get at least 9 hours of sleep on a regular schedule do better in school than children who do not. Eating breakfast is the most important meal of the day, so please help your child establish this habit. Each morning between 8:45-9:05 we will have milk, crackers, yogurt and/or cereal available.

We will provide the children with a healthy snack (not a meal)- crackers, cheese, milk and/or water at around 10:30-11. We will serve water to accompany snack. We won't serve juice, pop or any other drinks with added sugar at school.

DRESS

Our students participate in a variety of activities at school. The children are encouraged to paint, color, use clay, etc. Please send the children with clothes that can get dirty and are comfortable and closed-toe shoes. It is helpful if you can send your child to school in clothing that will allow him or her to use the bathroom independently and easily (no belts, complicated buttons or difficult ties).

Due to COVID-19, we will spend long periods of time playing outdoors every day; please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately to be comfortable spending most of their day at school in the outdoors. Dressing them in layers is best to set up your child to successfully and fully participate in what we have to offer. For example, t-shirt, long sleeve, shorts/long pants, socks, shoes, jacket and hat if necessary.

Please send a complete change of clothes at school (including undergarments and TWO pairs of socks) that we can use if there are accidents. As the seasons change, we will need to ask you to change out the type of spare clothing kept at school, for example, long sleeved shirts instead of short-sleeved, pants instead of shorts, etc. As winter approaches, your child will need a hat, mittens and warm jacket for outdoor play.

ENROLLMENT/CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Children with special needs will be admitted to and educated at LEAP unless the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

ASSESSMENT

LEAP was created to help support children, laying a strong foundation for future school success. In order to ensure our services are meeting the needs of the children and families, we use an assessment tool called Teaching Strategies/Creative Curriculum. The information that we collect includes skills and concepts related to all areas of development: social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language and literature.

The information we collect helps us make sure that we are providing challenging and supporting experiences for each child, as well as to evaluate our program in general.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT/VISITORS-

At LEAP we welcome and encourage parent and family involvement. Due to COVID-19, this year we are refraining from visits for the time being. Please maintain open and regular communication with your child's teachers.

CONFERENCES/FAMILY COMMUNICATION

All parents with a child enrolled in LEAP will be asked to participate in two conferences during the school year. Parents may also request a conference at any time throughout the year. Conferences and less formal conversations are a wonderful way to share what has been going on in the classroom, with friends, with work and with teacher/student interaction. We strongly encourage parents to maintain open communication with the teacher throughout the year. This open communication will help insure the emotional and academic success of the child and provide the teacher with the information needed to help the child in all situations during the school day.

SHARING AND TOYS

Toys from home are not permitted at school and should be left at home or in the car at drop-off. Toys from home create distraction and can be lost or damaged. Please remind your child of this as often as necessary. We do, however, welcome items that are found in nature that are not alive, and will joyfully display these on our "Nature Table". These items might include: special stones, rocks or gems, pinecones, leaves, beautiful twigs, sea shells, berries or flowers. Any nature item brought in by a child will be shared and appreciated by all members of our class!

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are an exciting and special time for children and we will celebrate the day accordingly. For a child's celebration parents are invited to provide a special snack (cupcakes or cake with water or milk - no soft drinks please); please make sure that everything is individually wrapped and arrange this with your child's teacher.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of bad weather, LEAP will follow the Durham Public Schools' schedule which will be posted at (www.dpsnc.net). Local radio and TV stations will also notify the public when DPS schools are closed because of weather. The teacher will NOT be able to call parents to notify them of school closure, and it will be up to the parents to inform themselves as to the Durham Public Schools' closure situation.

If Durham Public Schools are delayed for one hour, LEAP will remain closed on that day.

READING AT HOME

LEAP is fortunate to have many books and we want families to use them! We have a library of books that we encourage families to borrow. Please keep a book for up to 3 weeks and then return it (in the box marked "returns", so another family can enjoy it.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Parents should let the school know in writing if they are not comfortable having their child photographed. Throughout the year we will be documenting some of the activities we do to help the children make connections to the activities they have experienced. We will be displaying these photos on our bulletin boards in the classroom, and will send the photos home with the child when we are done or have completed the activity.

TUITION

Tuition is \$40 per month (with a valid Medicaid card or proof of reduced lunch), due during the first week of each month. If you need a subsidy to help you with the cost, please speak with the Executive Director. In order to maintain lower costs for our families, we ask that ALL FAMILIES volunteer an average of 2 hours a month; riding our school bus, cleaning our classrooms, kitchen, helping out with fixing things at school, painting and other tasks that may come up during the year. Our school is a community and our expectation is that we will all be willing to help and support each other.

TRANSPORTATION

LEAP owns a 14-passenger bus, which we use to bring children whose families cannot provide transportation to school. The monthly cost for using the bus is \$10 dollars in addition to the monthly tuition. Before hiring a bus driver we check their driver's record, criminal record and references. Parents and other volunteers ride the bus with the driver to help get the children into their car seats and stay safe. We also use our bus for class field trips. Families who use the bus are charged an additional fee. **All parents are expected to volunteer at school 2 hours a month.**

DISCIPLINE

As children learn the routines of the day, they will learn to make good choices and transition from activity to activity. The pattern of the day helps children know what to expect and how to interact with each other. At LEAP we believe that children inherently want to be helpers, follow rules, and participate in a positive manner with their peers. We use songs and quiet voices to redirect children who need extra help in any particular moment, and also help children find special jobs or alternative play situations if necessary. Throughout the year, the teachers will help the children learn to talk about his or her feelings and create situations where children can dialogue with each other about problems and solutions. Children who repeatedly have behavior challenges during the morning, may be asked to sit with an adult volunteer in a quiet area of the classroom for a brief amount of time, but will not be alone during this time. **Under no circumstances will any corporal punishment ever be**

administered to any child in attendance at Nuestra Escuelita- LEAP. Parents will be informed if a child is having difficulty with any classroom routine with which we are not able to assist the child with as the year progresses.

Positive reinforcement is an effective method for behavior management of children. When children receive positive and understanding interactions from adults, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, LEAP staff:

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| 1. DO encourage the children.
or | 1. DO NOT spank, shake, bite, pinch, push
otherwise physically punish the children. |
| 2. DO set limits for the children. | 2. DO NOT make fun of, yell at, threaten or
otherwise verbally abuse the |
| 3. DO model appropriate behavior. | 3. DO NOT shame or punish the children. |
| 4. DO modify the classroom environment
children.
to attempt to prevent problems before
they occur. | 4. DO NOT relate discipline to eating or
sleeping. |
| 5. DO listen to the children. | 5. DO NOT leave the children unsupervised
as punishment. |
| 6. DO provide alternatives for inappropriate
behavior. | |
| 7. DO provide the children with natural and
logical consequences. | |
| 8. DO treat the children as people and respect
their needs, desires and feelings. | |
| 9. DO stay consistent in our behavior manage-
ment program. | |

QUESTIONS?

The LEAP administration, staff and teacher feel a deep commitment to each student and family involved in the program. We are dedicated to helping children succeed throughout their time with us, and beyond. We believe in and seek to foster the emotional and academic growth of the children left in our care. If at any time during the day, a parent has a question or experiences a concern, please do not hesitate to contact the director or the teachers. Please be aware that the teachers will not answer the phone during the time spent with children from 9 to 12. Please do leave a message and the call will be returned as soon as possible.

Thank you, and we look forward to a wonderful year!

Phone Numbers

Leigh Bordley, Director, 919-302-0331 (please text if possible)
Dalia, Teacher Mentor: 763-218-8739