

Linda Vista Children's Center

1259 Linda Vista Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91103
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Parent Handbook 2019-2020

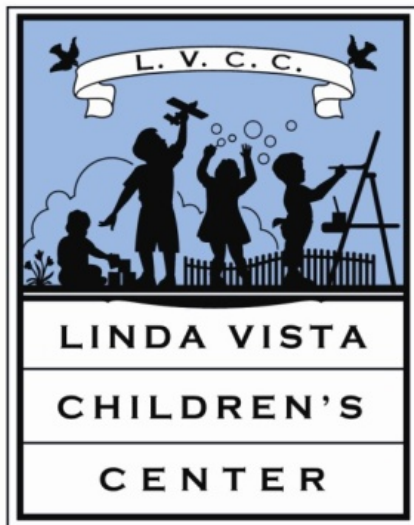


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About us

Linda Vista Children's Center (LVCC), established in 1966, is a non-sectarian, non-profit child development center serving infant through kindergarten children. We provide a high quality, developmentally appropriate program in a safe, loving environment where each child can develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. We value diversity and welcome all families without regard to race, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.

We hope you find the time spent at LVCC enriching for all of your family as well as your child. This *Parent Handbook* contains information about LVCC. Please read it carefully so you become familiar with our policies. We welcome and encourage parent involvement at LVCC, as it greatly enhances the program and fosters continuity between home and center. If you have any questions, please feel free to discuss them with your child's teacher or the Director at any time.

Linda Vista Children's Center operates year-round and is open from 7:00a.m. to 6:00p.m., Monday through Friday. Children from six weeks to five years are accepted in both full-time and part-time programs. The classes are grouped as follows: Infants (6 weeks to 18 months), Toddlers (18 weeks to 30 months), Twos (2 to 3 years old), Threes (3 to 4 years old), Fours and Fives (4 and 5 years old). Please note that per California licensing requirements, children must move to the older classrooms once they reach 18 months of age. Also, LVCC has the prerogative to move toddlers who are 24-30 months of age into an older classroom depending on their development and comfort.

Our beliefs and values

Excellence

Linda Vista Children's Center strives for developmentally appropriate excellence in all areas including:

- Staff – consistent, flexible, supported with continuing education and training
- Curriculum
- Facilities
- Safety
- Teacher-to-child ratios
- Professional resources

Inclusive Community

We strive to develop and nurture relationships within and outside of LVCC through:

- Respect
- Diversity among staff, children, and families with respect to ethnicity, race, culture, religion, socioeconomic status and sexual orientation
- Community awareness and involvement
- Responsibility

Nurturing Environment

We create a supportive, interactive, encouraging environment for all who are involved with LVCC – children, families, staff, and community. We do this through:

- Advocacy for individual children’s needs
- Friendliness
- Loving care
- A “children first” philosophy
- Positive discipline

Developmentally Appropriate Practices

We provide a creative program that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of children while responding to the needs of families through:

- Curriculum
- Adult-child interaction
- Relations between home and program
- Developmental evaluation of children

Communication

We develop and sustain relationships by:

- Practicing active listening and providing feedback
- Assuring accessibility
- Encouraging cooperation and collaboration
- Insisting on consistent and transparent interactions among all involved with LVCC

Educational Philosophy

We believe children grow best in a caring atmosphere with a competent staff committed to providing love and discipline. We recognize that no child development center can substitute for parents. However, we strive to provide care for children, in partnership with their parents, in a setting that is as comfortable and “homelike” as possible. Linda Vista Children’s Center focuses on the essential social development that occurs in the early childhood years. Our program promotes self-respect, respect for others, self-control, and appropriate expression of feelings and individualism. Although we do not focus on academic activities, the children have opportunities to learn through exploration of various learning centers.

Developmental Goals

Goals for Infants and Toddlers

Our goal in the Infant/Toddler program is to help children become secure, confident, and competent. We provide an environment that is emotionally warm and nurturing, physically safe, and cognitively challenging. There is time for uninterrupted play, and freedom to explore and interact with other infants. Respect is shown to the infant along with sensitive observation in order to understand his/her individual needs. It is our desire to work as a team with parents to provide the best for their child.

Goals for Two- to Five-year Olds

Listed below are general goals and objectives for children between 2 and 5 years of age:

Emotional development

- To persevere with most self-chosen tasks
- To take care of materials and classroom environment
- To demonstrate emerging self-discipline skills
- To be able to separate from parents
- To demonstrate ability to think and make decisions
- To demonstrate an increased ability to solve problems
- To respond to direction from adults and peers

Communication development

- To recognize and respond to simple commands and questions
- To focus attention on a speaker without interruption
- To engage in conversation by sharing ideas and participation in group discussions
- To use oral language in a variety of situations
- To recall words in songs, chats, or finger plays

Cognitive development

- To show curiosity and a desire to learn
- To show awareness of basic colors and shapes
- To form groups by sorting and matching objects according to their attributes
- To understand one-to-one correspondence in counting
- To classify objects according to similarities and differences
- To recognize their name
- To show awareness of letters and their concepts
- To be able to see and reproduce shapes
- To present interesting and creative ideas and questions

Motor development

- To demonstrate increasing loco-motor coordination
- To climb up and down equipment without falling
- To show awareness of their body in space
- To demonstrate fine motor skills: puzzles, manipulative, writing and cutting
- To use writing and drawing tools

Curriculum

To implement our philosophy, we care for children in a developmentally appropriate environment. Children are given choices. They can experiment and explore with activities designed to meet their needs in all areas of development. LVCC's curriculum is carefully planned by the teachers to offer choices designed to encourage physical skills, cognitive learning, problem solving, and independence. Active physical play, conceptual learning, art, music, science, math concepts, literature, and dramatic play are part of the daily program.

As child development professionals, we make the statement that play is a child's work. This statement is in response to the common adult perception that "play" is an activity with less value than "work." Play is the vehicle through which children learn and develop. The staff at LVCC have a comprehensive understanding of play and its relationship to learning. A primary goal of this program is to sustain and enhance the play activity of the children in the program.

Staff

The Linda Vista Children's Center staff includes the Executive Director, an Assistant Director, Lead Teachers, Associate Teachers, Assistant Teachers, Floaters and an Outside Coordinator.

Members of the staff are specialists in Early Childhood Education. They understand the importance of developing a positive relationship with each child. They have all completed early childhood education courses and are experienced in facilitating the growth and development of children from birth to age five. The administrative staff and teaching staff are fully qualified per the California State Community Care Licensing requirements. However, many staff members exceed the state qualifications with BA degrees, AA degrees, teacher permits, and site or supervisor permits in Early Childhood Education; others are continuing their education at the junior college and university levels, and all full-time staff members hold current CPR/ First Aid certification.

Board of Directors

A 16 member Board of Directors, consisting of parents and members of the community at large, meets on the third Tuesday of each month. The Board helps to determine Center policies, organizes fund-raising events, and oversees the general

functioning of LVCC. The list of current board members and their contact information is available in the Director's office. Feel free to contact the board members directly should you have any questions or concerns, as well as any ideas about the school you would like to discuss.

Policies

Registration and Enrollment

Initial Registration

Tours are on Tuesdays and Thursdays every half hour 9:30-12:30 and 2-3 p.m. Please contact us if you would like to schedule a tour. Following the tour, parents may submit an application for enrollment along with a \$50.00 non-refundable application fee. Because we usually have more applicants than we have spaces, families are selected on a first come first serve basis. Priority is given to siblings of current and former children. The program year starts in September, however, we fill openings as they arise throughout the year.

Enrollment

When a space is offered, a non-refundable tuition deposit, in the amount of \$500.00 per child, is required to guarantee the space. \$250.00 will be applied to your first month's tuition. The remaining \$250.00 is a New Family Enrollment Fee. A space will not be guaranteed until the tuition deposit is received. If a space is not available, families will be placed on a waiting list that is kept on file until an appropriate opening occurs, or when the application expires. Families can renew their applications annually to remain on the list. When an opening becomes available, families on the waiting list will be contacted and asked to send in the \$500 non-refundable tuition deposit to secure their spot.

Required Forms

Prior to admission, each child should have a physical examination by a doctor, including proof of immunizations (please see the Health Policies section for a list of immunizations required for attendance at LVCC). The following forms are required upon admission: Physician's Report, California School Immunization Record, Health History, Parent's Medical Consent Form, Identification and Emergency Information, Needs & Service Plan (Infants and Toddlers Only), Field Trip Permission Slip, Get Acquainted Form, Personal Rights, and Parents' Rights Statement. These forms must be returned to the Center's office before your child's first day of attendance. Financial arrangements must also be made with our Director and a Tuition Agreement signed before your child's first day.

Tuition

Linda Vista Children's Center's operating budget is based on tuition income spread out over a 52-week year. Our costs do not change monthly; we have the same staff salaries and overhead costs to meet. Therefore, there is no tuition credit (or refund) for sick days, holidays or vacation. We do not allow any substituting of days once your child's schedule is established. If you are part-time, please makes note of this.

Additionally, if at any time a child temporarily drops from full-time to part-time enrollment, we will not be able to guarantee return to full-time enrollment.

Tuition Payment

Payment may be made by cash, check or automatic debit. Receipts will be issued upon request. Families will not receive a bill unless their payment is late. Tuition is due at the beginning of each month, or semi-monthly as specified in the family's tuition agreement. Tuition payments can be put in the "tuition mailbox" which is located by the door exiting to the preschool play yard.

The total annual tuition for the Pre-K program ONLY is divided into 10 installments and paid monthly from September through June, with no tuition due in July and August. This payment arrangement stabilizes summer enrollment when our costs, including salaries, remain fixed. Typically, the Pre-K room children are transitioning to kindergarten in the fall and summer enrollment in this class is variable. Therefore, the prepaid portion of the installments is non-refundable. If at any time a Pre-K child increases the number of days of attendance (and wants to remain at the increased number of days), the additional tuition will be charged.

Tuition Late Fee

If payment is more than five days late, a fee of \$30.00 will be charged to your account. Enrollment may be terminated if tuition payments are more than one month delinquent. Parents are responsible for timely payment, regardless of any "Flex Plan" payment cycle. Participation in such a plan is an individual family's choice for which LVCC cannot be expected to bear the financial burden. You are encouraged to discuss anticipated financial problems with the Director before the payment due date.

Returned Check Policy

Should a check be returned for insufficient funds, an additional charge of \$30.00 shall be due upon presentation of payment. Payment for the returned check and the additional fee must be paid in cash or by cashier's check or money order. Upon receiving notice of a second returned check within 12 months, tuition must be paid in cash or by cashier's check or money order for the succeeding six months.

Refund of Tuition and Fees

Withdrawal from the Children's Center or reduction/increase of the number of days per week enrolled requires a 30-day notice to the Office. Informing your child's Lead Teacher is not official. If less notice is given, tuition will be charged as follows: tuition for one month, minus the number of days for which the notice was given. We do not do reduction from full-time to part-time on a temporary basis due to the financial necessity for full enrollment. If you choose to go part-time, your full-time spot will be offered to another family. We will not guarantee that a full-time spot will be available when you request to return full-time.

Tuition Increases

A 30-day advance notice will be given when tuition increases are made.

Tuition Assistance

LVCC financial aid program draws its inspiration from its mission statement and admission policy, both of which focus on ensuring access to the greater Pasadena area families. It addresses the need for financial assistance where there is an obstacle to admission and supports an enriched, pluralistic learning environment composed of children from different social and economic backgrounds.

LVCC financial aid grants are awarded on the basis of need only. A family must establish that a need exists in order to receive a grant. It is our good faith assumption that only families with true financial need will apply for tuition assistance. LVCC believes the primary responsibility for financing education rests with the family. If the family is not able to afford the monthly tuition, LVCC expects the family to investigate other resources to afford tuition. Families might qualify for tuition assistance through CCIS (Child Care Information Service). After all of the family's own resources and outside agency assistance have been exhausted, parents may wish to apply for LVCC financial aid to make up the difference between the cost of education and what the family can contribute.

Our Financial Aid Committee will determine the grant amount to be awarded. Financial need is determined by taking many factors into account, including family income, assets (especially housing) and liabilities, net worth, standard living expenses, unusual expenses, family size, and the ability of both parents to work. The Financial Aid Committee has prioritized families who have both parents working full-time and still cannot afford monthly tuition. The Financial Aid Committee maintains strict confidentiality over financial aid files. Teachers are not informed of financial aid decisions.

Renewals and first-time applicants

Renewal of financial aid is our first priority. Then consideration is given to those seeking aid for the first time. Each year, families fill out the Financial Aid Application. If the family's ability to pay decreases, LVCC will make an effort to raise the level of aid awarded, subject to fund availability. If a family's ability to contribute to the child's education increases, the level of aid awarded will decrease accordingly. The Financial Aid Committee will consider applications from returning families who have not received financial aid in the past. However, we cannot guarantee that LVCC will be able to meet the financial needs of these families. It is our expectation that families who begin at LVCC paying the full tuition will continue to do so.

Parents who are separated or divorced or never married

Both parents must submit the Financial Aid Application. The custodial parent and step-parent (if applicable), and the non-custodial parent and step-parent (if applicable) complete and submit the application. Both custodial and non-custodial parents submit copies of tax forms and W-2 forms to LVCC. The assets of both

parents, if living, will be considered in the evaluation. Financial need is determined by a family's ability to meet educational expenses, not on a willingness or unwillingness to pay. Both parents retain the obligation to contribute what they can afford to the education of their children, regardless of divorce or other agreements stating otherwise. The Financial Aid Committee will make an award only after considering the financial resources of both parents, unless one parent has never provided financial support to the child or has been uninvolved in the child's life for some time. If either parent remarries, the financial information of the step-parent must be included. We will take into consideration individual family relationships and financial agreements, as well as obligations of the parent and step-parent or other guardian to their other children.

Change in financial circumstances

If you find that your family circumstances change significantly after you send in the financial aid forms, please let us know. We will take all new information into account before making a final financial aid decision.

Procedures and deadlines for applying for financial aid

Pick up the financial aid application form from the LVCC office by July.

Complete and return the application to the LVCC office by August 1. If exact figures are not available, use estimates. Do not delay submitting the form. Bring a signed copy of your Federal Tax form 1040 with all supporting schedules.

Committee will notify you of the final decision within three weeks of turning in the application.

Please call the Executive Director if you need help with any part of the financial aid application process.

Additional Fees

At the time your child is enrolled, and subsequently every September, an annual Activity Fee is due for each child. This fee includes the premium for "School Time Insurance," an accident policy requiring no paperwork on your part, and it offsets a portion of the staff's CPR training, the purchase of disaster supplies, the cost of Snow Day, visits by the Cabrillo Museum, Reptile Families, as well as a Winter Holiday lunch, a Fourth of July barbecue and supplies for the family barbecues during the summer. Current fee rate is posted on our website.

Every September, LVCC will charge a fee for participation in the Parent Partner Fund. These funds go towards organizing events and purchasing gifts of appreciation for our teachers. This fee is automatic but it is voluntary. Parents can opt-out of participating in the Parent Partner Fund. Current fee rate is posted on our website.

Late Pick-up Charges

LVCC is open Monday through Friday from 7:00am to 6:00pm. Pick-up after 6:00pm will result in a late fee, which also applies to early closure days and special events (i.e. summer BBQ). If children are not picked up by 6:00p.m, you will need to pay: \$5.00 for any fraction of the first 5 minutes plus \$1.00 per minute thereafter. Pick-up fees are charged per child and should be paid directly to the teacher at the time of pick-up.

Holidays and Birthdays

LVCC is closed in observance of the following holidays (exact calendar days will be posted on our website):

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Day

Presidents' Day

Memorial Day

July 4th

Last 3 days of August staff training days

Labor Day

Day before Thanksgiving and Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Parents are welcome to provide a snack to celebrate a birthday with their child's class. These snacks might include muffins, Jell-O, ice cream, cookies, fruit, or lightly frosted cupcakes. Please do not bring cake or candy. Piñatas, goodie bags, and party favors are not to be brought to school at any time (holidays included). A simple snack and party napkins are sufficient. Teachers and parents will work together to provide a happy experience for the child and his/her friends.

Birthdays are a special time of heightened feelings in the lives of children. Please do not pass out party invitations in your child's class unless there is one for every child

Sign-in/Sign-Out

Each day children must be brought into the classroom by an adult. This adult must sign his/her full legal name on the sign in sheet. This is the State law. The same is also required at pick-up time. Please make sure a teacher knows when your child has arrived or is leaving. We ask that parents do not take their children to play on the playground before/after they sign their child/ren out. We are conveniently located next to a public park that you are welcome to visit during those times.

Toys

It is the policy of LVCC that children do not bring toys to school. Comfort items, such as stuffed animals or a special blanket, may be brought and stored in the child's

cubby to be used as needed. Items to “share” with the class may be brought to school in line with each teacher’s special instructions.

Meals

Breakfast and Snacks

Breakfast is served between 8:00am and 8:30am each morning (if your child comes after that please make sure they have a nutritious breakfast before arrival). Monthly menus are posted in the reception area upon entering the center. We also provide a morning (10:00am) and afternoon (3:30pm) snack.

Lunch

Children need to bring their lunches. You do not need to include beverages. We will supply either milk or water. Please use ice packs in your child’s lunch box when perishable items are sent for lunch.

Infant (Panda) Room Bottles and Food

Parents must bring in prepared bottles for their child(ren) each day labeled with the child’s first and last name, and the date. Due to licensing regulations, the teachers are not permitted to mix formula to make your child’s bottle, unless it is an emergency. Glass bottles are not permitted. All food and bottles must be taken home at the end of each day or it will be discarded. No food or bottles may stay overnight in the refrigerator.

Rest Time

A two-hour nap or rest time is provided following lunch. Naptime for Elephant room runs from approximately 12:00p.m. to 2:30p.m. and from 1:00p.m. to 3:00p.m. for Koala, Tiger and the Pre-K (Cheetah) Room. LVCC supplies individual cots. A crib sized sheet and blanket (small individual pillow optional) are brought from home. All bedding is sent home on Friday, or the last day of attendance for the week, to be washed and returned the beginning of the next week. Please be sure to label all bedding.

Health Regulations

We reserve the right to deny a child’s attendance on any given day for reasons surrounding health and illness at the discretion of administration. Please remember that we must take into consideration the health of other children, as well as teachers. We appreciate your understanding and support of our policies regarding health and illness.

Conditions Requiring Temporary Exclusion (Recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics)

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the staff of the child care program
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising their ability to care for other children
- The child has any of the following conditions, unless a health professional determines the child's condition does not require exclusion:
 1. Appears to be severely ill.
 2. Fever of 101° F orally or 100° F auxiliary (armpit) - the child will be sent home and may not return until the child has been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication.
 3. Diarrhea - 2 times: the child will be sent home and needs a note from the doctor to return to LVCC.
 4. Vomiting - 2 times: the child will be sent home and may not return unless vomit-free for 24 hours (without medication).
 5. Abdominal pain that continues for more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms.
 6. Mouth sores with drooling.
 7. Unidentified Rashes or rashes that have spread need clearance from a doctor to return to the center. This includes rashes with or without blisters.
 8. Pink or red conjunctiva or unidentified discharge (i.e. whites of the eyes) - child may return after 24 hours on medication.
 9. Impetigo - may return 24 hours after treatment has been started.
 10. Head lice or nits, until treated with a chemical that kills lice, and visible eggs have been killed or removed.

A green nasal discharge may indicate an infection requiring treatment by a physician. Please notify your child's teacher if your child has not been feeling well lately, or has been exposed to head lice, chicken pox, measles, meningitis, or any other contagious disease. Also, please notify your child's teacher or the office if your child has come down with any of the above. For more specific information refer to the "Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools" published by the American Academy of Pediatrics, which is available in the office.

If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be contacted to discuss the symptoms and you will be asked to take the child home within one hour.

When visiting the doctor for illness, please make sure to get a note from their office that the child can return to the center.

Required Immunizations

Age when enrolling	Immunizations required
2-3 months	1 each Polio, DTap, HIB, Hep B
4-5 months	2 each Polio, DTap, HIB, Hep B
6-14 months	3 Dtap, 2 each Polio, HIB, Hep B
15-17 months	3 each Polio, DTap, 2 Hep B, 1 MMR on or after first birthday, 1 HIB on or after first birthday regardless of any HIB doses given before first birthday
18 months – 5 years	3 each Polio 4 DTap, 3 Hep B, 1 MMR on or after first birthday, 1 HIB on or after first birthday regardless of any HIB doses given before first birthday 1 Varicella (chicken pox)

Diapers

In compliance with Health Department regulations, all non-toilet trained children will be required to be in disposable diapers.

Medical Emergencies

In case of medical and/or dental emergencies, LVCC will immediately contact one or both parents, after (or at the same time) we call 911. Our staff have current CPR and First Aid Certification, and are trained to respond to medical emergencies. The decision to call 911 will be made by the Director, Assistant Director, or Lead Teacher. Children will be transported to Huntington Memorial Hospital. Parents are responsible for all medical bills resulting in a medical/dental emergency.

Medication

All medications to be given to your child by our staff must be prescribed by a physician, be in the original container and marked with your child's name, dosage, doctor's name and prescription number. Every parent must complete The Parent Consent for Administering of Medication and Medication Chart form (LIC Form 9221) which is required by the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing. All medication is stored in the classroom cupboard or refrigerator. No medication is to be put in the child's cubby and we will not administer any EXPIRED medication. This includes over-the counter medication.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency School Closures:

If an emergency occurs that would warrant an emergency school closure, parents will be notified by telephone or e-mail. Children will be released to parents and/or adults listed on emergency forms only.

In the event of a non-emergency situation, children will be relocated to our designated assembly area. Once the center has been deemed safe to re-enter, daily business will continue. In case we lose power and/or use of our toilets flushing for over a 1 hour period of time, we will be calling parents to pick their child up for the day due to health and safety issues.

Should the center be deemed unsafe for children at any time the administration reserves the right to make the decision to close the center. Although this is rare, please keep in mind that our priority is to keep the children safe and there may be times that we are not able to give a 24 hour notice depending on the circumstances.

Emergency Evacuation Information

Every month LVCC has an unannounced fire evacuation/fire drill. Our mock drills are to prepare us in case of a true emergency. The teachers are trained on specifics they must fulfill when evacuating the center. When the teachers evacuate with the children they bring an emergency backpack which contains emergency contact information, medical consent forms, and first aid supplies. Once each classroom arrives at the emergency assembly area, they conduct a head count and take roll. The entire center waits until they are notified by the administration that the buildings have been cleared and we can now re-enter. All classrooms will conduct a head count and take roll upon re-entering their classroom.

Emergency Disaster Plan for Child Care Centers (LIC 610), Emergency Evacuation Map, Fire Evacuation Procedures, Earthquake Evacuation Procedures are posted in each classroom and office area.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Linda Vista Children's Center

EMERGENCIES CALL

911

Earthquake

- Stop, drop, duck and cover until the shaking stops.
- After the shaking steps, check yourself and others for injuries and move toward the nearest exit.
- Evacuate the building to your designated assembly location.
- Do not leave the center without with Administration.

Hazardous Materials Release

- If an emergency exists or if anyone is in danger, move away from the site of the hazard to a safe location.
- Alert others to stay clear of the area.
- Call 911. Notify them if you have been exposed or have information about the release.

Evacuation

- Remain calm.
- Evacuate using the safest exit possible.
- Follow directions given by your supervisor.
- Take emergency backpack and sign in book.
- Go to identified assembly location.
- Assist persons with disabilities or injuries without jeopardizing your safety.
- If there is time:
 - Turn off all lights and close all doors behind you.

Fire

- Remain calm.
- Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station and call 911.
- Evacuate the building to designated assembly location.
- Do not re-enter the building.

Suspicious Person

- Do not physically confront the person.
- Do not let anyone into the building.
- Call 911 and provide as much information about the person and their direction of travel.

Pasadena Police
Non- emergency
number: 626-744-4241

Fire Station 38
626-793-1449

Suspicious Object

- Do not touch or disturb the object.
- Do not use a cell phone.
- Call 911 from a center phone.
- Report object to the office.

Pasadena Public Health
626-744-6005

Field Trips

Field trips are taken throughout the year. A Field Trip Permission Slip is included in the registration packet. All the children participate in walking field trips around the neighborhood as part of their curriculum. Infants and toddlers venture out on walks buckled into the strollers. You will be notified in advance of any field trip that is planned away from the immediate neighborhood. Parents are invited and are welcome to join their children on all field trips. Our Pre-K children go on field trips throughout the year. They travel to events using Pasadena's public transportation or parents' private vehicles.

Discipline

We believe discipline at LVCC should complement the goals of discipline found at home. We are interested in nurturing thoughtful and considerate children who are concerned with the welfare of others as well as their surrounding environment. Children who feel secure learn to develop self-regulating skills and to practice control within themselves. Our strategy in attaining this is to use positive, rather than punitive, methods.

Foremost in our discipline policy is the maintenance of a constant, yet flexible structure. Children do best when they know what is expected of them. Our staff promotes good behavior through age-appropriate strategies, including positive reinforcement and "setting a good example." This facilitates the child's identification with parental figures and is the key factor in shaping good behavior in your children. The liberal use of phrases such as, "Thank you for helping us pick up the blocks," and, "It's nice to see you share your toy," as well as the staff demonstrating appropriate, nonverbal behavior, are effective means of implementing this strategy.

When unacceptable behavior occurs, a child is first given positive redirection. If this is not sufficient, the child is removed to another activity with the assurance that s/he may return when able to use proper behavior. This type of interchange allows the child to see the actual consequences of his or her actions and reinforces the norms of acceptable behavior. If the problem continues, the child is removed to an adjacent area and given a "thinking time" no more than 1 minute per age of the child. This allows the child to regain some inner control and to reassess the situation. At the end of the "thinking time", the teacher and the child will discuss the problem and the child's feelings.

Episodes of unacceptable behavior are considered a normal part of children's development. We encourage you to discuss your child's behavior with their teacher. It is important for you to inform your child's teacher of changes or disruptions in his/her life that might affect behavior at the Center. This will help us understand and work together in supportive ways.

We will inform you when we become concerned about a child's behavior. If a child repeatedly disrupts the flow of the class routine, or consistently seems overly angry or hostile, a conference with the family may be scheduled. This allows both the parents and the teachers to search the underlying causes of his/her behavior. If the problem persists, a specialist may be called in with parental consent to evaluate and help resolve the problem at the parent's expense. If the problem behavior cannot be resolved to both the parents' and LVCC's satisfaction, termination may be necessary.

At no time will corporal punishment or verbal abuse be used to discipline a child. Violation of a child's rights shall also never be used as punishment, including: humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse or other actions of a punitive nature including, but not limited to: interference with functions of daily living including eating, sleeping, toileting, or the withholding of shelter, clothing, medication, or aids of physical functioning.

Biting Policy

Why Do Children Bite?

In even the best child care programs, periodic outbreaks of biting occur among infants and toddlers, and sometimes even among preschoolers. Biting can be scary, frustrating and stressful for everyone involved: children, parents and teachers. This is a natural phenomenon and there is no quick and easy solution to the problem. It is not something to blame on children, parents or teachers. A bite is powerful, quick, and effective reaction, usually producing immediate and dramatic response. Some of the causes of biting are: teething, excitement and overstimulation, frustration, impulsiveness and lack of self-control, and it makes an impact on others.

When Biting Happens

The most important thing to do is to comfort the child who has been bitten, then wash the bite with soap and water, and then apply ice. In the event that a bite breaks the skin, the parents of the injured child will be advised to seek medical attention. The teachers in the classroom will help the child who bit learn other behaviors or words to use with their friends. We do not focus on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for biting. What does help are immediate, logical consequences in response to biting.

Informing Parents of a Biting Incident

Teachers will complete an accident report for every occurrence of biting. A report will be done for both the child who was bitten, as well as for the child who bit. Parents of both children will be contacted regarding the biting incident.

Ongoing Biting

When biting changes from a relatively unusual occurrence to a frequent and expected occurrence, it will be considered a biting problem. This may be triggered by one child or a number of children. Some children become "stuck" for a while in a biting syndrome and it can be frustrating for the families of bitten children that we are unable to "fix" the child quickly. We will make every effort to provide

information, guidance, and referrals for additional help as needed. If biting becomes a regular occurrence, the Center will notify all parents in the classroom of the problem and of strategies implemented to improve the situation. We will work together with the families of both biting children and frequently-injured children, on an individual basis, to keep them informed and to develop joint strategies for change. Children's names are kept confidential.

In summary:

Teachers will teach verbal and non-verbal non-biting responses to situations and reinforce positive behaviors.

Classroom staff will work together with parents and try to reach the cause as to deter future biting by observing and documenting the details before the bite.

Appropriate forms will be filled out (Incident Report). The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident. Note: If a bite breaks the skin and requires medical treatment, the licensing program analyst must be contacted by the next business day.

If the biting persists, teachers will meet with parents to go over a written behavior improvement plan and to discuss further support, and possibly a referral to a private specialist.

After a third (broken skin) biting incident, the child will be terminated from LVCC if deemed in the best interest of the child, LVCC, and the other children. Re-enrollment into LVCC may be considered in the future.

Visiting your child at LVCC

LVCC encourages parents to visit during the day. This makes the child feel very special, and facilitates communication between LVCC and home. Parents are also warmly invited to join scheduled field trips and other outside activities. We emphasize that, while notification of visits is helpful, parents are free to come and go from LVCC exclusively at their own discretion. When spending time in your child's classroom or on the playground, please remember to keep conversations with teachers or other parents to a minimum. Please refrain from discussions about other children or groups of children. If you have a question about your child or about the teacher's approach, wait for a private time to talk with the teacher. To help your child with the continuity of supervision while you are visiting at the center and sharing time with your children, please familiarize yourself with our classroom and playground rules.

Classroom Rules:

- Walking feet and inside voices
- We put away the toys we play with
- We sit in chairs or on the floor (not on the tables or cabinets)
- We keep our hands on our own body

- We only play in the classrooms when a teacher is present

Playground Rules:

- Children are not allowed to enter the code or to open the entrance door to the center
- No more than three children at a time on the tire swing (no standing)
- Feet first down the slide
- No climbing up the slide
- Children need to wear shoes when riding bikes and climbing structures
- Children may not run or play on the ramps and decking

Parent Communication

Open communication is the foundation of a harmonious child care facility. Please make use of our willingness to listen by communicating your needs and concerns as they arise. The lead teacher in your room, the Executive Director, and the Assistant Director are the people directly responsible for the operation of the Center. They have the training and experience to answer your questions and solve any problems that may arise. They can be contacted in person, by phone or e-mail. E-mails can be sent to: info@lvcckids.org or through our website at www.lvcckids.org. Anonymous e-mails can also be sent through our website.

Forms of Communication

Daily Notes are emailed/texted at the end of the day in the Infant (Panda), Elephant, Koala and Tiger rooms. These notes briefly describe the child's day, including information about eating and sleeping.

Weekly Lesson Plans are posted on the website. The *Class News* are also available online, and they provide information about staff and upcoming events. Our *website* is www.lvcckids.org. Information about enrollment, rates, our calendar, and special events can be accessed easily, as well as links to the current Parent Handbook, meal and snack calendar, and Amazon Smile and eScrip websites.

The *Bulletin Board* in each classroom contains news and information regarding classroom activities, and sign-in sheets.

A *Parent Bulletin Board* is located in the entrance/reception area and provides information regarding LVCC policies, parking updates, parent education opportunities, LVCC tax ID number, parent participation opportunities, and upcoming events.

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice a year in February and June. Informal conferences can be scheduled at any time by either parents or teachers. For the infant (Panda) and Koala rooms, service plans will be reviewed quarterly.

Parent Participation

Parent Participation is a commitment made by the parents in support of Linda Vista Children's Center. The tuition paid by LVCC families does not cover the entire cost of LVCC's programs. Fundraising allows LVCC to continue to provide high-quality, low teacher-student ratio care for all of our families.

Parents may choose one of the following three plans (A, B or C) to satisfy the participation requirements. Parents select their participation plan as part of the Payment Agreement signed by parents upon enrollment.

Plan A – Fundraising AND Volunteer Plan

<p>1. Pledge to sell a total of \$300 per year</p> <p>You can fulfill this obligation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selling items offered for sale as part of our Winter Market (wreaths, coffee, wine, poinsettias). You received \$10 credit for each item sold. • Procuring items for the annual Spring Fling event. The value of each item you procure is the dollar credit you receive. E.g. If you procure a gift card in the amount of \$25, you will receive \$25 towards your pledge. (Receipts may be requested) <p>Two parent families are required to contribute the equivalent of \$300 per family per year. Single-parent families are required to contribute the equivalent of \$150 per family per year. This applies to both full-time and part-time families equally.</p> <p>Any items or donations that are not listed above must be pre-approved by administration for credit. No exceptions.</p>	<p>2. Volunteer at least 10 hours.</p> <p>You can fulfill this obligation by helping the center during:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center work days • Fundraising events (planning, set-up, cleanup, winter market packing and delivery, silent auction at Spring Fling, etc). <p>This does not include the time you spend selling or procuring items for our fundraising events.</p> <p>Parents are responsible for recording completed time in Parent Participation Log available in your child’s classroom.</p> <p>Any parent hours that are outside of the list above MUST be pre-approved by Administration/Lead Teacher for credit. No exceptions.</p> <p>Parents’ service hours that are not fulfilled will be billed at the rate of \$30 per hour, if and only if, there were parent hours worked AND fundraising efforts made.</p> <p>If the balance of service hours and fundraising pledge is zero, then the family will be responsible for Plan C – Buyout Plan.</p>
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Parent participation obligation must be fulfilled during the period of September 1 through June 30. One half of the pledge should be completed before December 31, and the remaining half of hours/items should be completed by June 30.

Plan B – Leadership Plan

Must select one of the three following options:

Become an **active member** of a fundraising committee **AND chair** one or more of the fund-raising events:

Spring Fling/Silent Auction

Winter Market Sales

Other events decided upon fund-raising committee and administration

Active member is defined as participating in at least 75% of the fund-raising meetings plus volunteering time to assist in coordination/production of the fund-raising events.

Become a classroom **Parent Partner**

3 positions available per classroom plus an additional position in Pre-K (Cheetah) room to help with the end-of-the-year event:

- One parent partner will be a representative on the Fun-Raising Committee for the Winter Market sales
- One parent partner will be a representative on the Fun-Raising Committee for the Spring Fling
- One parent partner will represent the classroom:
 - Welcoming new parents to LVCCC
 - Maintaining communication with parents through e-mails
 - Classroom meetings/potlucks (e.g. Stone Soup, Week of the Young Child)
 - Coordinate events for staff appreciation: Birthdays, Holidays, Staff Appreciation Lunch/Dinner

We ask that you sign up for one Parent Partner position only.

Become a **Board Member**

Parents can express their interest to join the board by informing Administration or the recruitment representative (on the Board). Interviews for open board seats will begin in June. In September, the board will vote on new members to fill the spots needed for the duration of the academic year.

Plan C – Buy-out Plan

A monetary pledge separate from any other charitable support will satisfy the requirements in full:

\$1,000 for 1 child

\$1,500 for 2 or more children

Payment schedule options:

Lump sum payment due by 10/15 or

½ of amount due by 10/15 with other ½ of amount due by 3/1 or

\$100 per month for 10 months (\$150 for 2 or more children) Sept through June

Please note that if families select Plan B, but record zero service hours, and their fundraising pledge shows zero at the end of the school year then the family will be responsible for Plan C – Buyout Plan.

Fundraising

In addition to the Parent Participation obligation described above, there will be other voluntary fund-raisers throughout the year. As needed, your family may receive a letter in the mail asking for a tax-deductible, monetary gift to LVCC. The Fund Raising Committee of the Board has set a goal of 100% participation of LVCC families. We expect that all families will participate in each of the fund-raisers to the fullest extent they are able.

The Center also participates in the eScrip program -- it's fast, it's fun, and it's free! When you register your frequent shopper cards or credit/debit cards with eScrip, participating vendors will donate a percentage of your purchase cost to the Children's Center. eScrip is completely confidential and enrollment is completed over a secure link. Sign up at http://www.escrip.com/program/new_members.html, or you can click on the link located on our LVCC website www.lvcckids.org.

You can also make sure to begin all of your Amazon purchases at the following website: <http://smile.amazon.com>. Amazon will donate a portion of the sale to the organization of your choice. We ask that you select Linda Vista Children's Center as the "501(c)(3) charitable organization" on your first visit and 0.5% of all your subsequent purchases will go directly to LVCC. Please make sure to always return to the site above when shopping on Amazon.

Additional ways to contribute are through United Way designation and corporate matching gifts. Please talk to your Human Resources department about ways your employer can support Linda Vista Children's Center.

Staff Employment Outside of LVCC

Our staff are licensed and certified to only provide child care at LVCC, Monday through Friday from 7:00a.m. to 6:00p.m. Parents who employ staff to babysit outside of LVCC do so with the understanding that the staff employed in this manner are not agents of LVCC, and that LVCC assumes no responsibility or liability for its employees outside the Center's operating hours. Outside employment shall not interfere with staff members' job duties at the center at any time. To ensure the teachers' undivided attention to the children at LVCC, please do not call during our hours of operation to arrange outside babysitting.

Rights of Agency

Community Care Licensing has the authority to interview children or staff without prior parental consent. Community Care Licensing also has the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement.

Mandated Reporters

All LVCC staff are mandated child abuse reporters. Mandated reporters are people who have regular contact with children, disabled persons, senior citizens, or other identified vulnerable populations in the ordinary course of their work, and are therefore required to report (or cause a report to be made) whenever physical, sexual, neglect or other types of abuse have been observed or are suspected. As a mandated reporter we are not required to inform parents/guardians that a report has been made. Additionally, we are required to report when there is reasonable suspicion and is not predicated on the relationship we may have with the family. Mandated reporters whom do not follow the law and its guidelines can be legally penalized.

Parent Grievance Procedures

It is the responsibility of the staff at Linda Vista Children's Center to be sensitive and responsive to the needs and concerns of all children and their families. Parental concerns should be openly and freely discussed, whenever possible, with the child's teachers.

If for any reason the parent feels s/he is unable to reach an understanding with the teacher, then the parent may request the assistance of the Director. Concerns (grievances) need to be stated in writing and given to the Director, who then has three working days to meet with the parent (and teacher, if necessary) to resolve the grievance.

If the Director is unable to satisfactorily resolve the problem, then the parent may present the grievance in writing to the President of the Board of Directors, who will act upon it within five working days. The decision and supporting reasons shall be reported in writing to the parent and to the Director.

All grievance proceedings must be held confidential by all parties to the process.

Helpful Tips

Arrival

Although it is our aim to provide services when parents most need it, we believe it is crucial for children to be on time for the morning programs - especially the Pre-K program, which begins promptly at 8:30am. Children in Elephant and Tiger rooms are encouraged to arrive by 9:00am. Those who come in late miss a valuable part of their educational experience. In addition, late arrivals often disturb other children and staff who are busy carrying out their plans they have made for the day. Routine lateness, when it is detrimental to the child or other children, will be discussed with the parents. Please, do not bring children into the Center after 11:00am unless arrangements have been made in advance.

Arrival time is also an important time for parents to relay important information about their child to the child's teacher. The teacher should be informed of changes within the family or home environment, any medications the child is taking, and planned trips or visits from relatives that might excite the child or interrupt the routine at home. It is best to communicate privately with the teacher or to give staff a brief note, rather than to talk in front of the child.

Parking

Parking is available in the Children's Center parking lot. The entrance to the parking lot is located on Bryant Street. The entrance is for two-way traffic use, so please drive carefully, and use caution when entering and exiting the parking lot. Additionally, please only park in designated areas. Do not park next to the empty gated modulars as it makes it difficult for others to back out of the marked stalls. Please drive with caution, as children sometimes are unaware of cars coming through. The center closes at 6:00pm and the parking lot is locked and secured shortly thereafter. Any cars left in the parking lot will be locked inside and will need to be retrieved the following business day.

Transition

Starting a new school can be a difficult experience for a parent and a young child. We encourage the parent and child to visit LVCC after the initial visit and prior to actual enrollment. Two or three visits to LVCC during activity time, lunch, and nap provide an opportunity to become comfortable with the new environment before setting off on his/her own. The Lead Teacher in your child's class will contact you to arrange a smooth transition for your child.

Transitioning to a new classroom is really fun and exciting for the children, but can cause both parent and child some anxiety as well. One of the strengths of our program is our integrated curriculum. The staff works together to prepare the children for their new adventure and to make sure that the teachers in the new classrooms are aware of each child's individual needs. If you have any concerns about your child and his/her new classroom, please address those concerns to your child's new Lead Teacher, to the Executive Director, or Assistant Director. The continuity of our program is built around a sense of teamwork and community-building among our staff. So please focus on moving forward with your child and marveling at his/her growing mastery of new and challenging skills and relationships.

Infants in Panda room transition to the next classroom (Elephant) at their 18-month birthday. That means that transitions out of Panda room will occur throughout what is typically considered a school year (September-June). As much as LVCC would like to transition children (and parents) in groups, licensing requirements mandate that children leave the Panda room at their 18-month birthday. Toddlers from the Elephant room can transition to the next classroom (Koala room) any time upon turning 2 and up to 30 months of age. The teachers, taking into account the toddler's developmental milestones, recommend an optimal time for the child's transition. Teachers will consider moving children in groups to minimize disruptions to their social group. Children 3 and older typically move to the next classroom with their age cohort at the beginning of school year. In all cases, teachers will inform parents of upcoming transitions, they will provide orientation meetings and share information to guide you through any upcoming changes in your child's routine.

Helping Children Feel Comfortable When Parents Leave

At the beginning of the child's enrollment, parents should demonstrate their confidence in the child and LVCC by saying 'goodbye' to the child only once and leaving quickly, even if the child is crying. Prolonged leave-taking and displays of emotion by the parent usually result in a more difficult adjustment for the child.

Once the parent has left, teachers will help the child cope with the sadness and/or anger. At the beginning of the child's enrollment, teachers usually comfort crying children with loving attention, help them verbalize their feelings, and reassure them that the parent will return at the specified time. They use pictures of each family (which can be submitted prior to the start of school), to help the child remember that family continues to exist even when they are not physically present. Once the initial adjustment period has passed, the teachers use different strategies for helping children who are distressed when parents leave. These strategies will be discussed with parents individually because they differ from child to child, and it depends on the teacher's assessment of the situation. Of course, parents may also call LVCC to inquire about their child.

Most children exhibit moderate to severe concern about separating from the parent upon initial enrollment. Some continue to show concern at various times during the school year. Their concerns are thought to arise from the child's uncertainty about reuniting with the family. Therefore, it is important for the parents to tell the child when s/he will be picked up and by whom. It is also important for the parent to be on time for pick up. We recommend the parents to say something like:

"I will be back for you at [time]. Your teacher will take good care of you until I come back or you. Have a good time. Goodbye."

After one hug and one kiss, the parent should leave, even if the child is crying. If you need help, let the teacher know.

When children show signs of concern about separation after the initial adjustment period, it is more likely to be a bid for attention and control than anxiety about reunion with the family. We recommend that parents be very matter-of-fact about school attendance, saying something like:

Today is a school day. Would you like to wear this outfit or that one? If the child cries or says, *"I don't want to go to school,"* the parent can simply restate calmly, *"This is a school day..."* and continue with preparations.

It is best to avoid lengthy discussions about how much fun the child will have or complicated explanations about the benefits of going to school.

Again, parents are always welcome to observe once the children have been dropped off. This usually assures parents that all is well, because those children who claim to hate coming to school usually become involved quickly and clearly demonstrate that they enjoy the experience once they are at school.

Clothing

Children should be sent to LVCC in washable play clothes and shoes that are safe to run and climb in (no cowboy boots, party shoes, flip-flops, or "jellies", please.) Make sure that shoes are closed-toed and are secured to the feet. If you are not sure please choose a pair that you know are acceptable. To help children become independent, clothing that is easy to pull up and down for toileting is also recommended. Hooded sweatshirts or jackets should not have strings around them. Children should not come to LVCC with anything around their necks, such as chains, strings or capes. All clothing should be labeled with your child's name. Our play yard allows our children to run, jump, climb etc. we appreciate your cooperation in helping your child stay safe when exploring.

When selecting clothing for your child, this is a helpful rule of thumb: ask yourself, "Will I be upset if my child comes home with dirt or paint on this outfit?" If the answer is yes, your child should wear something else.

Nutrition

Here are some suggested items for your child's lunch. Additional tips can be provided by the teachers in your child's room.

Protein sources: Cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese cubes, sliced meat or peanut butter in sandwiches, beans, sliced hard-boiled egg.

Carbohydrates: Whole wheat bread, whole wheat tortillas, whole wheat pita, rice, corn, potato pancakes, fruit-sweetened cookies.

Vegetables, fruits: Cooked carrot strips, grated carrots, green pepper strips, broccoli "trees," coleslaw, cherry tomatoes, cooked vegetables of all kinds, washed peaches, pears, apples, nectarines, pitted cherries, grapes, applesauce.

Holiday Celebrations

Holidays are included at an age-appropriate level in order to teach children values, help children respect diversity, validate the child's/family's experiences, and demonstrate different beliefs.

We make every effort to stay away from the commercialism associated with holidays. Some of the holidays we include in our curriculum are:

Thanksgiving

Values: Sharing, giving, and friendship

Activities may include: Fests and potlucks where children bring food to share

Winter Holidays

Values: Family, fun, togetherness, and traditions

Activities may include: Cooking, crafts, cards and children and families sharing traditions with class

Martin Luther King Day

Values: fairness and equality (this is taught all year)

Valentine's Day

Values: Love, kindness, and appreciation

Activities may include: Making Valentine treats and cards for family, friends and helpers

Mother's Day and Father's Day

Values: Love, kindness, respect and appreciation

Activities may include: School-made cards and treats, and/or luncheon or parties in the older classes

Parents are encouraged to talk with their child's teachers about other holidays your family celebrates and we can include them in our curriculum.

Things to try at home

The Director and staff at Linda Vista Children's Center feel privileged to share in the growth and development of each young child. The following suggestions may provide a guide that can lead to a meaningful parent/child relationship.

Take time to listen to your child. Regular periods of conversation at special times are important.

Your child will be anxious to share his/her thoughts with you. Ask him/her what s/he sees as you drive to the Center or take walks together.

Make certain that mealtime is a happy, quiet, and relaxed time when as many family members as possible can come together.

Make every effort to alleviate your child's feelings of anxiety at separation. Leave your child from time to time with competent, caring friends or sitters.

Take advantage of your local library and its children's section. Visit the zoo, puppet shows, parks, places where children gather to play to help him/her adjust to group activities.

Encourage your child to learn his/her full name, address, and, if possible, telephone number at an age-appropriate level. Try teaching them their telephone number by singing it to the "ABC Song."

Help your child to take care of his/her dressing and toilet needs independently. Make certain clothes and shoes are manageable. Independence is a vital part of the development of the child. The environment of the Center is based on the philosophy that once a child is able to do something alone, s/he needs to be independent of help in that area (e.g. once a child walks, s/he needs to be allowed to walk into and out of the Center). Expediency and time often make us hurry the child and hinder the growth and development of independence.

Consider carefully the quality of programs and time spent by your young child viewing television. Become informed on effects from viewing violence and other programs which may evoke feelings of violence or other strong emotions.

Provide opportunities to reinforce left to right movement when reading stories to your child. Use your hand as a guide along with the words as you read.

Ask your child to tell you about his/her day when you pick him/her up from the

Center. It is best not to ask, "What did you do today?" The general response is, "Oh, nothing," but if you simply ask him/her to tell you about the day, you may get more information.

When playtime is over, encourage your child to put his/her toys away in the proper place.

Make every effort to read to your child daily to develop a love of storytelling, and on occasion, ask him/her to tell you the story with the pictures.

Most of all, be generous with love and praise for your young child. He or she is developing a feeling of self-worth that will take him/her through the years ahead. Nothing can replace the words, "I love you." Your unconditional love will heal wounds, build confidence, and remain with your child forever!