

Gatepath's
Learning Links
preschool

**PARENT
HANDBOOK**

Last Revised September 1, 2017

**The Niall P. McCarthy Center for
Children & Families**

1764 Marco Polo Way
Burlingame, CA 94010

650-259-8544

Enroll@LearningLinksPreschool.org

Mountain View Childcare Center

260 Escuela Avenue
Mountain View, CA 94040

650-938-2252

Mtnview@LearningLinksPreschool.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

i.	Welcome!.....	3
I.	Contacting the Center.....	4
II.	Introduction.....	4
III.	Curriculum.....	5
IV.	Our Staff.....	6
V.	Enrollment and Admissions.....	6
VI.	Tuition and Fees.....	7
VII.	Daily Operations.....	8
VIII.	Parent Advisory Committee.....	12
IX.	Holidays, Events and Meetings.....	12
X.	Health and Safety.....	13

APPENDIX

A.	Policy on Confidentiality.....	16
B.	Policies on Child Guidance and Discipline.....	18
C.	Policy on Reporting Child Abuse (Laws and Licensing).....	19
D.	Procedures for Accidents and Illness.....	19
E.	Procedures for Administering Medication to Children.....	21
F.	Emergency and Disaster Procedures and Preparedness.....	23
G.	Transportation Policy.....	25
H.	Disruptive Adult Behavior Policy.....	26
I.	Discrimination Policy.....	26
J.	Parent Responsibilities.....	26

Dear Families,

Welcome to Learning Links Preschool!

We are looking forward to working with you during this exciting start or continuation of your child's educational journey. The Parent Handbook will provide you with important information regarding your child's class, our teaching philosophy and other policies and procedures for the center. Please review the contents of this handbook and keep it for your reference.

We will strive to make your child's time at Learning Links an educational and enjoyable experience. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your center's Site Director.

We look forward to serving you and your family this year and we welcome your questions, input, and involvement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennie Chien". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*Jennie Chien
Director of Inclusive Early Childhood Education*

I. CONTACTING THE PRESCHOOL

ADDRESS

Burlingame:

Learning Links Preschool
Niall P. McCarthy Center for Children & Families
1764 Marco Polo Way
Burlingame, CA 94010
Tel: 650-259-8544
Fax: 650-652-0675
enroll@learninglinkspreschool.org

Mountain View:

Mountain View Childcare Center Learning Links
260 Escuela Avenue
Mountain View, CA 94040
Tel: 650-938-2252
Fax: 650-938-2251
mtnview@learninglinkspreschool.org

II. INTRODUCTION

PRESCHOOL OVERVIEW AND PHILOSOPHY

Learning Links is a developmentally appropriate play-based preschool for children ages two to five. Our Mountain View Childcare Center includes Infant and Toddler care as well. Our students of all abilities are encouraged to explore, learn and thrive together. Our teachers and assistant teachers work with our students to develop strong independent learning skills while having fun in the classroom each day.

Learning Links Preschool believes in providing a nurturing, safe and secure environment for children and their families. We aspire to teach and empower your child to develop a strong foundation for learning by promoting social skills development and school readiness. Our curriculum is designed to engage students in each activity with the goal of developing a desire to learn within each student. We are sensitive to the needs of each child and we will structure learning experiences suitable for your child regardless of ability, temperament, culture, or socio-economic background.

Learning Links Preschool is operated by Gatepath which has been dedicated to building inclusive community opportunities for individuals with and without special needs for more than 97 years. For more information on Gatepath, please visit our website www.gatepath.org.

III. CURRICULUM

At Learning Links, we facilitate children's learning using developmentally appropriate practices that support growth through play, exploration, daily routines, environment, and through meaningful interactions with peers and teachers. We also promote learning by building a sense of community within the classroom, designing an environment that is inviting and navigable by a young child, and allows the child to make meaningful choices within established boundaries. We also encourage children to become critical thinkers by engaging in dialogue and extending learning experiences that can address multiple disciplines simultaneously. We accept and promote the uniqueness of each child and we work individually with each student to determine his or her best learning styles and methods.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Each class includes the following activities. The order, length, and content of each time vary depending on age level and appropriate developmental level of each class.

Free Play Time

The entire class is open and children choose the areas of play. This choice during play based Free Play Time is important for young children to explore, experiment, and use their imagination. During Free Play Time, children practice their skills at their own pace and they learn how to play with others. Teachers facilitate their play as needed by modeling appropriate language and behavior.

Circle Time

Circle time is organized around set of daily routines. It may include songs, stories, circletime helper, checking the weather, checking the calendar, group games, or talking time. During circle time, children learn to pay attention, follow directions, wait for turns, take turns, share ideas, ask and answer questions appropriately.

Music

All of our classes have music enrichment offered by a qualified music teacher once a week. Music enrichment last from 15 to 30 minutes depending on the age of the classroom. The music teacher incorporates familiar songs and movements with new songs and small instruments.

Small Group Activity

Areas in the classroom are set up to reflect various developmental skill areas. These areas include art, sensory, manipulatives, sorting, and matching, fine motor, pre-writing and early math skills. Each area is facilitated by teachers to help children practice their skills.

Snack Time

Snack Time is used to practice self-help skills and social skills. Children are sitting, eating, sharing, taking turns, asking and answering appropriately, talking with peers and teachers, and cleaning up after themselves.

Outside Play

Children practice their gross motor skills, such as balance and coordination in running and jumping, during Outside Play. Children can choose to play on the slide structure, sensory tables, sandbox (Burlingame), or ride a tricycle. Children organize their own small group play or teachers facilitate small group play by setting up specific play areas.

Closing Circle Time

It's time to summarize the day. Closing Circle Time can include music and movement, large group game, or story time.

Lunch

Children who stay with us for lunch bring their own lunch.

Nap Time

All children who are at the center for four hours or longer must be given an opportunity to rest or nap. Depending on the age and needs of the child, nap can last from 45 minutes to 2 hours. All children have a dedicated crib (infants only) or cot to take their nap. For children in the infant room, parents are asked to provide three fitted crib-sized sheets. (Licensing requires sheets are changed every day and a third sheet can be used if a child soils their sheet during the day.) Parents are asked to provide a blanket and in some cases, a soft cuddle object to help their child feel comfortable during their nap.

IV. OUR STAFF

Teaching and working with young children requires experience, sensitivity and training.

Our teaching staff is qualified to deliver a developmentally appropriate, educational, and culturally competent experience to support each child's learning and development experience. Teachers have preparation time built into their schedules to prepare a unique plan that addresses the academic and social-emotional needs of each child. Each staff member completes a minimum of 10 hours of professional development annually.

V. ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSIONS

ENROLLMENT

Learning Links Preschool welcomes all families in the community. We individualize our services to meet the developmental needs of each child; both with and without special needs. Class size, composition, and staffing are carefully considered so that every child has the best possible opportunities for interaction and learning.

Our two schools have different enrollment priorities based on the school's location and focus.

ENROLLMENT PRIORITY BURLINGAME

1. Siblings of returning students and Gatepath Early Intervention graduates
2. School District Partners
3. Other children in the community

ENROLLMENT PRIORITY MOUNTAIN VIEW

1. Siblings of currently enrolled children.
2. Low income Mountain View Families (up to the 15% of the center's preschool enrollment.)
3. Mountain View residents.
4. City of Mountain View employees
5. Other children in the community

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Preschool enrolls children with special needs and provides appropriate supports for these children to be successful in the preschool environment.

At Learning Links Burlingame, children with IEPs from partnering School Districts and graduates from Gatepath's Early Intervention program will receive priority for placement through their School District.

At Learning Links Mountain View, we will first transition from preschool to pre-k all eligible children who make the California Department of Education cut-off date (September 1st) and are entering kindergarten the following fall.

If there is space available, we will accept requests from parents of children who do not make the cut-off, but are planning to enroll their child in transitional kindergarten or another program at the end of Pre-K.

VI. TUITION and FEES

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

1. A one-time, non-refundable application fee of \$150.00 (non-refundable) is due at time of enrollment or when families are joining the waitlist for future spots.
2. 50% of the first month's tuition (non-refundable) is due when a spot is reserved for the child. See the current Tuition Schedule for detailed information on monthly fees.

3. Tuition invoices are emailed on the first business day of the month, when automatic payment is processed. See automatic tuition payment below.
 - a. The first month of tuition will be the full tuition amount less the 50% non-refundable deposit placed at the time of enrollment.
4. If a family needs to withdraw their child (ren) for any reason, 30 days written notice is required. Tuition will be prorated for the days attended. See proration policy below.
5. In the event of an extended absence, tuition payment is **required** if space is to be held for the child.
6. Families will be notified of any tuition changes by July 1st of each year, with changes going into effect on September 1st of that year.

AUTOMATIC TUITION PAYMENT

Learning Links charges tuition and fees automatically on the first business day of the month. At the time of registration, families are asked to provide either banking/ACH or credit card information for monthly tuition and fee payments. Enrollment is not complete until payment information is on file. Families who choose to pay with a credit card rather than providing banking/ACH information will be charged the 3% processing fee, billed at the time of tuition.

TUITION PRORATION POLICY

Our tuition rates will be prorated based off the total number of days a child attends; for example, if there are 30 days in the month and your child attends until the 21st, you will pay 70% ($21/30=70\%$) of the month's current tuition rate. If there are 31 days and your child attend to the 21st ($21/31=68\%$) you are responsible for 68% of the current month's tuition.

LATE PAYMENT FEE

If payment is not received by the 5th day of the month, families will pay an additional charge of \$5 dollars per day. After 10 days of late tuition, the child cannot attend school until the account is paid in full.

VII. DAILY OPERATIONS

PARKING

California licensing standards require that no child can enter the classroom without contact between the center staff and the adult who is dropping the child off. Please allow time to park and enter with your child.

Extreme caution and safety should be exercised in the parking lot. A parking lot is a dangerous place for children who may run ahead of their caregivers. Please hold your child's hand at all times. Please park in designated parking spots or on the street. Parking parallel to the building is not permitted.

DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

Please be aware of your child's classroom schedule and try to arrive at a time that allows your child to acclimate to the day's schedule. Please pick-up your child at the designated pick-up time. **There will be a \$5.00 late charge per minute after program hours.** Late pick-up fees will be added to the monthly tuition invoice.

Dropping Off

Sign-in: There is a centralized electronic system for signing in and signing out your child (ren). Please sign your full, legal name (not your child's name) and time you are dropping off your child. State law mandates this procedure. The state can fine the center \$150 per child who is not signed in properly. Also, in the event of a disaster, these sheets are used to take attendance, and your child's welfare may depend upon the sign-in sheet's accuracy. **In the case where a family does not consistently sign in their child, a fine of \$50 will be charged to the family.** Before enforcing this fee, the center's Site Director will discuss the issue with the parents and inform them that the next time they do not properly sign in their child, a fee will be charged.

Check in with the teacher: We feel that it is a very important opportunity for us to personally greet you and your child when you bring your child to the classroom. We also wish to determine if he/she is feeling well and if they are ready for the demands of a busy day at the center. This process also ensures that responsibility for the child is "handed-off" from the parent to the teacher and that the child experiences a smooth transition between home and school.

When to leave: To be respectful of all the children and staff, we request that parents depart within the first few minutes of class. We have found that knowing that parents will leave after a brief time helps children with separation and it eases their transition into the classroom routine.

Picking Up

When arriving for pick-up: Please be respectful of the classroom schedule and the activities that are happening when entering the classroom. If you typically pick your child up after circle time, please wait for the teacher to end his/her circle time before entering the room; this allows the teacher to finish the activity with every child's attention.

Sign-out: Please use our electronic sign out system and be sure to sign your full name.

Only adults who are authorized on the LIC700 on file in the center's Site Director Office will be allowed to pick up a child. As per LIC995, Notification of Parents' Rights, a parent may not request that a parent not be allowed to visit their child or take their child from the child care center, unless the requesting parent has provided a copy of a certified court order to the Site Director.

If you have made arrangements to have a friend or another family member pick up your child, please be sure that you inform the teacher and/or Site Director. You will need to add their name to your list of Persons Authorized to Pick-up the Child from the Facility on the I.D. and Emergency form. He or she will also be required to show photo I.D.

No adult will be allowed to pick up any child if the adult appears unable to safely drive and/or safely take care of the child.

Check your child's cubby/classroom file folders: Children are provided with a cubby in their classroom. Cubbies are the children's private spaces in which they keep their jacket, extra clothes, and diapers, if needed. Please do not send toys from home. Completed artwork, projects, and notes to parents will also be stored in the cubbies until parents pick up their child (ren). Please check your child's cubby each day for messages and artwork. There are also teacher communication boards for each classroom where your child's teacher will post information about the class and upcoming activities. If your child's classroom has parent folders, please check your folder as well.

Late Pick-Up Fee and Policy: If you are running late, please call the school number immediately to let us know. There is a late pick-up fee for children picked up after the end of class. **The Late Pick-Up Fee is \$5.00 for each minute.** Please try to arrive 5-10 minutes before the end of the program to insure ample time to greet your child and speak with the teachers.

When you are leaving: During pick-up time, families and guardians are responsible for their child upon entering the classroom. It is important that children safely enter and exit classrooms and the school facilities with appropriate adult supervision; this supervision extends to siblings who join for pick-up or drop-off.

FOOD SERVICE PROVISION

LEARNING LINKS PRESCHOOL IS A NUT-SAFE BUILDING! NUT ALLERGIES ARE SERIOUS. PLEASE AVOID BRINGING IN ANY PRODUCT THAT CONTAINS NUTS OR WAS PACKAGED IN A BUILDING CONTAINING NUTS. WE DO OUR BEST TO ENSURE NUTS DO NOT ENTER THE BUILDING. IF YOUR CHILD HAS A NUT ALLERGY OR ANY OTHER FOOD ALLERGIES, PLEASE TELL THE CENTER SITE DIRECTOR. CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SHARE FOOD FROM THEIR LUNCH.

Snacks

Learning Links Preschool provides a nutritious snack each day in accordance with Title 22 regulations section 101227 (5)(c). Parents are responsible for reporting any food allergies their child may have. Staff will plan and/or serve snack accordingly. Each snack shall consist of at least one serving from at least two of the four major food groups (grain, protein, fruit, vegetable).

Lunch

Children who are enrolled in program through lunch time are asked to bring lunch from home daily.

Food Safety

Hard candies of any kind, popcorn, whole hot dogs, whole grapes and anything grape-sized, such as cheese cubes, present a choking hazard to small children and are not allowed for lunch, birthday parties or other events at our center.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays can be celebrated during class time. Parents may bring a treat for the children and assist with the distribution and clean-up of the snacks. Other options for birthday celebrations include doing a favorite art or cooking project with your child's class. Please check with your child's teacher for any class rules or limitations.

CLOTHING

Due to the nature of children's activities, and for safety reasons, we highly recommend that tennis shoes be worn at Learning Links. If the child must wear sandals or boots, he/she needs to bring a pair of tennis shoes for use on the climbing structure and tricycles. **FLIP-FLOPS ARE NOT ALLOWED DUE TO SAFETY CONCERNS.** To avoid mix-ups, parents should label all clothing with their child's name.

A complete change of clothing, including socks and underwear, and an extra pair of shoes should be available in your child's cubby every school day in case of accidents or water play.

TOILETING & TOILET TRAINING

We encourage toileting independence where appropriate. Communication about toileting issues is important, and we welcome the opportunity to work with you and your child.

Children are not required to be toilet-trained before they enter Learning Links Preschool. Disposable diapers, Pull-Ups, and/or extra underwear and pants must be provided by the child's parents.

If diapers or Pull-Ups are being used by a child, parents should bring one pack of wipes at the beginning of each week.

FIELD TRIP PROVISIONS:

Field trips may occur throughout the school year. Parent permission forms will be issued and a signature will be required in order for a child to participate in each field trip. Most field trips will be within close walking proximity to Learning Links Preschool. However, if transportation is needed, field trip transportation will be provided according to Title 22 California State Regulations for Child Care Centers (see Appendix). A request for parent volunteers will be issued with the field trip notices, and parents will be selected on a first come, first serve basis.

TEACHER-PARENT COMMUNICATION

Frequent communication between staff and parents/caregivers is essential to providing quality care and education for your child. Each classroom has a communication board above the sign in desk where teacher notes will be posted. We encourage parents/caregivers to check in with their child's teacher on a daily basis. Email with teachers is also acceptable. Parents/caregivers can also schedule individual time with their child's teacher to discuss class participation or their child's progress or other communication. For Learning Links Mountain View you can call 650-938-2552 and use the phone menu to leave a message leave your child's teacher.

Teachers should be informed about changes in home life, i.e., parents going out of town, illness or death of a relative or pet, a new sibling, etc. Such situations may cause changes in a child's behavior and an informed teacher can address your child's needs.

HANDLING CLASSROOM CONCERNS

If you ever have concerns about your child's care or education, please schedule non-classroom time for a private discussion with the teacher to discuss and to partner in resolving your concern.

If the issue or grievance is unresolved, please contact the center's Site Director.

If the concern is still unresolved the parent may contact the VP of Programs, Tracey Fecher (650) 259-8548 or tfecher@gatepath.org.

We encourage parent feedback and require that the above process be followed to avoid interruptions to the positive learning environment we provide for children.

PARENT/FAMILY CONFERENCES

We recognize that parents and caregivers are the experts in their child's development. Our wish is to partner with you in promoting your child's development and progress. Parent conferences will be held twice per year. However, either staff or parents/caregivers may request additional conferences at any time. Learning Links highly values building relationships with families and we know that your input and expertise about your child allows us to facilitate a program that is suitable for your child.

Students who may be receiving therapy services from outside vendors will need to work with the Site Director to ensure program space is available for these service providers. Each classroom has a maximum occupancy number allowed for safety reasons.. The Site Director will work with the family and teachers to determine the most appropriate time for service delivery for each child.

VIII. PARENT PARTICIPATION and PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Parent participation is encouraged through the Parent Advisory Committee (“PAC”). The PAC meets monthly to discuss and organize programming, resources, parent work days, and fundraising. The Site Director supports and assists the PAC, but it is primarily a parent-facilitated group and your participation is vital to its success.

If you are interested in participating in the PAC, volunteering in the classroom, or sharing a special talent with the center, please contact the Site Director who will give you more information on opportunities for you to contribute to your child’s classroom.

IX. HOLIDAYS, EVENTS & MEETINGS

HOLIDAYS

Learning Links is closed for major holidays. A full school calendar will be provided to families for the upcoming school year.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

Each Fall we hold a “Back to School Night”; this is an opportunity for families to meet with teachers and to learn more about curriculum and the classroom procedures.

COSTUME PARADE

On October 31st, children are encouraged to wear costumes to school. We ask that children not wear masks to school with their costume for proper identification and supervision of children. Each teacher sets up a costume party and other activities in the classroom. All students can participate in a parade around our school campus.

X. HEALTH & SAFETY

WHEN TO KEEP A CHILD AT HOME

In compliance with California State requirements and for the protection of all of the children and staff, the illness policy (located in your admission agreement) is of the utmost importance to the health of our community and it must be adhered to.

Learning Links Preschool should be called if a child will be staying home due to illness. The staff needs to be aware of illnesses which may be present among the children attending our schools, and it is important to notify the center if you suspect that your child has an infectious disease. These illnesses include, but are not limited to: conjunctivitis, impetigo, chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, and bacterial diarrhea. If your child may have been exposed to any of these illnesses at the school, we will distribute a notice to alert you.
child must be kept home if he/she has:

- A fever. A child should stay home until a normal temperature has been maintained for at least 24 hours.
- An unusual rash that might be a symptom of a contagious disease.
- A contagious virus such as measles, chicken pox, mumps or roseola.
- An eye infection with a discharge. After being examined and placed on medication, the child may return when they are no longer contagious.
- An ear or throat infection. Once the child has been examined, placed on medication, and made comfortable, he or she may return to school when no longer contagious.
- A cold. A child should stay home until the symptoms of a cold such as coughing, sneezing, watery eyes, and thick, green mucus secretions have subsided.
- Diarrhea and/or symptoms of flu. A child who has been vomiting and/or complaining of a headache may get even worse at school.
- A persistent, hacking cough.
- Difficulty breathing

Please see Appendix D, Section 2 for additional details.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In the event of an emergency involving your child, it is imperative that we are able to reach you in a timely manner. Please provide the school with your cell phone, work phone, home phone, etc. Be sure to inform the office when there are changes to your phone numbers or address.

EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The center holds regular fire and disaster drills and it is prepared to care for children for up to 72 hours in the event of a major natural disaster. In case of an emergency, the staff has also been trained in CPR/First Aid.

Please see Appendix for detailed Emergency and Disaster Procedures.

GENERAL SAFETY AND FIRST AID

If a child is injured at the center, the staff on duty will administer first aid. The staff has been trained in first aid procedures for all children in our care. In the event of serious or life-threatening injury, the staff will call 911 unless other instructions have been indicated on the medical treatment consent form on file in the center's Site Director's office. Learning Links has

a head injury policy that requires staff to call parents anytime their child bumps their head and a red mark or excessive crying results. We recommend that parents call their pediatrician immediately in the case of a head injury. There has been heightened concern and attention in the medical community about head injuries. If we have any concerns about your child's head injury and cannot reach you, we will call 911 and seek medical attention for your child. Parents are asked to sign a release when their child has sustained a head injury that results in a red mark or bump.

Minor injuries (i.e. scraped knee, etc.) which do not require a doctor's. In the case of an injury which staff feels may require a doctor's visit, you will be notified as soon as possible at the number on your Emergency Care Form.

SMOKING IS PROHIBITED

For the health and safety of children and families, smoking is prohibited on the grounds of the Niall P. McCarthy Center for Children & Families and the Mountain View Childcare Center.

IMMUNIZATIONS

To attend a childcare facility in California, children must be current on all immunizations as outlined by the State of California. Parents/guardians must present the child's Immunization Record as proof of their current immunizations. The law allows exemptions only when deemed necessary for medical reasons by the child's physician. Parents or Guardian must file with the governing authority as stated in SB-277 Public Health: Vaccinations Section 5, 120370. Children not immunized under these circumstances will be excluded from program if an outbreak occurs. Children not yet age eligible for immunizations are exempt from this requirement.

APPENDIX

A. POLICY ON CONFIDENTIALITY

1. All information provided by parents in the enrollment and scheduling process is considered confidential, with the exception of the Child's Developmental and Health History that contains a disclaimer for the information it contains. We will disclose relevant information to the Department of Social Services and the Department of Education and other qualifying agencies (such as alternative payment programs) for legal eligibility and qualifying purposes for programs.
 - a. Information in the children's files is accessible to the credentialed staff and administration staff only and it is kept in locked cabinets at all times.
 - b. No information concerning a child's enrollment status may be released over the phone or to any person other than the child's parent or guardian, as listed on the enrollment application.
 - c. No child shall be released to an adult other than their parent/guardian, without written permission and proper identification.
 - d. Adults other than parents authorized to pick-up children must be listed on the Emergency and Identification Information card, kept in his or her classroom **and** on the Emergency and Identification Information form on file at the front desk.
 - e. Any additions to the Emergency pick up list for your child can be made by filling out the Change of Address/Phone/Pickup form and returning it to the front desk. Faxed and emailed changes to the pick-up list must be followed up by a signed copy of Information Change form submitted to Front Desk the next day.
2. The Child's Developmental and Health History is part of the child's individual portfolio that is kept in the classroom. It is accessible to the staff at Learning Links so that they:
 - a. Know the children better
 - b. Can establish individualized goals for curriculum planning
 - c. Can encourage each child to develop appropriately.
3. Strict professionalism concerning the discussion of confidential information is required from all staff members and parents.
 - a. Discussion of information regarding individual children is acceptable between adults only when such discussion is appropriate and conducive to meeting the needs and goals of each child.
 - b. Discussion of confidential information with unauthorized persons is never permitted.
4. Photographs and video of individual children will be used to record and document a child's progress in different developmental areas. This documentation becomes a part of your child's portfolio and will be shared during parent teacher conferences.
 - a. If a photo is to be used in publicity or on our website, parents will have an opportunity to approve or deny that specific request.

B. POLICIES ON CHILD GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Learning Links Preschool is a learning environment for children with many different learning styles. Our staff facilitate activities throughout the day that provide for the introduction of and consistent use of basic rules and expectations, which include the ability to function within a preschool environment without causing harm to oneself or others.

Learning Links uses positive guidance techniques to foster the growth of personal responsibility and empathetic behavior in each child. The classroom environmental design and activities provided are designed to offer children choices that are age appropriate as well as interesting and challenging. All discipline and guidance is based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of each child. We strive to maximize the growth and development of each child while protecting the group and the individuals within the group. If a child behaves outside of the set limits, the teacher will quietly take the child aside and explain why the behavior is inappropriate and give suggestions to resolve it. A child may be removed from a particular activity for a period of time, which is appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and then redirected to more appropriate choices when they return to the activity. Praise is also used to help reinforce appropriate behaviors. Learning Links staff will use appropriate techniques to address difficult behavior while respecting the child's personal rights. We are consistent, firm, fair and understanding in order to help children develop self-control and problem-solving abilities.

- a. Children are encouraged to use communication skills to solve disagreements or conflicts with others. The teaching staff is on hand to model appropriate communication and intervene if necessary.
- b. Teachers use positive phrasing to help children understand expectations (for example, "let's save our running feet for outside time and use our walking feet inside").
- c. Younger children are re-directed to other play areas or offered substitute play items when they cannot cooperate with others.
- d. Sometimes a child needs a moment or two away from the group to calm down, disengage, and be ready to make positive choices. In this case a child will be taken to a quiet area and supervised by a staff member. Together, the child and teacher will discuss what is expected. When ready, the child will let the teacher know they would like to rejoin the group.
- e. Each situation and every child is unique. We follow the above guidelines and adapt each situation to meet the needs of each child. Please feel free to discuss any questions with the staff.

Our staff recognizes that young children experience challenging behaviors as they develop skills in order to promote independence. We use basic behavior guidance techniques at Learning Links. The personal rights of all children are held in high regard by our staff. Written behavior management plans will be provided and implemented for children whose behavior consistently interferes with the environment of the classroom. Any child whose behavior is unable to be addressed in a behavior plan because he/she cannot function safely within the classroom and

poses a danger to physical harm themselves or others will be unable to participate in Learning Links Preschool.

Policy on Handling Complaints about the Behavior of a Child

- f. The problem is observed and reported to the Teacher or Site Director.
- g. A conference is scheduled with parent to discuss the problem, formulate an action plan, and schedule weekly follow-up conferences.
- h. An action plan could include: special techniques to use at home and school, counseling, or special education referrals.
- i. Action plan monitoring:
 - i. Evaluate the success of the action plan three weeks after initial conference to determine progress.
 - ii. If progress is being made, update and continue the plan of action, and continue to update every three weeks, until the issues are resolved.
 - iii. If no progress is being made, a meeting with the family, the teaching staff, and/or other administrative staff will be held to discuss options and ensure a positive experience for the child.

2. Assaultive Behavior Policy

- a. The center's general policy on repeated, unprovoked assaultive behavior such as biting, hitting, and throwing heavy toys:
 - i. First occasion: redirection and warning
 - ii. Second occasion: Parent is called. Child is excluded from class until a conference is completed with the parent. A referral for counseling or other services may occur.
 - iii. Conference is called with parent. See Section VII "Handling Classroom Concerns"

3. Exclusion Policy

A child may be excluded from our program when we have exhausted all avenues of assistance and feel no progress has been made in resolving the behavior, or it is determined that our program is not successful in meeting the child's needs.

C. POLICY ON REPORTING CHILD ABUSE (LAWS AND LICENSING)

1. Section 11166 of the California Penal Code requires any child care custodian who has knowledge of or observes a child in his or her professional capacity or within scope of his or her employment whom he or she knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse, to report the known or suspected instance of child abuse to a child protective agency. We are bound by this mandate.

For more information about reporting child abuse call ChildHelp USA, National Child Abuse Hotline (800-4-A-Child). The ChildHelp Hotline is a 24-hour professional crisis counseling social service and support resource.

2. The California Penal Code requires individuals/organizations working with families and/or children to report possible cases of:
 - i. Physical Abuse (non-accidental injuries)
 - ii. Emotional Abuse (verbal or psychological)
 - iii. Sexual Abuse
 - iv. Neglect
3. The law specifies that a report is to be filled without delay with the local authority for child protective services. Failure to do so may result in:
 - a. Loss of facility licensing and/or
 - b. Loss of professional staff (instructor and supervisory) California credentials
4. When a case is reported, the Child Protective Services makes a determination if further evaluation is necessary

D. MEDICAL AND DENTAL ACCIDENTS, ILLNESSES AND EMERGENCIES

All center staff have been trained in First Aid and CPR; it is required that at least one staff member has a minimum of 15 hours of health and safety training. Each classroom is equipped with first aid kits.

1. In Case of Serious Medical/Dental Accident
 - a. Parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, persons listed on the Child's Emergency Contact Sheet will be contacted.
2. If injuries are life threatening, 911 will be contacted immediately. The licensing paperwork filled out and signed by parents before enrollment gives Learning Links the permission to seek emergency medical care.
3. Illness Procedures
 - a. Our guidelines for excluding ill or infected children from the center are based on "The National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out of Home Childcare Programs: published in Healthy Young Children: A Manual for Programs
 - i. Our center shall not deny attendance to or send home a child because of illness unless one or more of the following conditions exist:
 1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the center's activities

2. The illness results in greater care need than the center's staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
- ii. The parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized by the parent, will be notified immediately when a child has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the center as described below. The child must be picked up within 1 hour of notification. For any contagious diseases, a child cannot return unless they have a doctor's doctor's clearance.
 - iii. A child will be sent home when any one of the following conditions exist:
 - a. **Temperature**, axially (armpit) temperature of 100° or greater; accompanied by behavior changes or other signs and symptoms of illness until the child is fever free, unmedicated, for 24 hours since center's detection of illness.
 - b. **Symptoms and signs of severe illness**, such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs until medical evaluation indicates the child is ready to return to school.
 - c. **Diarrhea illness** (two episodes at school of loose, watery stools within a 24 hour period), until diarrhea stops or until a health care provider determines the illness to be non-communicable, and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
 - d. **Vomiting illness** (one episode at school of vomiting) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines the illness to be non-communicable, and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
 - e. **Mouth Sores**. Unless a health care provider or health official determines the condition is non-infectious.
 - f. **Rash with fever or behavior change**, until a health care provider determines the symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
 - g. **Purulent conjunctivitis** defined as pink eye or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
 - h. **Scabies**, head lice or other infestation, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and all nits have been removed.
 - i. **Tuberculosis**, until a health care provider or health official states that the child can attend childcare.
 - j. **Impetigo**, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
 - k. **Strep throat or other streptococcal infection**, until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever as above.
 - l. **Chicken pox**, until 7 days after onset of rash or until all sores have dried and crusted and no new sores have appeared.
 - m. **Pertussis**, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.
 - n. **Mumps**, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.

- o. **Hepatitis A Virus**, until 7 days after onset of illness or as directed by the health department when passive immunoprophylaxis, currently immune serum globulin, has been administered to appropriate staff and children
- p. **Measles**, until 6 days after onset of rash.
- q. **Unspecified respiratory illness**, ill children with common cold, croup, bronchitis, pneumonia, and otitis media, whose symptoms require special staff attention until symptoms subside.
- r. **Shingles**, unless the lesions can be adequately covered by clothing or a dressing or until the recommendation of the health care provider.
- s. **Herpetic gingivostomatitis**, Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable secretions, until symptoms subside or until the recommendation of the health care provider.
- t. **Hand-Foot and Mouth Disease**, child should not return to school until lesions are no longer visible.

E. POLICY ON ADMINISTERING MEDICATION TO CHILDREN

1. The staff is **not authorized** to administer children's Tylenol, decongestants or other **non-prescription medications**. If a child needs these medications, he/she may be too sick to be in school.
2. Parents are requested to administer prescription medication to their child. Medication can be stored at school with the proper paperwork being completed prior to leaving the medication(s) at the school.
3. If parents are unable to administer the prescribed medication(s), a staff member may administer the medication **only** under the following conditions:
 - a. The container must have an unaltered label
 - b. The container must be labeled with the child's name, medication name, dosage, and date.
 - c. Medication shall be administered only when approved by the child's parent, and in accordance with label directions.
 - d. A "Request to Administer Medications" form must be completed, signed and kept on file at the center.
 - e. All medications shall be stored in a locked in a medication cabinet located in the classroom, or other appropriate location, which is inaccessible to children.
 - f. A log will be maintained indicating time of administration, amount, recipient and staff member administering the medication.
 - g. Be sure you have the duplicate medication at home as we do not wish you to remove the medication from school. Staff are not permitted to dispense over-the-counter medications, even at the suggestion of a doctor.

Sunscreen is considered to be a topical medication. Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen before they leave their child at school. Otherwise, the parent must give written consent to have sunscreen applied to a child after nap

5. If your child requires Epipen precautions please inform the Site Director for policies, procedures and authorizations.

F. EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PROCEDURES

1. In case of an emergency, the children will remain at Learning Links in their own classroom (if it is possible) until the parent or an authorized person comes to pick up the child. We will combine children into one or two classrooms when necessary for safety, or after most children have been picked up. In case of an emergency, we will post information for parents (if it is possible) where it is most visible regarding changes in location to direct parents to where their children are if there is a change. Our primary objective is to keep everyone safe.
2. If Burlingame has to evacuate the building we will move to the front of the building near the drop off parking area. If Mountain View has to evacuate the building, we will move to the Rengstorff Rengstorff Park field behind the center.
3. Our staff is trained to deal with emergencies. May want a qualifier to this statement All of our staff have First Aid and CPR training and at least one staff member has a minimum of 15 hours of health and safety training. Each classroom is equipped with first aid kits. Should the situation require it, we have on-hand food and water supplies for up to 3 days.
4. Gatepath's Emergency Alert System enables us to rapidly send notification messages via multiple mediums including text, email, and voice to designated contacts. The primary use of the system is emergency notifications to our staff and parents or caregivers of our students in case of an emergency/natural disaster. This system may also be used for non-emergency situations if an important communication needs to be sent out right away.

F1. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Throughout the school year, all classrooms will participate in disaster preparedness drills. There are many kinds of disasters; we must be able to respond appropriately based on the conditions created by the disaster. Some conditions require a shelter-in approach (i.e. disruptive/threatening people present, chemical or radiation disasters). Other disasters require evacuation (i.e., earthquakes, fires). Following are brief overviews of the two different possible responses to disasters:

1. Shelter-in Procedures:
All children will be brought into their classrooms. Attendance will be taken using the sign-in/sign-out sheets. All openings to the outside will be sealed as much as possible (i.e., windows closed, blinds drawn, towels put at base of door, etc.). Communications between the classrooms and the office will be via cell phone.
2. Evacuation Procedures:
Burlingame: The children will be evacuated to the yards adjoining each of the classrooms, at which time the teachers will use the sign-in/sign-out sheets to take attendance. Then they

will be led to the south end of the property, and to the parking lot. Teachers will then take a second attendance, and review what has just occurred with the children and reassure them. The center's Site Director will set up a triage area as needed. This plan has been created in conjunction with the fire department.

Mountain View: The children will be evacuated to the yards adjoining each of the classrooms, at which time the teachers will use the sign-in/sign-out sheets to take attendance. Then they will be led to the Rengstorff park field located behind the center. Teachers will then take a second attendance, and review what has just occurred with the children and reassure them. The center's Site Director will set up a triage area as needed. This plan has been created in conjunction with the fire department.

3. In case of power outage:

If the power is out at the school building before the start of school and PG&E estimates power will not return for more than two hours, school will be closed for the day. Parents will be notified of the closure via our school alert system.

If the power goes out during the program day, California State licensing dictates how long a program can operate without power. The parents of preschool children (ages 2-5) will be called to pick up their child if power is out for longer than one hour. The parents of infants and toddlers (ages 0-24 months) will be called and asked to pick up their children immediately. If PG&E estimates the power is going to be out for longer than two hours, school will be closed for the remainder of the day.

3. Since the regular phone lines may be inoperable, in the event of an emergency: you can reach a center staff member on our emergency cell phone.

a. For Burlingame,

i. Site Director: 650-600-4559

ii. Director of Inclusive Early Childhood Education: 650-826-7452

b. For Mountain View,

i. Site Director: 650-248-4071

ii. Director of Inclusive Early Childhood Education: 650-826-7452

4. Tune your radio or TV to the Emergency Broadcasting System for information regarding conditions throughout the city.

5. Know that we have enough supplies to care for the children for 72 hours. The staff will remain at the school until all children are picked up. We will utilize local hospitals and EMT for any necessary medical treatment.

6. We will only release children to people you have authorized through the information Lic700 form on file in the office. Please be sure this information is up to date.

7. We must know any specific medical conditions or allergies pertaining to your child. If he/she may need any medication, please be sure we have a supply here.

8. Discuss your family's plan in case of an earthquake or if disaster strikes while everyone is at various locations, i.e., where you should try to meet; an out-of-state contact that each family member knows to call for your condition or location (remember local telephone contact may be impossible).
9. Burlingame Center: The streets north of Marco Polo may be closed to non-emergency vehicles due to the proximity of Mills Peninsula Hospital. Be sure you have walking shoes in your car in case you have to walk to reach your child.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Site Director.

F3. DISASTER PACK INSTRUCTIONS

As a part of our disaster preparedness plan we are asking each family to provide a large Ziploc bag of basic supplies for your child. **ALL ITEMS MUST FIT INSIDE THE BAG!** Each bag should contain the following:

1. Family photo
2. Short note of reassurance written to your child
3. 2 diapers (if necessary)
4. 1 pair extra underwear and long pants
5. Small toy or mini stuffed animal

In addition to these Ziploc bags we have food, water, blankets and first aid supplies in our disaster box. Your child's bag will be a source of comfort for him/her until you are able to pick him/her up. We are prepared to stay with your children as long as needed.

G. TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Learning Links adheres to the Title 22 regulations for transportation

Title 22 regulation reads:

Title Section: 101225 TRANSPORTATION

- (a) Only drivers licensed for the type of vehicle operated shall be permitted to transport children.
 - (b) The manufacturer's rated seating capacity of the vehicles shall not be exceeded.
 - (c) Motor vehicles used to transport children shall be maintained in a safe operating condition.
 - (d) All vehicle occupants shall be secured in an appropriate restraint system.
 - (e) Children shall not be left in parked vehicles.
 - (f) The licensee shall post signs at the entrance to the child care center that provide the telephone number of the local health department and information on child passenger restraint systems pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 1596.95(g) and Vehicle Code Section 27360(b).
- (1) The signs shall provide all of the following information:
- (A) Protect your child--it is the law.

- (B) Children under the age of six years, regardless of weight, or weighing less than 60 pounds, regardless of age, must be in an approved child passenger restraint system.
- (C) You may be cited for a violation of the child passenger restraint system provisions. In addition, your automobile insurance rates could be adversely affected as a result.
- (D) Call your local health department for more information.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 1596.81, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Sections 1596.72, 1596.73, 1596.81 and 1596.95, Health and Safety Code.

H. DISRUPTIVE ADULT BEHAVIOR POLICY

We have a zero tolerance for disruptive adult behavior that threatens the safety and environment of children and staff our policy on disruptive behavior includes but is not limited to:

Behavior displayed	Action to be taken
1. An adult who is argumentative, uncooperative or any behavior that is not an emergency but certainly a disruption. If it is felt that the parent poses a genuine threat in this instance, Police will be called.	a.The adult will be asked to move to the conference room or someplace else away from the children where the Site Director will meet to help deescalate the issue. b..An appointment will be scheduled to discuss the concern in more detail if warranted. If the adult persists with disruptive behavior, the adult will be asked to leave and not return until a meeting is held to discuss solutions. c.Please avoid confrontation in front of the children as this can be very alarming to them. Police will be notified if staff feels that the adult is unresponsive to our requests or poses a threat to anyone at the center.
2. An adult who poses an immediate or potential danger to themselves or others. This describes the behavior of a parent that could be considered violent, potentially violent, agitated, irate, or ANY other behavior that poses a significant danger or extreme disruption.	a.The Police (911) will be called to respond to the situation.

I. DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Gatepath prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, medical disability, mental condition including genetic characteristics, marital status, sex, age, or sexual orientation, or other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. Gatepath also prohibits unlawful discrimination based on the perception that anyone has any of those characteristics or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics.