



# Lil' Explorers Parent Handbook



Dedicated to Excellence

Chandler Unified School District  
Community Education  
1525 W. Frye Road  
Office (480) 224-3900

Scott VanDerMillen – Director of Community Education



Chandler Unified School District offers three Lil' Explorers Early Childhood Development Centers within the district. Our centers provide nurturing care and developmentally appropriate early childhood educational experiences for children from birth through the start of kindergarten. Our goal is to establish a partnership with families and ensure that each child receives the care and developmental support necessary for future success while attending our centers.

### Hours of Operation 6:30 a.m.- 5:30 p.m.

When a child is picked up after the normal hours of operation, a Late Pickup Fee of \$3.00 per minute, per child, will be charged to the family account.

The site clock will be used to determine the time.

#### Navarrete Elementary School Site

**Gaela.Hazel@cusd80.com**

**6490 South Sun Groves Blvd.,**

**Chandler, 85249**

**(480) 883-4811**

(480) 883-4854 Infant Program (Room B24)

(480) 883-4849 Toddler Program (Room A19)

(480) 883-4848 Two-Year-Olds (Room A18)

(480) 883-4847 Preschool Threes (Room A17)

(480) 883-4846 PreK program (Room A16)

#### Chandler High School Site

**Berry.Patricia@cusd80.com**

**350 N. Arizona Ave.,**

**Chandler, 85225**

**(480) 812-7846 Office**

**480-204-3666 Site Phone**

(480) 812-7999 Infant Program (Room C520A/B)

(480) 812-7997 Toddler A Program (Room C521A)

(480) 812-7846 Toddler B Program (Room C521A)

(480) 812-7898 Three-year-olds (Room 521B)

(480) 812-7943 Threes/Four-year-olds (Room C517)

#### Perry High School Site

**Morcomb.Heather@cusd80.com**

**1919 E. Queen Creek, Gilbert, 85297**

**(480) 224-2937**

(480) 224-2923 Infant Program (Room F123)

(480) 224-2922 Toddler Program (Room F122)

(480) 224-2936 Two-Year-Old Program (Room F158)

(480) 224-2921 Preschool Threes Program (Room F121)

(480) 224-2919 PreK Program (Room F119)

*Further information can also be found on the district website at <http://www.cusd80.com>. Click on the Community Education link and choose Childcare from the drop-down menu.*



### The Lil' Explorers Vision

A caring community that values each child's individuality.

### The Lil' Explorers Mission

Expand your child's learning potential through exploration and discovery.

### Lil' Explorers Child Development Centers Program

Brain and Early Childhood research are unmistakable, but the best practices in early childhood education are to break away from passive teaching and allow for playful learning and investigation, as this is the foundation of a child's long-term academic success. Play and learning are not separate activities, they are intertwined, and our programs encourage children to select activities and materials that spark their curiosity. Offering children the opportunity to take initiative in their own learning is a critical component of Lil' Explorers Child Development Centers.

Our caring and knowledgeable early childhood professionals utilize the Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines and the Arizona Early Learning Standards. These tools promote the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language domains of a child's development through individual and group activities. Throughout the day, there are many developmentally appropriate fun and engaging hands-on learning experiences for exploring the areas of early literacy, math, science, social studies, pre-writing and writing skills, sensory, dramatic play, music and movement, and creative expression.



## Enrollment Information

We encourage you to plan a visit to the center(s) in which you are interested prior to enrollment to become acquainted with the center coordinator, staff, and program. We feel we can best serve you and your child by establishing positive communication right from the beginning.

Although we maintain an open-door policy and welcome you at any time, tour appointments are encouraged to ensure a quality visit and answer any questions you may have. During your tour, you can expect to meet our staff of early childhood professionals and observe their positive interactions within our classrooms. We will also review and discuss schedules, lesson plans, and developmental age groups.

After deciding which child development center you would like your child to attend, please notify the Center Coordinator, who will confirm the enrollment process.

\*\*After receiving confirmation of space, parents may complete online registration at <https://cusd80.ce.eleyo.com>. Once the registration request is approved in the system, a non-refundable \$80.00 registration fee will be charged. If the child has not been registered within the one-week period, the space for the child may be reassigned.

\*\*Current rates are published in our statement of services brochure and may be obtained by visiting [www.cusdcommunity.com](http://www.cusdcommunity.com).



## Summary of Fees

**REGISTRATION FEE (\$80.00)** – The registration fee is non-refundable and will be charged at the time of initial enrollment approval as well as at the time of annual re-enrollment near the beginning of each school year.

**TUITION PAYMENTS** – Tuition payment options are weekly or monthly only and may not be changed. Weekly tuition is invoiced on Thursday and collected on Friday for the upcoming week of attendance. Monthly tuition is collected on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. If paying by debit card, please understand that it may take up to a week for the charge from a checking account to clear your bank account.

Weekly payments are not pro-rated for weeks that have holidays. Tuition payments are based on the school year calendar of care and do not relate to the number of days in a week. There is no refund for days not attended. Monthly payments are not prorated for intersession/camps or cancelation/withdrawal of contract during the month of service.

**LATE PAYMENT FEE (\$25)** – A late fee is assessed to each family account when payments are not received by the 2<sup>nd</sup> business day after the payment was due. Your child's attendance may be suspended from the program due to past-due payments. This includes but is not limited to returned/canceled checks and declined credit card transactions.

**CHARGEBACK/STOP PAYMENT FEE (\$25)** – will be assessed to the family account if credit card charges are disputed or if a stop payment is placed on a check, and the charges are valid for services received/contracted. Late fees may also be assessed to parent account. If a check is declined by the bank institution two times, checks will no longer be accepted for payment.

**CHANDLER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT RETURNED CHECK POLICY** – CUSD gladly accepts checks. For any checks returned as unpaid to CUSD, the check writer's account may be electronically debited without further notice for the amount of the check, plus a \$25 returned check fee, as allowed by state law.

**REFUND POLICY** - The annual registration fee is non-refundable. Unused days will not be refunded including sick days.

**FAMILY DISCOUNT** - Families with two or more children active in the Lil' Explorer program will receive a 5% family discount.

**LATE PICKUP FEE (\$3.00 PER MINUTE, PER CHILD)** – Lil' Explorers' hours are from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday - Friday. When a parent picks up their child(ren) after the normal hours of operation, a Late Pickup Fee of \$3.00 *per minute per child* may be charged to the family account. The site clock will be used to determine the time.

## **SCHEDULE CHANGE REQUESTS, TEMPORARY DISENROLLMENT OR WITHDRAWAL**

**PROCEDURES** - Although we prefer to avoid any of our families leaving, we know that situations and circumstances arise that create the necessity to cancel a child's attendance. To help provide assistance in some situations, temporary disenrollment may be an option.

Temporary disenrollment is intended for the child who will not be in attendance for a minimum of two weeks or more with the intention of returning to the program. Arrangements should be made in advance with the Center Coordinator for the child's return.

Requests for either a schedule change, temporary or permanent disenrollment of attendance should be requested through your Eleyo account a minimum of one week prior to invoicing. Please contact your Center Coordinator by email ([ceact@cusd80.com](mailto:ceact@cusd80.com)) so they may review the request in a timely manner. If your schedule change or withdrawal request is not submitted prior to 5 days in advance, your account will be billed for tuition as scheduled. Any refunds of fees are subject to Director approval.

**SUSPENSION OF ATTENDANCE** - If payments for the contracted week are not made, your child's attendance may be suspended indefinitely. Any outstanding tuition balance left unpaid for more than five (5) business days for which arrangements have not been made, will result in immediate suspension of attendance until the account has been paid in full. If space is available in the classroom, reinstatement is possible by contacting the Center Coordinator.

**TEACHER WORKDAYS** - All centers are open on scheduled CUSD "Teacher Workdays" and "Teacher In-Service Days." **Please review thoroughly the current district calendar online at <http://www.cusd80.com/page/1298>.**

**SCHOOL BREAKS & HOLIDAYS** - Lil' Explorers Camps are available during the fall, winter, spring, and summer intersession breaks. Camps are held at a different center each break. **All centers are closed on CUSD observed holidays designated on the district calendar.** Registration for camp(s) is required at <https://cusd80.ce.eleyo.com>.

**MEDICAL LEAVE** - Children *hospitalized* for three (3) days or more will receive medical leave status from Lil' Explorers. Upon written documentation of the hospitalization, the center coordinator will contact accounting for processing the request leave, and space will be available upon the child's return. During the medical leave period, the parents will not be charged the weekly tuition.

**MILITARY LEAVE** - Any Lil' Explorers parent who has military duty due to deployment or reserves for more than 10 days will be allowed to request the disenrollment of their child(ren) during the deployment/reserve period. Parents can reinstate care at no additional cost. A space will be available for the child upon their return. The Center Coordinator will assist with disenrollment and re-enrollment, when needed.

**INSURANCE** – CUSD Lil' Explorers Child Development Centers are covered under the district's liability insurance policy.

**STATEMENTS & TAX ID NUMBER** - May be obtained by logging into your Eleyo account.



## Staff Qualifications

All staff members are employed by CUSD and undergo a background check through local, state, and federal authorities. A fingerprint clearance card is obtained before applicants are hired. Ongoing professional development opportunities in the areas of developmentally appropriate practices, classroom management, guidance, health and safety, and child development are required for all staff throughout the year. At a minimum, there is one staff member per class certified in CPR/First Aid.

## Staff/Child Ratios

| <b>Ages</b>    | <b>Staff: Children</b> |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Infant Program | 1:5 or 2:11            |
| 1-year olds    | 1:6 or 2:13            |
| 2-year-olds    | 1:8                    |
| 3-year-olds    | 1:13                   |
| 4-year-olds    | 1:15                   |
| 5-year-olds    | 1:20                   |

The Arizona Department of Health Services Bureau of Childcare Licensing determines ratios and room capacity.

Lil' Explorers Child Development Centers are licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services Bureau of Childcare Licensing. We are compliant with all childcare regulations set forth by their offices. A copy of the Child Care Licensing Rules and Standards as well as past licensing inspection reports for Lil' Explorers Child Development Centers are available online [ADHS - Child Care Facilities Licensing - Home \(azdhs.gov\)](https://www.azdhs.gov).



## Biting Procedures

Our Early Childhood Professionals understand that biting in young children is a typical occurrence during early childhood development. However, we do believe it is in the best interest of the children placed in our care to set limits for behaviors such as biting, which have the potential to harm others.

Biting can occur for many different reasons such as

|                 |                         |                  |  |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------|--|
| <i>Teething</i> | <i>Lack of Language</i> | <i>Curiosity</i> | <i>Affection (Infant Program &amp; young toddlers)</i> |
| <i>Fear</i>     | <i>Attention</i>        | <i>Hunger</i>    | <i>Over Stimulation</i>                                |

It is our goal to recognize and identify triggers that cause biting and redirect a child before the incident occurs. In the event we are unable to intervene, the following steps will take place.

### If a child is bitten:

- ✓ Childcare staff will first attend to the bitten child by comforting the child and then cleaning the bitten area with soap and water.
- ✓ If the skin is broken, the child will be taken to the school nurse or health assistant to have the injury assessed.
- ✓ After assessment of an incident the Center Coordinator will contact the parents of the bitten child to notify them of the incident.
- ✓ The bite incident will be documented on an Ouch/Incident Report by the childcare staff. The parents will be presented with a copy of the form and the original will be kept on site.

The biter may be removed from the setting in an age-appropriate manner so that the situation can be addressed. For example, an early childhood professional will say "Biting hurts. We bite food, not people."

It is the goal of the Lil' Explorers Child Development Centers to keep all children safe and free from harm.





## Aggressive Behaviors

Lil' Explorers Child Development Centers use a positive approach to guidance by directing children toward appropriate behavior. Our Early Childhood Team assists children in the development of self-regulation by:

- Utilizing redirection techniques
- Using patience, love and understanding
- Setting clearly defined limits
- Modeling of appropriate behaviors

If a child exhibits aggressive behaviors which create an unsafe learning environment, Lil' Explorers reserves the right to revoke the child's ability to attend the program.

Lil' Explorers will make every effort to assist the child and his/her family by developing behavioral intervention plans, hosting parent conferences, and daily communications.

Aggressive behaviors include, but are not limited to, kicking, biting, scratching, slapping, hitting staff and/other students, or any behavior that causes harm to another individual or damage to property.



## Health and Wellness Policy

When the staff observes that a child is not feeling well, out of love and concern parents will be notified regarding the child's condition. Because we are not trained medical professionals, staff will use their best discretion regarding medical concerns and parents may be notified to pick up their child when an illness is suspected or if the child displays any of the following symptoms.

### **COVID 19**

Lil' Explorer's follows CUSD protocol for Covid-19. Please refer to CUSD district website for updated processes and expectations.

### **VOMITING**

If a child vomits while at the child development center, parents will be notified to pick up the child. Child may return when they are 24 hours symptom free without medication(s).

### **DIARRHEA**

If a child has one or more episodes of diarrhea in the same day, parents will be notified to pick up the child. We understand that diarrhea can be caused by various other reasons besides illness, such as antibiotics or teething in the very young. In these cases, two or more episodes will still constitute a child to be picked up for other reasons including but not limited to the risk of dehydration. Child may return when they are 24 hours symptom free without medication(s).

### **FEVER**

If a child has a body temperature of 100.4 degrees or more, parents will be notified to pick up. Child may return when they are 24 hours fever free without the use of medications, such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen, or any other medication related to the illness and/or a note from health care provider indicating that child is not contagious.

### **UNEXPLAINED RASHES**

If a child has an unexplained rash, a doctor's note will be required before the child can return to the childcare center.

### **HAND/FOOT/MOUTH DISEASE**

At the discretion of the program, children having been diagnosed with Hand Foot Mouth Disease and produced blisters during their illness, may return when all dermal blisters have been scabbed over and oral blisters show signs of healing (pink, not red sores). If no blisters occurred, a child may return after they have been fever free for 24 hours without the aid of a fever reducer.

### **PINK EYE/CONJUNCTIVITIS**

Parents will be asked to pick up a child that shows signs and/or symptoms of Pink Eye/Conjunctivitis red, itchy watery eyes with any white/yellowish/greenish discharge. Prior to returning to the child development center, a child with pink eye should have received prescribed medication for a minimum of 24 hours.

### **ABNORMAL LETHARGY**

When a child demonstrates an inability to participate in normal, everyday activities and exhibits loss of appetite, parents will be notified regarding these signs and symptoms and may or may not necessitate the child to be picked up from the center.

### **RSV**

When a child shows any combination of signs and symptoms of possible RSV, the child will be excluded from attendance until it is determined with clinical testing done by a medical professional, that RSV is not present. CDC.org states that symptoms of RSV usually include runny nose, decrease in appetite, coughing, sneezing, fever, and wheezing. In young infants with RSV the symptoms may also include irritability, decreased activity, and breathing difficulties.

### **HEAD LICE**

At the sign of any live lice or nit, parents will be notified to pick up child. Hair must be free of all live lice and nits prior to returning to school.

### **CONTAGIOUS CONDITIONS**

If a child has any contagious conditions (strep throat, pink eye, chicken pox, etc.), please contact Lil' Explorer's Site Coordinator immediately so parent alert letters can be posted. (Confidentiality will be maintained.)

### **PRESCRIPTION OR OTC MEDICATIONS**

If a child requires medication during the day a Medication Consent Form must be filled out and submitted before medications can be dispensed. Prescription Medications need to be in the original container and show the child's full name, name of their parents, date, and physician's order which should include the name of the medication, dosage, frequency and mode of administration and the Medication Consent Form must be completed.

Any medications being dispensed to children must have had **the first dosage at their home 24 hours prior to administering** at the CUSD80 childcare location.

Children who have health concerns that require an epi-pen or breathing treatments must complete a personal health plan packet each year.

No medications are to be kept or stored in children's diaper bags or back packs while in the classroom. Please see your Center's Coordinator should you have a need to bring meds to school for later pick up.

When a child demonstrates an inability to participate in normal, everyday activities and exhibits a loss of appetite parents will be notified regarding these signs and symptoms, which may or may not necessitate the child to be picked up from the center based on the discretion of the Site Coordinator.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What should I pack for my child on the first day of enrollment?**

#### **Infant Program**

Bottles or Sippy cups labeled with FIRST AND LAST NAMES  
5 Crib sheets labeled with FIRST AND LAST NAMES (fitting a mattress 37"L x 23-1/2"W x 3"H)  
Change of clothes LABELED WITH FIRST AND LAST NAMES  
Brest Milk/Formular/Baby Food  
Diapers and Wipes

#### **Toddlers and Twos Programs**

Toddler cup labeled with FIRST AND LAST NAMES  
Crib sheet & blanket labeled with FIRST AND LAST NAMES (52L x 28W x 10D inches)  
Change of Clothes labeled with FIRST AND LAST NAMES  
Diapers and Wipes

#### **Preschool (3-year-olds) & PreK (4-year-olds) Programs**

Refillable Water Bottle  
Crib sheet & blanket labeled with FIRST AND LAST NAMES (52L x 28W x 10D inches)  
Change of Clothes labeled with FIRST AND LAST NAMES

### **What is the daily arrival/departure procedures?**

Each classroom will have a SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT system. Parents/Persons who are picking up a child per parent permission, must bring picture ID with them when picking a child up from the program. Parents must sign their full first initial and full last names along with arrival and departure times of their child. This is a state DHS mandated procedure. Please take a moment to speak with your child's care givers to share or receive information about how your child is adjusting to the center and their daily accomplishments.

### **Am I required to pay the same tuition amount during holiday/short weeks?**

Tuition rates are based on the number of days care is available during the contract year, this provides parents with a consistent tuition payment amount regardless of holidays or short weeks. Please direct tuition and account questions to [ceact@cusd80.com](mailto:ceact@cusd80.com)

### **How do I contact my child's classroom during the day?**

Contact information for each classroom is provided at the front of this booklet. If you are not able to reach the classroom, please contact the Center Coordinator located at your child's site. They will direct your call and/or provide information on the status of your child.

**Am I responsible for payment on days on which my child is absent?**

Yes, you are responsible for contracted days. We suggest scheduling vacations and visits from out-of-town guests around the school calendar. You will not be charged during intersession and summer breaks unless you register your child for camps that are available during the breaks. Please direct tuition and account questions to [ceact@cusd80.com](mailto:ceact@cusd80.com)

**Can we celebrate my child's birthday at the childcare?**

Yes, you can bring items such as cupcakes, cakes, cookies etc. **Due to food allergies in the center, Lil' Explorers does not allow Nut products to be served.**

**What happens if I am running late and cannot pick up my child by closing time?**

We ask that you please contact the center to notify your child's care staff that you will be late. A late fee of \$3.00 per child, per minute **will** be charged to your account.

**What if my child has food allergies?**

If your child is allergic to any food, please notify staff. You may choose to bring your child's lunch and snacks.

**Are breakfast, lunch and snacks provided?**

Yes. Menus are posted at each site and available online.

# 10 Things Every Parent Should Know about Play

by Laurel Bongiorno

## **1. Children learn through their play.**

Do not underestimate the value of play. Children learn and develop:

- cognitive skills – like math and problem solving in a pretend grocery store.
- physical abilities – like balancing blocks and running on the playground.
- new vocabulary – like the words they need to play with toy dinosaurs.
- social skills – like playing together in a pretend car wash.
- literacy skills – like creating a menu for a pretend restaurant.

## **2. Play is healthy.**

Play helps children grow strong and healthy. It also counteracts obesity issues facing many children today.

## **3. Play reduces stress.**

Play helps your children grow emotionally. It is joyful and provides an outlet for anxiety and stress.

## **4. Play is more than meets the eye.**

Play is simple and complex. There are many types of play: symbolic, socio-dramatic, functional, and games with rules—to name just a few. Researchers study play's many aspects: how children learn through play, how outdoor play impacts children's health, the effects of screen time on play, to the need for recess in the school day.

## **5. Make time for play.**

As parents, you are the biggest supporters of your children's learning. You can make sure they have as much time to play as possible during the day to promote cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional development.

## **6. Play and learning go hand-in-hand.**

They are not separate activities. They are intertwined. Think about them as a science lecture with a lab. Play is the child's lab.

## **7. Play outside.**

Remember your own outdoor experiences of building forts, playing on the beach, sledding in the winter, or playing with other children in the neighborhood. Make sure your children create outdoor memories too.

## **8. There's a lot to learn about playing.**

There's a lot written on children and play. Here are some [NAEYC articles and books about play](#). David Elkind's *The Power of Play* (Da Capo, 2007 reprint) is also a great resource.

## **9. Trust your own playful instincts.**

Give your children time for play and see all that they are capable of when given the opportunity.



**10. Play is a child's context for learning.**

Children practice and reinforce their learning in multiple areas during play. It gives them a place and a time for learning that cannot be achieved through completing a worksheet. For example, in playing restaurant, children write and draw menus, set prices, take orders, and make out checks. Play provides rich learning opportunities and leads to children's success and self-esteem.

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Laurel Bongiorno, PhD, is the director of Champlain College's graduate program in early childhood education, with specializations in teaching and administration, in Burlington, Vermont. She has taught preschool, directed early childhood programs, and studied parents' perceptions of preschoolers' learning through play.

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Are you concerned about your child's development or academic progress?

**Does your child**

- ✓ Have trouble seeing people and objects?
- ✓ Have difficulty hearing voices and other sounds?
- ✓ Remain unusually quiet for prolonged periods of time?
- ✓ Have difficulty talking or pronouncing words properly?
- ✓ Move about with difficulty when crawling, walking, or running?
- ✓ Learn slowly and have difficulty understanding?
- ✓ Have trouble playing with children or getting along with adults?
- ✓ Have other special health needs?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of the questions, call one of the contacts below today. Learn about screenings and special services that are available for all children from birth through age twenty-one.

- If your child is younger than 3 years old, please call the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AZEIP) at 1-888-439-5609 or (602) 532-9960.
- If your child is 3 to 5 years of age and you are a Chandler resident, please call CUSD's Early Childhood Assessment Center at (480) 883-5865.
- If your child is 5 to 21 years of age, please call your local school.