

RICEVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT'S LITTLE CATS' DAYCARE



PARENT HANDBOOK

WELCOME

Welcome to Little Cats' Daycare! We are looking forward to meeting and working with your child on reaching their highest potential. Little Cats' Daycare is a place where your child will be in a safe and nurturing environment and will be encouraged to explore new experiences to promote their mental and physical growth.

Mission Statement

The Little Cats' Daycare provides a nurturing environment that encourages the development of the whole child. Staff incorporate activities that include social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and language skills into their daily schedule.

Goals

- To develop responsibility for one's own actions in self-help, health, safety, and interpersonal areas and to exercise appropriate independence
- To facilitate intellectual development by widening the child's experience in order to increase knowledge, basic concepts, and skills development
- To provide support and guidance for the child and family

This handbook will help you become more acquainted with our program. As you read through this book, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. Communication is very important as well as a trusting relationship between our families and our employees. Please call us at 641-985-2288 and we will set up a time to meet and discuss your questions or concerns. We also have an open door policy so feel free to stop in at any time to visit your child.

Thank you for choosing Little Cats' Daycare and letting us get to know you and your child better and helping them grow. Together we can help your child reach their highest potential.

Sincerely,

Riceville Community School District Board of Education
Director and all of the Little Cats' Daycare Staff

INTRODUCTION

About Little Cats' Daycare

Little Cats' Daycare hours of operation are 5:30 am to 6:00 pm. We are licensed by the Iowa Department of Human Services. Our Daycare is currently licensed for 85 children ages six weeks to twelve years of age.

Little Cats' Daycare is operated by a Director(s) who answers to the Riceville Community School District's Board of Education and the Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council. The Department of Human Services conducts annual licensing visits to assure the Daycare meets state standards and regulations.

Enrollment

Children are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis from ages six weeks to twelve years. We do not discriminate between race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, or disability. Priority is given to those seeking full-time daycare, followed by part-time children and then drop-ins. There is a one time enrollment fee of \$25 per child due before their first day. This fee is non-refundable.

Wait List

In the event of a wait list, there will be a \$25 fee per child to hold their spot on the list. This fee is non-refundable but will be used as a credit towards future care.

Admission

The following forms need to be completed and submitted to Little Cats' Daycare prior to enrollment:

1. Registration Form
2. Child Health Exam Form
3. Immunization Record
4. Medical/Dental Emergency Treatment Consent Form
5. Release of Child from Daycare Form
6. Consent Form
7. Handbook Acknowledgement

Little Cats' Daycare may require additional statements from a parent/guardian or physician if needed. This information needs to be completed prior to your first day of attendance. This information will remain confidential and will need to be updated annually.

Little Cats' Daycare Programming

Curriculum

Little Cats' Daycare strives to meet the developmental needs of all children attending our program. Each room looks at children's individual needs to establish needs for that room. We feel this is essential to assist children in their development. The goals of our curriculum are multi-faceted. Our goals encourage children to be enthusiastic, self-confident, independent learners. We believe that play is the primary mode of learning. Our curriculum also respects individual learning styles and ever changing interests. Through our curriculum we promote growth in all areas of development.

Social: To help children learn from adults and one another by observation, imitation, and interaction.

Cognitive: To promote curiosity and to help children acquire learning skills, such as the abilities to solve problems, make choices, ask questions, and express their ideas, observations, and feelings.

Emotional: To provide a safe and secure environment where children can develop pride, self-confidence, independence, self-control, and a positive attitude toward life.

Physical: To help children develop and enhance their small and large muscle skills and feel confident and comfortable with their own bodies.

Our curriculum goals are achieved through integrated, theme-based activities and conversations with adults and children. Opportunities exist within the classroom for the child to engage in one-on-one activities with the teacher, small group and large group activities along with individual play allowing for opportunities to experiment and explore. Whole group activities are for short periods of time and are suited to the age and ability of the children. Supervised free play and small groups predominate as a means of encouraging educational interaction.

Each room will post a calendar of activities outside their room to let parents know what the curriculum material is for the month. We will additionally give parents a newsletter to let you know what the children are working on. Each room also will post times when activities occur in the rooms.

Infants/Toddlers

In the Infant Room, we will target working on physical, cognitive, social, and emotional skills. We will also incorporate sign language to enhance your child's brain development.

Toddlers

In the Toddler Rooms, we work with children on color recognition, ABCs, counting, and shape identification. We will also focus on self-help skills and bathroom independence.

Preschool-Age

Our primary goals in the Preschool Room are social and emotional development, problem-solving skills, and early literacy skills.

Little Cats' Daycare offers a three-year-old preschool program on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday mornings from 8:30-11:00. There is a one time registration fee of \$50 that is non-refundable and due before the first day of school. If Riceville Community School cancels for any reason or starts late due to weather, there will not be preschool; however, you will still be charged for your scheduled hours. You may choose to use a sick day if you wish.

Arrival and Departure

Parents will be responsible for signing their child in and out using the Daycare's iPad. Visitors will be required to sign the child in/out with their name, reason for visit, and contact information.

Parents are encouraged to communicate with the Director or designee on a daily basis at drop off to convey any changes in schedule or circumstances that may affect their child's general disposition during the day, such as a family death, illness, upcoming vacation, etc.

Dress Code

Your child will have many opportunities to participate in a variety of activities at Little Cats' Daycare. Simple clothing that is washable will allow your child to comfortably participate in all activities from messy art projects to playground fun. We recommend tennis shoes be worn to ensure the safety of children on the playground. If flip flops/sandals are worn, we ask that you provide a pair of tennis shoes as well.

The children experience outdoor physical activity daily when the weather permits. Please be sure to provide your child with the appropriate clothing (hats, boots, mittens, etc.) for outdoor play throughout all seasons of the year.

Parents will need to supply a change of clothes and undergarments to be kept in the child's locker at Little Cats' Daycare in case of any kind of accident. Parents may want to provide multiple sets of extra clothing for their child(ren).

Holidays

The Daycare will be closed on the following holidays or other special designated days.

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas Day

Holidays that fall on weekends shall have a weekday in observance, designated by the Riceville Community School District Board of Education and the Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council.

Although New Year's Eve is not considered a holiday, the Daycare will close at 3:00 p.m.

Billing

The billing period is from Monday to Friday. Bills are sent through ProCare and are due by Friday morning at 9:00 am. Parents will be required to fill out a weekly schedule to include arrival time and pick up time for their child(ren) one week in advance. Schedules are due Wednesday by 3:00 pm for the following week. These are the minimum hours you will be billed for. It is necessary to develop a weekly commitment to adequately schedule staffing for your child. There is no reimbursement if a family does not utilize the full hours that they committed to on a weekly basis. For example, if a family commits to 20 hours for the week and only uses 15 hours, they will still be charged for the 20 hours of daycare. Any hours over the scheduled hours will be charged at the drop in rate. The rate schedule is as follows:

Infants (6 weeks to 23 months)	\$3.85/hour
24 months and older	\$3.80/hour
Each additional child	\$3.50/hour
Drop In Rate	Categorical charge plus an additional \$2.00/hour per child
Late Bill Charge	\$25 per week per family
Late Schedule Charge	\$25 per week per family

Sick Days

Each child will be granted five sick days per fiscal year. After these are gone, you will be charged per your scheduled hours. A courtesy call or message is needed.

Snow Days

For a child that already attends the Daycare, they will NOT be charged the drop in rate for snow days. For any children not enrolled, drop in rate will apply. If you choose not to bring your child to the Daycare on snow days, you will still be charged according to your schedule.

If school is canceled or school starts late due to weather, there will not be three-year-old preschool; however, parents are still welcome to send their child(ren). If they wish not to attend due to weather, parents may utilize a sick day or be charged according to their schedule.

Late Charges

Late charges will be posted to your account at 9:00 am Friday morning unless arrangements have been made ahead of time. If there are extenuating circumstances and you are unable to pay your bill on time, please contact the Director to make arrangements to set up a payment schedule. If there are circumstances in which you cannot make weekly payments due to the length of your pay period, etc., please talk to the Director to confirm your payment schedule.

Parents will be asked to provide a copy of their driver's license with intake paperwork. This is strictly used only in case the need for account collections should arise and only the Director will have access to this.

Failure to make payment arrangements within 2 weeks of a late payment will result in removal of the child(ren) from the schedule.

Returned Checks

There is a \$30.00 per incident fee for returned checks, in addition to any bank charges that may be incurred because of the returned check. Parents will be required to pay cash after two returned checks.

Scheduling

Our staffing patterns depend on the staff-to-child ratios. Therefore, it is important to have accurate child schedules in order to maintain ratio. Parents are asked to fill out weekly/monthly schedule forms to guarantee a spot. We understand that some places of employment require flexibility and parents/guardians often need to change the schedule. Please inform the Daycare of any schedule change no later than Wednesday the week before by 3:00 pm. If the schedule is not received by this time, a \$25 fee will be added to your bill. Requests after Wednesday at 3:00 pm are not guaranteed a spot for the following week. Any request sent on the weekend will not be responded to until Monday morning. The child(ren) will not be able to attend without the Director's approval.

No Call/ No Show

Parents are required to call the Daycare by 7:00 am if their child is not going to attend so no penalty occurs. Little Cats' Daycare understands that sometimes situations arise that will change your schedule. We simply request that you inform the Daycare so we can adjust our meal planning and staffing. If there is no notification of the child's absence within one hour of scheduled time, staff will contact the parent/guardian.

Unscheduled Drop Off

If parents drop off a child without contacting the Daycare, they will be charged \$25 per child in addition to the hourly charge. This is particularly important because additional children change staffing requirements, and we must maintain a ratio in accordance with DHS rules.

Late Pick-Up

Little Cats' Daycare hours are from 5:30 am to 6:00 pm. Teachers and staff at Little Cats' Daycare may have commitments at the end of the day. In addition to the hourly rate, there will be a \$25.00 fee per child charge for every 15 minutes that your child is at the Daycare after 6:00 pm. If you are 15 minutes or more past your scheduled pick up time, but the Daycare is still open, you will be charged the drop in rate for the remainder of the time your child(ren) are at the Daycare. Please contact the Daycare if you are running late and will be unable to pick up your child at the regularly scheduled time. Repeated tardiness to pick up a child may result in dismissal from the Daycare.

Child Care Assistance

Child Care Assistance is available through the Department of Human Services (DHS) for families meeting income guidelines. The PROMISE JOBS program is also available to low-income families with a parent attending school to achieve employment. Information regarding program guidelines is available through contacting DHS. You may contact DHS at 563-382-2928 to inquire about qualifications or talk to the Director to assist you with applying for childcare assistance.

Parents will be responsible for all charges prior to the written approval date from DHS.

Extended Leave of Absence

Parents may reserve their child's placement within the schedule following a leave of absence due to circumstances such as having the summer off, maternity leave, or other absences lasting three weeks to four months in length. A \$100.00 per child non-refundable reservation deposit shall be made when the child(ren) leaves the Daycare. This will be considered a pre-payment for services when the child(ren) returns.

Withdrawal From Care

A two-week notice is requested before termination of services.

Physical Examinations

All children must have a physical examination upon entering Little Cats' Daycare. Annual medical updates are required thereafter. If your child is school-age, a copy of the physical examination is accepted or a health statement provided by the parent is acceptable if a physical examination form is on file from the previous year. **Your child will NOT be allowed at Little Cats' Daycare without this form. This is a state requirement of licensed daycare centers.**

Immunizations

State law requires immunizations to be recorded on a special form and signed by a health official. Exemptions are possible with proper documentation. Immunization records are checked annually by the Howard or Mitchell County Public Health Departments. **Your child will NOT be allowed at Little Cats' Daycare without this record. This is a state requirement of licensed daycare centers.**

Conditions That Require Temporary Exclusion

Little Cats' Daycare will decide whether a child who is ill, or appears ill, will be permitted to remain in the Daycare for the day. The child will be required to be picked up if he/she has thrown up once, has a fever of 101 or higher, or has had two episodes of diarrhea. **Your child will be able to return to the Daycare after being fever free and Tylenol free for 24 hours. They also must be vomit-free and diarrhea-free for 24 hours before returning to the Daycare.** This also includes any other symptoms of a contagious illness.

Chronic Condition

Any child with a chronic condition, such as asthma, must have an emergency plan form on file. If an EPI pen is required, one must be provided when the child is in attendance at the Daycare and will be held by the lead teacher in the classroom.

Health and Illness Policy

In order to provide a healthy, safe environment for your child at the Daycare, we have established health policies. We do not have the staff or facilities to care for your child if they are too ill to participate in regular daycare activities. When the Daycare feels your child is sick or contagious, the child will not be permitted to attend the Daycare at the time of illness. In the event your child becomes ill while at the Daycare, we will call you to pick up the sick child. We

expect you to pick up your child within an hour of being called. If we can not reach you when your child is ill, we will call the emergency contact person indicated in your enrollment packet. The Director will look at each case individually to determine if a child will be sent home.

To ensure the overall health and safety of all the children, we ask that you not bring your child to daycare if one or more of the following exists:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in daycare activities including outdoor play.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without risking the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in the Daycare.
3. An acute change in behavior: lethargy, lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or a quickly spreading rash.
4. Fever with behavior change or other signs and symptoms in a child older than 2 months (e.g., sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea)
5. For infants younger than 2 months of age, a fever with or without a behavior change or other signs or symptoms
6. The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health care professional indicates that you can include the child in daycare activities
 - a. Fever, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness until a medical professional feels the child able to be included at the Daycare. Fever of 101 degrees or more. The child must be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to the Daycare.
 - b. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness like:
 - i. Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness
 - ii. Uncontrollable coughing
 - iii. Unexplained irritability, fussiness, and persistent crying
 - iv. Difficulty breathing
 - v. Wheezing
 - vi. Other unusual signs for the child
7. Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, hard stools, or medication that may cause the bleeding.
8. Vomiting illness. No vomiting for 24 hours before returning to daycare. May also return if the health care provider determines the vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
9. Persistent abdominal pain which continues more than two hours or intermittent pain associated with fever.
10. Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines that the child is noninfectious.
11. Rash with fever unless a health care provider determines it is not contagious.
12. Diarrhea which is loose, watery, and frequent stools. Child must be diarrhea-free for 24 hours before returning to the Daycare.
13. Fifth Disease. Keep the child home if fever is present.
14. Conjunctivitis or pink eye with discharge. No exclusion unless the child meets other exclusion criteria.
15. Scabies. Child must have been treated for 24 hours before returning. Blisters must be covered.

16. Tuberculosis. Health care provider or health official states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend daycare.
17. Impetigo. Child must have been on medication for 24 hours before returning.
18. Strep throat. Child must have been on medication for 24 hours before returning with no other exclusion signs.
19. Mumps. Child can go back to daycare five days after the start of symptoms or until symptoms are gone, whichever is longer.
20. Hepatitis A virus. Child may return one week after the start of symptoms.
21. Measles. Child may return four days after onset of rash.
22. Rubella. Child may return six days after onset of rash
23. Herpes simplex. Child who has control of the secretions from the mouth may return to daycare.
24. Bacterial Meningitis. Child may return to daycare 24 hours after starting antibiotics.
25. Head Lice. No exclusion unless the child meets other exclusion criteria. Treatment of an active lice infestation may be delayed until the end of the day. Children do not need to miss daycare due to head lice. Treatment recommendations <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/treatment.html>
26. Hand, foot, and mouth disease. No exclusion unless the child meets other exclusion criteria. Or is excessively drooling with mouth sores.
27. Chicken pox. Child may return 6 days from onset of pox or until pox becomes dry. (Crusted with no oozing)
28. COVID-19. Child must be excluded. Child may return to daycare 10 days after symptoms start and 24 hours with no fever and improved symptoms OR 10 days after a positive test if there are no symptoms.
29. Influenza. Child must be excluded. Child can return to daycare when the child is fever free for 24 hours and resolution of exclusion criteria.
30. Molluscum Contagiosum. No exclusion unless the child meets other exclusion criteria. Skin disease similar to warts. Do not share towels or clothing and use good hand hygiene.
31. MRSA. No exclusion unless the child meets other exclusion criteria. Wounds should be kept covered and gloves worn during bandage changes. Do not share clothing and use good hand hygiene.
32. Otitis Media or ear infection. No exclusion unless the child meets other exclusion criteria.
33. Whooping Cough. Child must be excluded. Can return after 5 days of antibiotics and resolution of exclusion criteria.
34. Ringworm. No exclusion unless the child meets other exclusion criteria. Treatment of ringworm may be delayed to the end of the day. Child may be readmitted after treatment has begun. Cover lesions if possible. Do not share clothing, bedding, or personal items.
35. RSV. No exclusion unless the child meets other exclusion criteria. Fever of 101 degrees or more. The child must be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to the Daycare. Lethargy, irritability, crying, difficulty breathing, etc.
36. Croup. No exclusion unless the child meets other exclusion criteria. Fever of 101 degrees or more. The child must be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to the Daycare. Lethargy, irritability, crying, difficulty breathing, etc.

If there is any confirmed infectious illness at the Daycare, the Daycare will consult Public

Health and DHS on recommended health and illness policies for the safety of all families. Policy will be adjusted to their recommendations.

If a child attending Little Cats' Daycare has been exposed to or is being treated for a communicable disease, a notice shall be posted on the front doors of the Daycare and sent through ProCare. This notice shall include the symptoms of the disease and the period of communicability.

Medication Procedures

All medications require a permission slip signed and dated by the parent before medications can be administered to children. All medications will be administered by a person who has had medication dispensing training. Training will take place annually by the Director of the facility. The following is the medication policy.

If your child is on a prescription medication, the following procedures need to be followed.

Prescribed Medications

1. All medications shall be stored in their original containers with accompanying physician or pharmacist's directions and label intact and stored so they are inaccessible to children and the public.
2. The label must include the child's name, the name of the medication, the date of the prescription, the medication's expiration date, administration instructions, and storage instructions.
3. Whenever possible, the first dose of the medication should be given at home to see if the child has a reaction to the medication.
4. In case of medications that are administered on an ongoing, long-term basis, authorization shall be obtained for a period not to exceed the duration of the prescription.
5. Staff administering medications will be trained on administration before giving medications. All medication administration shall be recorded.

Over the Counter Medications

1. The medications will be in the original child-resistant container.
2. The child's first and last name will be legibly printed on the container.
3. Specific, legible instructions for administration and storage will be provided.

Please do not place any medications in children's bags. The parent must hand the medication to the staff. The staff will place all medications in a locked box located in the office area away from children.

Any medication left in the Daycare after its expiration date will be disposed of by flushing or putting down the drain or returned to the parent. Any medication remaining after the authorization to dispense has ended or the child no longer requires the medication should be returned to the parent.

Medication Administration

Little Cats' Daycare will administer medications to children with written approval from the parent and an order from a health care provider. Whenever possible, the first dosage of medication should be given at home to see if the child would have any type of reaction. Parents or legal guardians may administer medication to their own children during the child care day.

Little Cats' Daycare will administer medications only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that meets the safety check.

Prescription medications must be provided in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication, the date of the prescription, the medication's expiration date, and administration, storage and disposal instructions.

For over the counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last name, specific and legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer, and the name of the health care providers who recommended the medication for the child (if applicable).

All medications will be stored out of the reach of children and at the recommended temperature.

Medications will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond the prescription guidelines. Long-term medication prescriptions will need to be renewed annually.

Little Cats' Daycare also requests that parents supply a medicine dropper, measuring cup, etc. for dispensing medications if needed. The measuring device needs to be placed in a closed or sealed bag and labeled with the child's name.

Medication logs will be completed by the staff administering the medications. The documentation will be kept on file as well as recorded for the parent or legal guardian's reference. If a medication error occurs, the Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately.

Sanitation and Hygiene

Diapering will be done in a designated area. There will be no food handling in this area. Staff will follow diapering procedures and proper cleaning and sanitizing practices. Toilets in rooms will be kept separate from activity areas. Children less than five years of age and older children who require assistance will be accompanied by an adult. Toilets are adapted to encourage independent use by children.

If a parent wishes to use cloth diapers, they must provide a bag or bucket for disposal. Staff is not responsible for cleaning the diapers. Diapers must be taken home and cleaned daily.

Surfaces and toys will be sanitized and disinfected in accordance with Iowa Department of Public Health Regulations.

Staff Hand Washing

The Daycare shall ensure that staff demonstrates clean personal hygiene sufficient to prevent or minimize the transmission of illness or disease. All staff shall wash their hands at the following times:

- Upon arrival at the Daycare
- Immediately before eating or participating in any food service activity
- Before leaving the restroom with a child or by themselves
- Before and after administering medication or non-emergency first aid to a child
- After handling garbage

Children Hand Washing

The Daycare shall ensure that staff assists children in personal hygiene sufficient to prevent or minimize the transmission of illness or disease. Children's hands shall be washed at the following times:

- Immediately before eating or participating in any food service activity
- After using the restroom or being diapered
- Before and after playing in sensory tables
- Before and after meals or snacks

Maintenance of Sleeping Equipment

Each crib, cot, or mat is to be labeled with the name of the child who uses the equipment. All surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected before use by another child. Bedding will be washed one time per week. Bedding will be stored so there is no contact between sleeping surfaces of another child.

Staff Requirements

The Daycare Director and staff have educational backgrounds and/or experience that meet licensing requirements. Full-time staff members are trained in CPR/First Aid, Universal Precautions, and Mandatory Reporting and Child Abuse. Staff members are also required to have additional training hours dependent on job title and employment status and are encouraged to attend training which would enhance the child care environment and experiences of the children served.

Supervision and Ratios

No child will be left unsupervised while at Little Cats' Daycare. Standards for staff ratios are based on what a child needs in order to have a reasonable amount of quality care and to allow for one-to-one interactions.

Age of children Minimum Ratios

Two weeks to two yrs	1:4
Two years	1:7
Three years	1:10
Four years	1:12
Five to ten years	1:15
Ten years and over	1:20

When there are mixed-age groups in the same room, the child to staff ratio will be consistent with the age of the youngest child attending. Ratios may deviate from the norm when children are resting, during activities, for transportation purposes, and to accommodate during special circumstances. These regulations can be found in the Department of Human Services Licensing Standards and Procedures.

Unlimited Access

Parents are entitled to unlimited access to their children during the Daycare's hours of operation unless parental contact is prohibited by a court order.

The facility is under surveillance 24/7; however, only daycare staff have access to recorded footage. Parents will not be allowed to view camera footage.

Access Policy

Little Cats' Daycare is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of the children as well as others present within the Daycare.

Any person in the Daycare who is not a staff member or parent shall not have unrestricted access to the children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian. Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct supervision and monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. Individuals not employed by Little Cats' Daycare, but who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc., will be monitored by paid staff and will not be allowed to interact with the children on the premises.

Sex Offender Policy

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) and who is required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry, shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the Daycare and shall not be on the property of the Daycare without the written permission of the Director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own minor child or ward to and from the Daycare.

The Director is not obligated to provide written permission and must consult with their DHS licensing consultant. If written permission is granted, it shall include the conditions under which the sex offender may be present.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is of utmost importance at Little Cats' Daycare. The Director will share any information pertaining to children, their families, financial situation, and other sensitive information only on a need-to-know basis. Parents, as well as the Department of Human Services licensing agents, have unlimited access to this information upon request.

Discipline Policy

One of Little Cats' Daycare's goals is to develop positive self-esteem in each child. The staff uses positive reinforcement or redirection whenever possible to accomplish this goal.

Staff encourages proactive problem solving and conflict resolution between peers. The use of corporal punishment and/or physical discipline is prohibited at all times.

All staff at Little Cats' Daycare follows the guidelines outlined in the Iowa Department of Human Services Day Care Daycare Standards and Procedures (section 109.7 Discipline).

They read as follows:

- No slapping, spanking, or shaking will occur.
- No punishment that humiliates or frightens a child will be used.
- No threats, verbal abuse, or derogatory comments will be made to a child.
- Punishment is never used in association with a child's illness or toilet training.
- A child can never be deprived of food or rest as punishment.

Parents will be informed of these policies and procedures prior to enrolling their child at Little Cats' Daycare. The director may reach out and set up a meeting about behaviors and discipline with parents if needed at a later date. Please speak with the Director if you have any questions or concerns about the discipline policy.

Biting

Children biting other children is one of the most difficult behaviors in group child care. It can occur without warning, is difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in all persons involved.

Biting is a very common behavior among children ages birth to three years. It is important to think positively of children who bite. Biting is a form of communication. Children are usually trying to let others know their needs whether it be that they are hungry, want a toy, etc.

Here are some reasons young children may bite:

- Are not provided developmentally appropriate care and guidance
- Do not have a strong attachment with a consistent, responsive caregiver
- Have too many transitions through the day
- Are cared for in large groups
- Are in large undefined spaces
- Lack the language skills necessary for expressing needs or strong feelings
- Are overwhelmed by sounds, light, and activity level
- Need more active playtime, choices, and materials
- Are over-tired
- Are teething or have a need for oral stimulation

Whatever the cause may be, biting causes strong emotions with all involved. We feel it is important to have a plan of action for biting before it occurs. When a child bites, the following procedure will occur:

1. The biter will be removed from the area where the biting occurred. The staff will tell the child, "Biting is not ok." A calm voice will be used.
2. The staff will now focus on the child who was bit. First aid will be given at this time according to staff's first aid training on bites.

3. The staff will then talk to the child who bit in a calm voice explaining on the child's level why it is not ok to bite. "I understand you want the toy, but it is not ok to bite others. It hurts them which makes them sad."
4. Redirect the child to another play area.
5. An accident/incident report will be written for both children involved. The biter's parents will additionally be notified by the Director or designee. All incident reports will be put in the children's files to ensure privacy.

When biting occurs, the Director will talk with the staff about when the biting occurred. The biting may involve a routine time, etc. The biting incidents or attempts to bite will be charted so the Director and staff can see if something can be changed. This may involve a schedule change, environmental change, etc. The Director needs to additionally assess where the staff was located in the classroom when the biting incidents occurred. Staff may need to be closer to the children during certain times of the scheduled day. The staff will teach all children in the class "It is ok to say no" or "Don't hurt me" to someone who is going to bite you.

The parents of the biting child will have a conference with the Director and staff involved. At that time, the Director will talk about the changes and measures being done to help stop the biting. The Director will make it clear that if the biting continues, the child may be asked to leave the Daycare during the biting phase. A warning will be put in writing before the parents are asked to remove the child from the Daycare.

Accident/Incident Reports

If your child is hurt or has an accident, parents will be notified via Procure and a paper copy of the accident/incident report will be filled out and filed in their portfolio. We ask parents to sign the incident report when picking up the child stating that they were informed of the situation. If parents would like a copy, parents must notify staff.

Dismissal

If your child is exhibiting unacceptable behavior, a conference will be scheduled with your child's caregiver and/or Director. When meeting with the parent(s), the Director will discuss a reasonable period of time for resolution of the situation. If a child continues to exhibit unacceptable behavior and requires a great amount of staff guidance, we will meet with parents to address the problem and work together to find a solution. Little Cats' Daycare encourages parents to share any observations, questions, or suggestions they may have in dealing with the child with the Director. If a workable solution cannot be found, it may result in dismissal from our program.

Suspected Child Abuse

All suspicions of child abuse or neglect will be immediately reported to the Department of Human Services. Staff, serving in the caretaking role of children, are mandated reporters of child abuse. Reporters of suspected child abuse are protected by law if the report was made in good faith.

Please keep in mind it is not the staff's job to decipher abuse or neglect. It is simply the staff's job to report any possible cases. The Department of Human Services is responsible for determining abuse.

Emergencies

The safety of the children in attendance at the Little Cats' Daycare is the first priority. Immediate attention will be given to each situation as it arises and it will be handled accordingly. Practice drills for fire and tornado situations are practiced on a monthly basis.

Requiring physician and/or dental attention:

- If the child is in critical condition, unconscious, bleeding, or disabled, a call for quickest medical attention is made. Please keep emergency contacts updated on all enrollment forms. Accident report forms *will* be filled out on all accidents.

Blizzard:

- The Director or a staff member will monitor weather conditions. If complications prevent a child from being picked up by the parent, the staff on duty will remain in the Daycare with the child until the parent makes other arrangements.

Fire:

- All children are removed from the immediate danger through the nearest exit, and taken to the Bus Barn. Parents will immediately be notified. Fire drills are practiced monthly as stipulated by Iowa law.

Tornado:

- The Director or staff will listen for weather announcements of threatening weather. If there is a tornado warning, the children will be escorted to the designated area until the threat of the storm is over. A staff member will remain with the children until a family member arrives. Tornado drills are practiced monthly.

Emergency evacuation:

- If, due to an emergency, we are forced out of the Daycare, shelter will be taken at the Bus Barn until parents are able to pick up their child.

Every staff member will have training on emergency plans for the above situations. These plans will be reviewed periodically and with each new employee.

Weather Related Cancellations

Little Cats' Daycare does not usually close due to weather-related conditions. If the decision is made that the facility will close due to weather conditions, parents or legal guardians will be notified by social media and ProCare. Efforts will also be made to contact families by phone.

Little Cats' Daycare Facebook Page

Riceville CSD Facebook Page

ProCare

Intoxicated Parent

If an employee observes that a parent or authorized pick-up person appears to be intoxicated at the time of pick-up, the parent/authorized pick-up person will be given the option of Little Cats' Daycare contacting an alternative pickup. Little Cats' Daycare cannot hold a child.

However, law enforcement will be contacted if a parent/authorized pick-up person chooses to leave with a child and is clearly under the influence.

Injuries or Illnesses Requiring Medical Attention

Staff members are trained in CPR, first aid, and universal precautions. In case of an emergency, 911 will be contacted immediately. The parent will be contacted as soon as possible. If we are not able to reach a parent, we will contact an alternative emergency contact. A staff member will stay with the child until a parent or emergency contact assumes the responsibility of the child. If a caregiver is removed from the facility, a substitute staff member will be called in to maintain the staff-child ratio.

Missing or Abducted Children

Staff will perform periodic counts of their children when outside of the facility to prevent lost or missing children. If it is determined that a child is missing or lost, Little Cats' Daycare will immediately notify the local police, DHS, the director, and parents or legal guardian. Staff will notify the director who will search the building or a lock down will be announced.

Authorized Pick-Up

Children will only be allowed to be picked up by the custodial parent or legal guardian, or those listed on the authorized pick-up sheet. If someone not authorized comes to pick up a child, we will contact the parents and they may give oral authorization once. Any pick-up person who the staff does not know will be asked for identification. Upon pick up, the parent will need to add that person to the pick up list or make a separate note for the occurrence. No child will be released without permission from the parents. Staff may require identification from a person taking a child. The police will be contacted if an unauthorized person seeks custody of the child.

Smoking, Prohibited Substances, and Weapons

Smoking and the use of tobacco products is prohibited on ANY PROPERTY of the Little Cats' Daycare and the Riceville Community School. Alcohol and illegal drugs and guns or lethal weapons are also prohibited.

Field Trips

On occasion, short walking field trips may occur to help enhance the children's experience and expand their real-world knowledge. These trips are a privilege and can be taken away if staff feel it necessary. These may be short walking trips to the library, park, grocery store, or fire station. All field trips will be cleared with the Director two weeks in advance and must meet the following guidelines:

- Age appropriate for the children
- Additional and approved supervision of the children to reduce ratio
 - In the event that the Daycare becomes short staffed and ratio is unable to be met, parents will be notified if a child has to stay behind.
- First aid supplies and emergency contact information will accompany all field trips.
- Parents will be notified one week in advance.
- All consent refusals will be respected and followed on field trips.

- Supervision will be met by staying in ratio plus having an additional staff member whenever leaving daycare grounds.
- There will be touch “supervision,” meaning children will be in sight and within arms reach at all times when around water.

Transportation

Little Cats' Daycare may transport children over the age of 4-years-old on field trips within city limits. The child must have written permission from the parent/guardian prior to the field trip.

Invitations

Oftentimes children can feel left out if they are not invited to another child’s party. To keep the positive self-esteem for our children, invitations to personal parties need to be handled from home rather than at Little Cats' Daycare.

Personal Property

Items brought from home can create difficulties with sharing and also puts the child’s possessions at risk for being lost or stolen. We highly suggest that items are not brought from home. Little Cats' Daycare provides a variety of toys and activities for the children to enjoy during the day. If a child does bring an item from home, it will be placed in the child’s cubby/locker until they are picked up at the end of the day. Little Cats' Daycare is not responsible for lost or misplaced items a child brings from home.

Nutrition

Breakfast and lunch will be provided by the Riceville Community School District’s Food Service Program. There will be an additional charge for meals provided by the school. Each family will set up a lunch account through the school. An application for free and reduced meals will be available. Meals will be paid separately from the child care bill. Snacks are provided by Little Cats’ Daycare at no additional charge. Snack and meal times are as followed:

- Breakfast: 8:00 – 8:30
- Lunch: 11:00 – 12:00
- Snack: 2:30 – 3:00

Little Cats' Daycare always welcomes donated items from parents to share with the group for afternoon snacks. These items can be crackers, fresh fruit, cheese or meat slices, yogurt, or other prepackaged healthy snacks.

Infant and Toddler Feeding

Infants are fed on demand. The infant must be developmentally ready, and solid foods should be introduced one at a time at home to detect allergies. Parents/guardians must introduce new foods at home before the Daycare will offer the food to the child. Each infant's eating schedule will be discussed with their parents. Infants will always be held while they are eating from a bottle, as propping bottles is not allowed at Little Cats' Daycare. Juice will not be offered to infants.

Formula brought from home must be brought in the manufacturer’s container and labeled with the child’s first and last name. Formula will be made according to the instructions provided on the container. Breast milk or formula will be warmed in a glass of warm water and temperature

tested before feeding. Baby food will be served from a bowl or cup and not from the container. Solids will be fed by spoon only, not bottle. Uneaten food will be discarded. Only formula or breast milk, provided by the caretaker, will be served to infants under 12 months of age. Children 12-24 months will be served whole milk, provided by the center. Children over the age of 24 months will be served skim or 1% milk, provided by the center. Any exceptions to this require a physician's statement.

Breast Milk Storage

All breast milk must be labeled with the child's first and last name and date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk will be thawed under running cold water and used immediately. Any thawed breast milk not consumed by your child will be discarded.

Food Allergies

Little Cats' Daycare takes special care to ensure that all food allergies are properly cared for. CACFP regulations require an Allergy/Food Exception Statement be filled out by a licensed physician in order for the Daycare to substitute allergen foods for your child. If this statement is not filled out, the parents will be responsible for providing substitute foods.

Food items should not be brought from home unless pre-approved by the Director due to allergies. Snacks for special occasions must be store bought, not homemade, and be peanut/nut free. Non-food items such as stickers, crayons, or small toys are encouraged in lieu of sugary snacks to help promote our wellness policy.

Physical Activity

The daily schedule provides time for large motor skill activities both indoors and outdoors, weather permitting. Children will go outdoors each day unless the temperature is above 90° F including humidity or below 10° F including wind chill. Staff also has time scheduled for both fine and gross motor development throughout the day.

Playground Rules

1. Staff members are to be stationed wherever children are playing, watching for potential hazards and encouraging and interacting with the children.
2. Attention should be directed to the children at all times.
3. Staff should direct children to follow the play area rules.
4. Equipment will be installed and utilized according to the manufacturer's instructions.
5. Rubber mulch is provided for fall surfacing. Staff should make sure there is enough mulch under or around climbers, slides, and swings.
6. If a piece of playground equipment is to break, staff will contact the director as soon as possible and it will be repaired or replaced.
7. If there is an injury on the playground, staff will follow the first aid procedure and complete an incident report.
8. Playground equipment will be inspected on a monthly basis.

Strangulation Prevention

Little Cats' Daycare's top priority is the safety and wellbeing of all children. To best ensure safety, staff will make sure:

- Strings and cords long enough to circle a child's neck are not accessible.
- Window blinds and draperies will not have looped cords.
- Tension or tie down devices will be used to hold cords tight.
- Dramatic play items with handles or straps will be removed or shortened.
- Ties, scarves, necklaces, and boas will be used by children under 3 only if directly supervised.
- Pacifiers attached to a string/ribbon will not be used.
- Parents will be asked to remove strings from children's hooded sweatshirts.
- If lanyards are used, they will be the breakaway type.

Rest Time Policy

During naptime, all children enrolled at Little Cats' Daycare, regardless of age, need to have at least 30 minutes of quiet time each day. They do not have to sleep but need to lie quietly so that other children can rest and fall asleep. After a minimum rest time, the child who has not fallen asleep will be given something quiet to do (books, lacing cards, small puzzles, pattern blocks, paper, and crayons/markers, etc.). If at all possible, we will try to follow parent's wishes about rest time. The following actions will be taken to ensure all children remain as safe as possible during rest time:

- Toileting needs are attended to before and immediately following naptime. Shoes may be removed if the child wishes. Special blankets, pillows, stuffed animals, etc are allowed.
- Infants will be placed on a firm mattress, with tight fitting sheets and no blankets in the crib. There will be nothing else in the crib, no swaddling, and the temperature of the room will be adequate during naptime.
- Infants under 12 months will be placed on their backs to sleep. A child under 4 months will be rolled back onto their back during sleep.
- Infants may not nap in the swing, bouncy seat, or car seats. They must be moved immediately to a safe sleep environment if they arrive asleep or fall asleep outside of a safe sleep environment.
- All hazardous materials, such as bibs, pacifiers, clips, etc., the child is wearing should be removed prior to nap time.
- Children under 12 months cannot sleep in another position without a waiver from the child's primary care physician requiring as such for a medical need. The waiver will have an expiration date.
- Children over the age of 6 months may not have a mobile over their cribs.
- The rooms should be luminated and quiet enough during nap so that children are able to be seen and heard at all times.
- All bedding will be washed weekly.

Grievances/Problem Solving Procedures

Parent complaints or problems are of concern to the Daycare. Our policy is to give the parent an opportunity to voice their side of the issues and give full consideration to the issues or concerns. In order for Little Cats' Daycare to help with a problem or concern, we must know about it. We ask that the concerns be brought to the Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council directly, not through Facebook, social media platforms, or in the community, etc.

- If the parent has a concern or problem, the parent should speak to the Director.
- If the issues/concerns are not resolved after addressing them with the Director, the parent should then refer the issues to the Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council. Current Daycare Advisory Council members' contact information is available upon request at the Daycare. Attending a Little Cats' Daycare Council Meeting is highly recommended so all Daycare Advisory Council members may be aware of the issues or concerns. A parent should notify the Director if the parent intends to speak at a meeting or talk with the Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council.
- The Council may utilize up to five days to make any decisions or further address issues. The Council will follow up or respond within five days of a meeting as well. Any decision rendered by the Council, as a whole, must be considered final and binding.

Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council

- Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council meetings are the 3rd Wednesday of each month unless otherwise posted to change. Once proper procedures are followed as listed above, special interest or concerns will be handled on an individual basis and special or closed meetings will be scheduled to protect the interests of the parent or family involved. You will be notified of any meeting that personally involves you as a family or parent.
- Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council positions can be filled at any time during vacancies. Parents are welcome to become part of the Council. Any vacancy shall be filled by a majority vote of the existing Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council members.
- The Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council shall update the Riceville Community School District Board of Education on a quarterly and annual basis.

Review and Revision of Policies and Procedures

Little Cats' Daycare will review and update policies annually in July or immediately upon regulation changes. Little Cats' Daycare will notify parents via ProCare of such changes and make copies available to parents upon request. When a child is enrolled in the Daycare, parents or legal guardians will sign an acknowledgement form stating they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures of Little Cats' Daycare. When a new staff member begins employment at the Daycare, they will also have to sign that they have read, understood, and agreed to abide by the content of the Little Cats' Daycare's policies.

Little Cats' Daycare holds the right to make modifications to these policies and procedures when determined conditions warrant change.

These policies will be reviewed and edited at the discretion of the Little Cats' Daycare Advisory Council and approved by the Riceville Community School District Board of Education.