

Welcome ♥ to the ♥ Nest



♥ THE LIL' CARDINALS NEST ♥
FAMILY HANDBOOK

Where Little Cardinals
Grow & Big Dreams Begin! ♥



A SAFE PLACE. ♥ A LOVING PLACE. ♥ A LEARNING PLACE. ♥ THE NEST.

Welcome: ♥ to the ♥ Nest!

Dear LCN Family,

Welcome to Lil' Cardinals Nest!

Thank you for considering us to be part of your child's early years. We understand that choosing childcare is one of the most important decisions a family can make, and we are honored that you're here.

At Lil' Cardinals Nest, we strive to provide more than quality childcare—we provide a warm, nurturing environment where children feel loved, encouraged, and inspired to learn each day.

Whether your child joins our Blue Group or Red Group, our goal is the same: to help every child grow academically, socially, and emotionally while creating lasting memories along the way.

We believe childhood should be filled with laughter, exploration, friendships, creativity, and kindness.

Thank you for trusting us with one of life's greatest blessings.

We look forward to welcoming your family to *Our Nest!* ♥

With gratitude,

Rene' Harbin
OWNER & DIRECTOR



A SAFE PLACE. ♥ A LOVING PLACE. ♥ A LEARNING PLACE. ♥ THE NEST.

Our Nest, Our Promise

♥ A PLACE TO GROW. A PLACE TO BELONG. ♥

At Lil' Cardinals Nest, we promise to partner with you in your child's journey. We know the early years are precious, and we are committed to creating a safe, loving, and stimulating environment where your little one can thrive.

OUR VALUES



LOVE

We lead with love in all that we do, creating a nurturing space where children feel safe and seen.



RESPECT

We celebrate each child's individuality and treat every family with kindness and respect.



GROWTH

We support each child's unique development and encourage curiosity, confidence, and independence.



LEARNING

Through play, discovery, and hands-on experiences, we make learning meaningful and fun every day.



FAMILY

We believe in strong partnerships with families— together, we help little ones grow and succeed.

OUR CURRICULUM

Our play-based curriculum is designed to foster the whole child—academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. Every activity is age-appropriate, engaging, and created to build a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

THROUGH DAILY EXPERIENCES, WE FOCUS ON:

- ♥ Language & Literacy
- ♥ Math & Problem Solving
- ♥ Science & Exploration
- ♥ Creative Arts
- ♥ Social & Emotional Development
- ♥ Physical Development

FUN FACT!

Cardinals mate for life and are known for their loyalty and strong family bonds— just like the community we build here at Lil' Cardinals Nest!

LIL' CARDINALS NEST

LITTLE
HEARTS
♥
BIG
DREAMS



A SAFE PLACE. ♥ A LOVING PLACE. ♥ A LEARNING PLACE. ♥ THE NEST.

A Day in Our Nest

♥ LEARNING. LAUGHTER. LOVE. EVERY DAY. ♥

OUR DAILY SCHEDULE ♥

-  7:30 – 8:30 AM Arrival & Quiet Activities
-  8:30 – 9:30 AM Circle Time & Learning
-  9:30 – 10:15 AM Snacks & Social Time
-  10:15 – 11:30 AM Play-Based Learning
-  10:15 AM – 12:00 PM Lunch Time
-  12:00 – 3:00 PM Quiet Time / Rest Time
No Ins or Outs between Noon & 3pm
-  3:00 – 3:30 PM Snack & Story Time
-  3:30 – 5:00 PM Outdoor Play / Activities
-  5:00 – 5:30 PM Wind Down & Goodbyes

*Every moment matters.
Every child is loved. ♥*

WHAT MAKES OUR NEST SPECIAL ♥

- ♥ **A SAFE PLACE** – Your child's safety is our top priority.
- ♥ **A LOVING PLACE** – We nurture hearts with kindness and compassion that lasts a lifetime.
- ♥ **A LEARNING PLACE** – Through play and discovery, we inspire curious minds to grow.
- ♥ **STRONG FOUNDATIONS** – We build confidence, independence, and friendships that help children soar!
- ♥ **FAMILY PARTNERSHIP** – We believe in open communication and working together for your child's success.

TOGETHER, WE HELP LITTLE CARDINALS
GROW BIG DREAMS! ♥

POLICIES & REMINDERS ♥

- Tuition is due by Monday at close. Holiday weeks due Friday.
- Drop-off ends at 9:30 AM. The door is locked after 9:30.
- No Ins or Outs between 12:00 PM & 3:00 PM.
- Please send water bottles only.
- Healthy snacks & meals provided.
- Sick policy: 48 hours fever/symptom-free.
- Blankets stay at school.
- No outside food or drinks.
- Shoes should be easy on & off.

Thank you for trusting
us with your greatest
treasure – your child. ♥



A SAFE PLACE. ♥ A LOVING PLACE. ♥ A LEARNING PLACE. ♥ THE NEST.



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Together, We Grow!



♥ STRONGER TOGETHER. BRIGHTER TOMORROWS. ♥



The best childcare happens when families and teachers work together.

We believe open, honest communication builds trust and helps every child succeed. We welcome questions, concerns, celebrations, and feedback throughout the year.

STAY CONNECTED

-  Director: Rene' Harbin
-  Phone: 417-540-6539
-  Email: lilcards@gmail.com
-  Facebook: Lil' Cardinals Nest

We'll communicate through:

- ♥ Facebook
- ♥ GroupMe
- ♥ Daily conversations
- ♥ Newsletters
- ♥ Individual messages when needed



PARENT PARTNERSHIP

At Lil' Cardinals Nest, you are an important part of your child's learning journey.

Together we will:

- ♥ Celebrate milestones
- ♥ Encourage independence
- ♥ Build confidence
- ♥ Foster kindness and respect
- ♥ Create lifelong memories



Thank You

Thank you for trusting us with one of life's greatest blessings—your child.

It is truly an honor to watch your little Cardinal learn, grow, and flourish each day.

We look forward to partnering with your family for years to come.



LIL' CARDINALS NEST

WHERE LITTLE
CARDINALS GROW &
BIG DREAMS BEGIN!



Enrollment & Tuition

THANK YOU FOR TRUSTING US
WITH YOUR GREATEST TREASURE!



TUITION
\$185/week



TUITION DUE
Monday



HOLIDAY OR VACATION WEEKS
Tuition needs paid prior to school closing during holiday or vacation weeks.



LATE FEES
A \$25 fee will be charged for each day tuition is late.



RETURNED CHECKS
A \$35 returned check fee will be applied.



PAYMENT METHODS
Cash, Check, Credit/Debit Card (via Square), or Automatic Bank Pay



★ NEW

Tuition Adjustment ♥

Beginning each January, tuition will increase 3% to help offset annual increases in operating expenses including wages, utilities, insurance, supplies, licensing costs, and food.



Where Little Cardinals
Grow & ♥ - Big Dreams Begin!



Hours of Operation



7:30 – 5:30

HOURS OF OPERATION

We are here to love, teach, and care for your little Cardinals!



DROP-OFF ENDS 9:30

To help your child start their day smoothly, please have them here by 9:30.



NO INS & OUTS

12:00 – 3:00

Quiet time! Rest time! Learning time! Please plan appointments and pick-ups outside of this window.



ARRIVAL

Children are to be welcomed at the door with a brief goodbye from parents and they need to be signed in on Brightwheel.



DEPARTURE

We offer curbside pick-up beginning at 4:00 PM. Children will automatically be dispatched out of Brightwheel at 5:30 PM.



LATE PICK-UP

We understand that life happens. A late fee of **\$2.00 per minute** will be charged after 5:30 PM.



AUTHORIZED PICK-UP

For your child's safety, children will only be released to authorized individuals listed on your enrollment form.



CLOSING TIME 5:30 PM

5:30 PM is our closing time. The center is closed and all children must be picked up by this time.



What to Bring

Everything your little Cardinal needs for a successful day.



EXTRA CLOTHES

Please provide 2 complete changes of seasonally appropriate clothing, including:

- ♥ Shirt
- ♥ Pants/shorts
- ♥ Socks
- ♥ Underwear (if potty training)



Please replace clothing as your child grows or as seasons change.



BLANKET

Each child should bring one small blanket for rest time.



Blankets remain at school throughout the week and are sent home every Friday for washing.



WATER BOTTLE

(May–August Only)

Children may bring a spill-proof water bottle during the summer months.

Please label it with your child's name.

Water bottles stay at school during the week.



NAP ITEMS

If your child uses a comfort item (small stuffed animal or lovey) for rest time, it may be brought for naps only.



DIAPERS & WIPES

Parents are responsible for providing:

- ♥ Diapers/Pull-Ups (Velcro side closure only)
- ♥ Wipes
- ♥ Diaper cream (with authorization form)

We will notify you through Brightwheel when supplies are running low.



DAILY FOLDER

Each child will receive an LCN folder for artwork, newsletters, and important papers.

Please check folders daily.



COAT HOOKS

Each child has their own personalized coat hook.

Please label jackets, coats, hats, and backpacks.



PLEASE LEAVE THESE AT HOME

- ✗ Toys
- ✗ Electronics
- ✗ Candy or gum
- ✗ Outside food or drinks
- ✗ Money
- ✗ Valuables
- ✗ Large backpacks (We provide storage, so cubbies and oversized backpacks are not needed.)



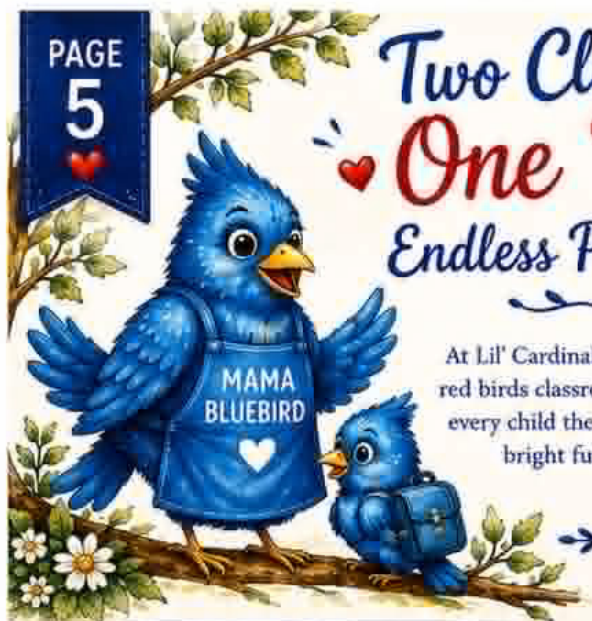
HELPFUL TIP

Labeling your child's belongings helps us return items quickly and keeps our classrooms organized.



Two Classrooms. One Nest. Endless Possibilities.

At Lil' Cardinals Nest, our blue birds and red birds classrooms work together to give every child the best start for today and a bright future for tomorrow.



BLUE BIRDS CLASSROOM

Our blue birds are building a strong foundation for a lifetime of learning.

- ♥ Exploring & discovering
- ♥ Building independence
- ♥ Learning through play
- ♥ Developing early language
- ♥ Making friends
- ♥ Growing confidence
- ♥ Having fun every day!



RED BIRDS CLASSROOM

Our red birds are preparing for kindergarten and the exciting road ahead.

- ♥ Preparing for Kindergarten
- ♥ Building leadership skills
- ♥ Strengthening independence
- ♥ Expanding vocabulary & thinking
- ♥ Solving problems
- ♥ Practicing kindness & respect
- ♥ Becoming confident leaders



ACTIVITIES WE LOVE



Story Time
& Books



Music &
Movement



Sensory
Play



Art &
Creativity



Outdoor
Adventures



Building
& Blocks



Circle Time
& Songs



Hands-On
Learning



LEARNING GOALS

We encourage curiosity, problem solving, and a love of learning every day!



INDEPENDENCE

We help children build confidence by doing things for themselves!



SOCIAL SKILLS

We learn, play, and grow together by sharing, listening, and showing kindness!



LOTS OF CARDINALS

Our classroom is filled with love, laughter, and lots of little Cardinals!



PREPARING FOR KINDERGARTEN

We build the skills and confidence needed for a successful start!



LEADERSHIP

We inspire children to be kind leaders and positive role models!



CONFIDENCE

We celebrate efforts, encourage progress, and cheer on every accomplishment!



SCHOOL READINESS

We focus on important skills to help children thrive in school and in life!



Different ages.
Different milestones.
Same love.
Same care.
Same nest.

WHERE LITTLE
CARDINALS GROW
& BIG DREAMS
BEGIN!

Meals, Snacks & Growing Healthy

NOURISHING GROWING CARDINALS

At Lil' Cardinals Nest, we believe *healthy* children learn best. Every day we provide nutritious meals and snacks through the CACFP Food Program, giving children the energy they need to play, learn, and grow.

Good food
fuels
big adventures
and bright
futures!



BREAKFAST

A healthy breakfast is served each morning.



LUNCH

Balanced lunches include:

- ♥ Protein
- ♥ Fruit
- ♥ Vegetables
- ♥ Grain
- ♥ Milk



AFTERNOON SNACK

A healthy snack is served every afternoon before pickup.



WATER BOTTLES WELCOME

Children may bring a labeled water bottle from May through August.

Water is encouraged throughout the day.



OUTSIDE FOOD

To keep everyone safe—Please do not send food, drinks, candy, or gum unless previously approved for a special event.



ALLERGIES

Please notify us of all allergies before your child's first day. We take food allergies very seriously.



SPECIAL DIETS

Medical diet substitutions require physician documentation. We gladly accommodate approved dietary needs.



We love to help every little cardinal grow strong, healthy, and ready to learn each and every day!



Keeping Our Little Cardinals Healthy

A healthy child is a happy child!

OUR GOAL

The health and well-being of every child is one of our highest priorities. Working together helps us maintain a safe, healthy environment where children can learn, grow, and play.



OUR ILLNESS POLICY

To help reduce the spread of illness, children must remain home until they have been:

- ♥ Fever-free without fever-reducing medication
- ♥ Vomit-free
- ♥ Diarrhea-free
- ♥ Free from other contagious symptoms

Children may return after **48 hours** OR after missing **two full days of scheduled care**, whichever comes first.

EXAMPLES:

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
			RETURN THURSDAY	

A child who attends Monday-Friday and goes home sick on Monday may return Thursday.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
	×	×		
			RETURN FRIDAY	

A child who attends only Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and becomes ill on Monday may return Friday after missing Wednesday's scheduled day of care.

Our illness policy is designed to protect all children, families, and staff by reducing the spread of contagious illnesses throughout the center.



CHICKENPOX & COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Families are asked to notify the center immediately if their child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease including:

- ♥ Chickenpox
- ♥ Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease
- ♥ RSV
- ♥ Influenza
- ♥ COVID-19
- ♥ Pink Eye
- ♥ Strep Throat
- ♥ or any other contagious illness

We will notify families when appropriate while protecting everyone's privacy.



MEDICATION

Prescription and over-the-counter medications may only be administered with:

- ♥ Parent authorization
- ♥ Original labeled container
- ♥ Physician instructions when required



FEVER

Children with a fever of **100.4°** or higher will be sent home and may return after meeting our illness policy.



VOMITING & DIARRHEA

Any episode of vomiting or diarrhea requires immediate pickup to help protect the health of all children.



EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Please keep all emergency contacts, phone numbers, and authorized pickup information updated in Brightwheel.

If we cannot reach a parent, emergency contacts will be called.



Healthy Children Learn Best!



♥ WASH HANDS



♥ GET REST



♥ EAT HEALTHY



♥ STAY HOME WHEN SICK

Safety First

Keeping Our Nest Safe & Secure

Your child's safety is our top priority.
We practice, plan, and prepare so we can
respond quickly and calmly in any situation.

SAFE NEST
HAPPY HEARTS
BRIGHT FUTURES



FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are practiced monthly and at various times throughout the day. Children are taught procedures in an age-appropriate way so they feel safe and confident.

- ♥ We know two safe ways out of every room.
- ♥ We practice calmly and quietly.
- ♥ Safety is our routine.



TORNADO

In the event of severe weather, we follow our tornado plan immediately.

- ♥ We listen for alerts.
- ♥ We go to our safe place.
- ♥ We practice drills so children know what to do.



EMERGENCY PLANS

We have detailed emergency plans for many situations including fire, severe weather, lockdown, power outages, medical emergencies, and more.

- ♥ Staff are trained and prepared.
- ♥ We review and update plans regularly.
- ♥ Children are kept calm and cared for.



AUTHORIZED PICK-UP

Your child's safety is our priority. Children will only be released to adults who are listed in Brightwheel and have valid photo ID.

- ♥ Please keep your pickup list updated.
- ♥ No child will be released to anyone not on the list.



RATIOS

We maintain state-required staff-to-child ratios at all times to ensure proper supervision and quality care.

- ♥ More eyes. More care.
- ♥ More peace of mind.



SECURITY

We take security seriously every single day.

- ♥ Doors are locked.
- ♥ Visitors are monitored.
- ♥ Classrooms are secure.
- ♥ Children are always supervised.



Working Together for a Safe & Happy Nest

Please help us by following safety guidelines, keeping information updated, and talking to us if you ever have questions or concerns.

Together, we protect today so our little cardinals can learn, grow, and soar!



WE PLAN ♥ WE PRACTICE ♥ WE CARE ♥ WE PROTECT

Inclement Weather

Keeping Our Nest Safe During Winter Weather



FIRST SNOW DAY

If local schools close due to snow or ice, Lil' Cardinals Nest will also close for that first weather event.



FUTURE WEATHER CLOSURES

After the first closure, all future weather-related closures will be determined at the Director's discretion based on:

- ♥ Road conditions
- ♥ Safety of our families
- ♥ Staff ability to travel safely
- ♥ Local weather conditions



WEATHER DAYS

Three weather closure days are already built into our annual tuition structure.

Because staffing, payroll, utilities, insurance, and operating expenses continue during closures

Weather-related closures are not credited or refunded.



COMMUNICATION

If we need to close or delay opening, families will be notified through:

- Brightwheel
- Facebook
- Email (when applicable)

Notifications will be sent as early as possible so families have time to make arrangements.



OUR PROMISE

Your family's safety—and the safety of our staff—will always come first.

Whenever possible, we will remain open to serve our families, but we will never ask our staff or families to travel in unsafe conditions.

Thank you for understanding that every weather decision is made with care.



SAFETY FIRST

FAMILY ALWAYS

WE'LL KEEP YOU UPDATED



Holidays & Closures

Time to Celebrate & Time to Recharge

We believe time with family is important for happy hearts and healthy minds.

Please review our holiday and closure information below.

FAMILY
TIME
MAKES THE
BEST MEMORIES

TOGETHER
WE GROW
STRONGER

PAID HOLIDAYS

- ♥ New Year's Day
- ♥ Memorial Day
- ♥ Juneteenth
- ♥ Independence Day (July 4th)
- ♥ Labor Day
- ♥ Thanksgiving Day
- ♥ Day After Thanksgiving
- ♥ Christmas Eve
- ♥ Christmas Day



Dates are subject to change with advance notice.

SUMMER BREAK

Lil' Cardinals Nest closes for one week each summer to allow our teachers and families time to rest and recharge.

Dates are announced well in advance each year.



CHRISTMAS BREAK

The center closes each year during Christmas.

Specific dates will be shared annually.



WEATHER CLOSURE DAYS

Three weather closure days are already built into our annual tuition.

If additional closures become necessary beyond those three days, families will be notified as outlined in our Incident Weather Policy (Page 13).



THANK YOU
for being part of
our nest family!

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN YOUR TUITION

We believe in keeping tuition simple and predictable. Your weekly tuition has been carefully calculated to include the cost of operating Lil' Cardinals Nest throughout the entire year—even during scheduled closures.

Your tuition already includes:

- ♥ All Paid Holidays
- ♥ One Week Summer Break
- ♥ Christmas Break
- ♥ Five School Personal Days
- ♥ Three Weather Closure Days
- ♥ Curriculum & Classroom Materials
- ♥ Meals & Snacks through CACFP
- ♥ Licensing, Insurance, Utilities, Cleaning Supplies, and Daily Operating Expenses

used for staff training, licensing requirements, continuing education, appointments, or other center needs

Our goal is to provide exceptional care

while maintaining a consistent tuition rate that families can easily budget for year-round.

FAMILY TIME SPECIAL MEMORIES STRONGER TOGETHER



Our Discipline Philosophy

At Lil' Cardinals Nest, our goal is to teach—not to punish.

Every child is learning important social and emotional skills, and we believe guidance, consistency, and clear expectations help children succeed.

POSITIVE GUIDANCE

Our teachers use:

- ♥ Reflection to appropriate choices
- ♥ Gentle reminders and encouragement
- ♥ Clear, consistent expectations
- ♥ Age-appropriate problem solving

Children are always treated with kindness, dignity, and respect.



WHEN ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE IS NEEDED

If a child continues to make unsafe or inappropriate choices after redirection:

- ♥ The child will be reminded of the expected behavior.
- ♥ If necessary, the child will be seated away from the group for an age-appropriate amount of time to calm, regroup, and reflect before returning to activities.
- ♥ Once ready, the child is welcomed back to the group with a fresh start.



PARENT PARTNERSHIP

If challenging behaviors become frequent or persistent, we will communicate with parents to work together on strategies that support the child's success both at home and at school.

In situations where a child's behavior becomes unsafe, significantly disrupts the classroom, or cannot be safely managed despite intervention, parents may be contacted and asked to pick up their child for the remainder of the day.



OUR PROMISE

Every child deserves another chance.

We believe children grow through love, consistency, encouragement, and teamwork between families and teachers.



Thank you for trusting us with your child. Together, we can help them become the best version of themselves!



OUR DISCIPLINE POLICY

REDIRECTION

We use redirection to guide children to make better choices and to help them understand what is expected.



FIRM UNDERSTANDING

Children are given firm understanding of our expectations and reminded of appropriate behavior.



TIME AWAY

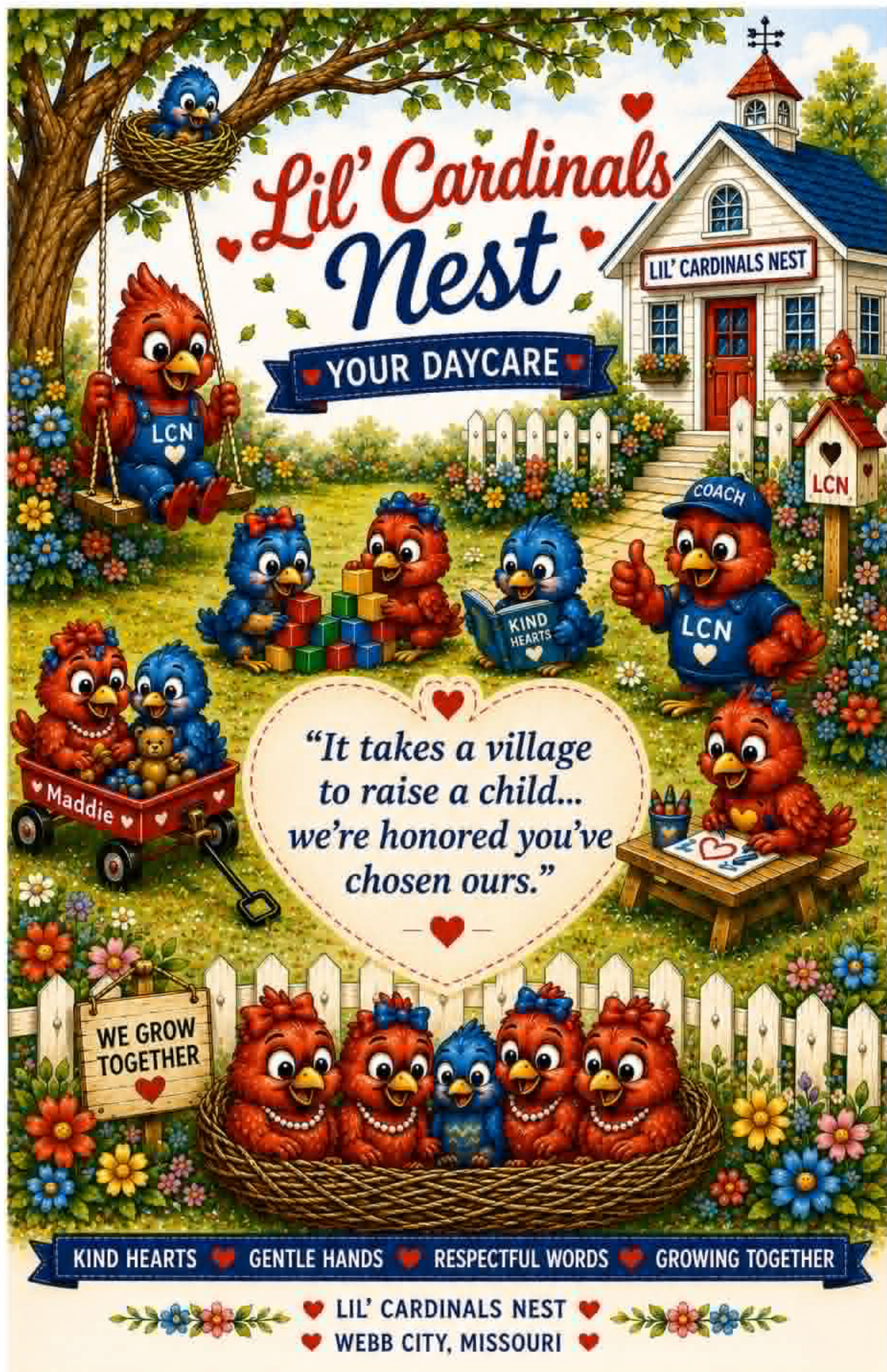
If needed, the child will be seated away from the group for an age-appropriate amount of time to calm down, regroup, and reflect before rejoining the group.



FAMILY CONTACT

If behaviors are persistent, parents will be called to work together on solutions.

If behaviors remain unsafe or unmanageable, the child may require to be picked up for the day.



Lil' Cardinals Nest

YOUR DAYCARE

"It takes a village to raise a child... we're honored you've chosen ours."

KIND HEARTS GENTLE HANDS RESPECTFUL WORDS GROWING TOGETHER

LIL' CARDINALS NEST
WEBB CITY, MISSOURI

Receipt of Handbook



Thank you for being
part of our nest! ♥

By signing below, you acknowledge
that you have received, read, and
understand the Lil' Cardinals Nest
Parent Handbook.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the
Lil' Cardinals Nest Parent Handbook and will
review it carefully.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____



POLICIES RECEIVED

I acknowledge that I have read and understand
the policies, procedures, and expectations
outlined in this handbook.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____



PARENT SIGNATURE

I agree to follow the guidelines and support
the policies as we work together for the
success of your child.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____



DIRECTOR SIGNATURE

I confirm that I have provided the Parent
Handbook to the family.

Director Signature: _____

Date: _____

♥ IMPORTANT NOTE ♥

This policy book can be changed or updated at any time. Things are subject to change
according to circumstance. Families will be notified of any changes in a timely manner.
The most current version will always be followed.



Thank you for trusting us with
your most precious little ones.
Together, we can help them grow
kind hearts, bright futures, and
a love for learning! ♥



KIND HEARTS ♥ GENTLE HANDS ♥ RESPECTFUL WORDS ♥ GROWING TOGETHER



At Lil' Cardinals Nest, we believe that open communication and a strong partnership between families and our center helps every child thrive.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read, understand, and agree to the policies and expectations outlined in this Parent Handbook.



TUITION AGREEMENT

I understand and agree to the weekly tuition rate, payment schedule, late fees, and all financial policies outlined in this handbook.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____



SIMPLE AGREEMENT

I understand the expectations, daily routines, guidelines, and policies outlined in this handbook.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____



PARENT SIGNATURE

By signing, I confirm that I have read, understand, and agree to follow the policies and procedures of Lil' Cardinals Nest.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____



DIRECTOR SIGNATURE

I confirm that I have reviewed this handbook with the family.

Director Signature: _____

Date: _____



DATE

The date this agreement is completed.

Date: _____



Thank you for trusting us with your most precious little ones. Together, we can help them grow kind hearts, bright futures, and a love for learning! ♥

KIND HEARTS ♥ GENTLE HANDS ♥ RESPECTFUL WORDS ♥ GROWING TOGETHER