

Lighthouse Center for Infants

Parent Handbook

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Revision Date: February 2024

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Welcome to the Lighthouse Center for Infants

Welcome to the Lighthouse Center for Infants! Choosing a center for your child is a very important decision, and we are pleased that you have chosen LCI to care for your very precious child and look forward to participating with you and your child.

Our Goal

The goal of the Lighthouse Center for Infants is to express the love, care and compassion of Jesus Christ to all as we endeavor to provide developmentally appropriate and excellent quality care for the infants and toddlers (ages 12 weeks to 24 months) assigned to our care. Employees of LCI strive to exemplify 1 Corinthians 16:14 “Do everything in Love” and Colossians 3:17 “and whatever you do whether in word or deed. Do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Mission Statement

Our mission is to use Holy Scripture and Early Childhood Practices to promote and enhance each child’s individual development. We want to demonstrate the Love of Christ while assuring the parents peace of mind in the care and services we render. LCI provides a safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate program which fosters active development supporting the whole child. We strive to accommodate each child’s individual rate of development in a child friendly environment.

Our Philosophy

LCI sees each child as an individual maturing at his/her own rate, and it is our goal to value and encourage each child as they grow and develop physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. There is much for children to learn and discover in the world around us and with God’s help, we work together to stimulate and challenge children’s interest and curiosity! We accept the challenges and privileges of facilitating a child’s growth and in discovering God’s word as we partner with parents in every aspect of their child’s maturation and development.

We believe that as parents, you are responsible for the training of your child. Our desire is to partner with you! Each staff member has a desire to participate in the physical, cognitive, and emotional development of your child.

Our Staff Affiliation and Belief Statement

The LCI is affiliated with the Lighthouse Church located at 1220 20th St. in Santa Monica. As members of The Lighthouse Church: We are a Bible-believing, Jesus-centered, Spirit-filled, family-focused Christian Fellowship Ministries Foursquare Gospel Church and School.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

The Lighthouse Center for Infants admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students in the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship, loan programs, athletic and other school administered programs.

Admission Procedures

The following information is the procedures and guidelines set forth for the safety and successful operation of our program. Please read the information, familiarize yourself with our policies and please adhere to the LCI policies.

Upon admission to the center, you must read the parent handbook, sign, date and return all appropriate forms to the director. All forms must be completed and the physician's report clearly filled out with the child's immunization record and the physician's signature. No child will be enrolled in LCI without all required immunizations or a plan by a licensed Physician for fulfilling immunization requirements. Director and parents will review the Individual Care Plan and Family Information Form to develop a need and service plan for each child before their first day. Failure to provide all needed forms within the first 30 days of enrollment will cause a termination to your contract.

Discipline

There is absolutely no physical discipline of any kind at Lighthouse Center for Infants. The staff is trained to redirect, positive role modeling, pray, and help children with problem solving skills. At no time will a child be confined to a crib, high chair or playpen, or any other furniture or equipment as a form of discipline. We believe discipline is primarily the responsibility of the parents and we expect the parents to cooperate with the school in this matter. If a disciplinary challenge arises with a child, the LCI policy is to inform the parent(s) promptly and work together with parents to develop a plan to address the behavior.

At no time are parents permitted to physically discipline their child on the premise, also, parents are ***not permitted*** to verbally or physically correct ***any child*** other than their own at any time. If you see a child misbehaving, allow our teachers to take care of the situation or you may bring the incident to a teacher's attention. Please be careful what you say to a child (including your own) not to embarrass or make comparisons with other children. If there is violation of this policy it will lead to termination of your child's enrollment at LCI, this includes but is not limited to: name calling/bullying of the child and/or family, placing your hands on another child, not allowing staff to intervene in a situation of misbehavior.

Baby sitting

We have a **no babysitting policy** for staff members with families currently enrolled at our school. However, during the "weeks" we are closed, the teachers may be asked to take care of your child if they are available. If you are in need of a babysitter outside of our hours of operation we do provide a list of Lighthouse Christian Academy students and alumni that may watch your child at your arrangement.

Tuition and Fees

Monthly Tuition

Payments will be made online payment through Brightwheel: Excessive late payments can result in termination of your child's enrollment.

Registration fee - \$200.00

Tuition - \$2500.00

Your enrollment contract runs month to month (the 1st of the month to the last day of the month); you are not "locked" in for six months/year. Tuition is due on the 1st of every month. Full payments are to be made in a timely manner, there is a five-day grace period. A \$25.00 dollar late fee will be added if tuition is not paid within that grace period. Continued late payment can result in the termination of your child care contract with LCI.

If you find that you are no longer in need of childcare for your child due to life changes, a full one contract month's notice is REQUIRED. If given less than one month's notice you will be responsible to pay for the next month in full: i.e. If you wish for your child's last day to be August 1st, notice must be given no later than July 1st. If your child's last day will fall in the middle of the month, notice must still be given on the first of the previous month; i.e. if you want your child's last day to be August 17th, notice must still be given of the 1st of July since our admissions contracts run on the 1st to 30th basis. This gives us ample time to find a new family to fill our opening. No notice is required for the month your child ages out of our program.

Subsidized families are required to pay a co-payment if the subsidy does not pay the entire fee for monthly tuition, regardless of the enrolled program.

Prorated Tuition: Full tuition payment is due each month regardless of absences, personal or school holidays, however; there are a few exceptions. If your child starts at LCI in the middle of the month their tuition will be prorated and adjusted accordingly. If your child's last day falls in the middle of the month, and you have given a written notice by the first of the previous month, your tuition will be prorated for the month that your child is leaving.

Holidays: Our center is affiliated with The Lighthouse School in Santa Monica, therefore, we will observe the same holiday schedule unless otherwise posted. The center will be closed the following days:

New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr., Lighthouse Oceanside Marrieds Retreat, Presidents Day, Good Friday, Easter Week, June Bible Conference Week, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Lighthouse Pismo Marrieds Retreat, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving week, and the last 2 weeks of the year to include Christmas and New Years.

Hours of Operation: The Lighthouse Center for Infants (ages 12 weeks to 24 months) is open 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Dropping off your child before, or picking them up after hours is not permitted. You will be charged an additional \$1.00 for every minute late. If the parent is not able to pay the late fee at that time, the fee will be due the following day. Excessive early drop off/late pickup can result in termination of your child's enrollment.

What To Expect After Enrollment:

Your Child's First Week: Leaving your child in our center may be hard for both of you. It is our hope that you have chosen our center because you have faith and trust in our ability to nurture and care for your child. That being said, we at LCI recommend that you and your child take a week to adjust to this new part of your lives. It is our recommendation that the first week should follow this pattern:

1. **Monday:** Both child and parent stay in the center for about an hour to simply be in the environment and become familiar with staff as well as go over any questions they may have about paperwork and what to expect in the coming days.
2. **Tuesday:** Both child and parent stay in the center for about an hour and a half to simply be in the environment and become familiar with staff.
3. **Wednesday:** Parents will sign in and drop off their child for no more than 3 hours. *All paperwork is due this day.*
4. **Thursday:** The child is dropped off at LCI for half a day.
5. **Friday:** The child is able to stay for the whole day.

This is a very important time for your child and you as parents to make attachments to the teachers thus developing the foundation of a trusting relationship. Transitions may vary depending on the child's disposition. A transition can be difficult if a parent is too anxious and not ready for their child to be at daycare, or if there is no consistency between the teacher and parent. Occasionally a child is unable to adjust to the center; if after a reasonable period of time the child or parent(s) is unable to adjust, we reserve the right to request the withdrawal of the child.

Please bring the following items for your child's first day at our center: formula/breast milk, 2 clean bottles, if applicable baby's food/snacks, at least two complete changes of clothing, diapers, and creams/lotions. Please label your child's belongings

Open Door Policy: We maintain an open door policy between the hours of 8am to 1pm. If at any time you would like to come observe your child at the center we invite you to do so, please message us on Brightwheel so we can prepare a space for you and your child to bond without the disruption of other friends. Please also be sure your child has adjusted to their new environment and friends. During your time in the center please be respectful and kind to others present, remember to not pick up other children and to not correct/discipline other children and staff; if you have an issue please bring it to the attention of the director present. Failure to be kind and respectful to all participating parties at LCI will result in the termination of your child's enrollment.

Sign In and Out: All parent's and authorized persons are required by state law to accompany their child in the center and pick them up. Please make sure that a staff member is aware of your entrance and exit from the premises. State law requires that you and any authorized person (18 years or older) sign your child in and out of the center. This must be done with a legal signature, *no initials, please*. These steps are necessary for the protection of all children in attendance. If you are adding someone new to your pick-up list please notify the director. If someone other than the persons listed on your release card is to pick up your child, it must be done in writing by hand/email. Any person authorized must verify their identity to a staff member before the child is released to them. Please be sure to keep home address and cell/home/work phone numbers up to date so that we are able to contact you at any time.

Absences: It would be greatly appreciated if you call/message to notify us if your child is ill and unable to attend. Any child absent three consecutive days must have a doctor's note stating the child is okay to return to the center. Your tuition and fees pay for the direct cost of operations; it is not our policy to reimburse or otherwise provide credit for absences. Continued, unexplained absences can result in the termination of your child's enrollment.

Clothing: Children need to be dressed appropriately for active play and weather. Remember we encourage children to engage in many activities including paint, water, sand etc., so please provide up to 3 complete sets of extra clothes so we can change them when necessary. If your child is being potty trained, clothing that is easy for them to put on will aid in their mastery of using the toilet and enhance their sense of accomplishment. To ensure your child's clothing does not get mixed with another child's, please be sure to label all clothing.

Toilet Training: We encourage children to use the toilet when they are developmentally ready. The staff will *not* push a child to use the toilet, however we will watch for signs of readiness and work with the parent to best support this process. Parents and staff will develop a plan that best suits the child.

Toys: Our center provides a wide variety of age appropriate toys your child should not need to bring toys from home. However if your child does bring a toy or other item that will make transition to the center easier, please be sure that all items are labeled with your child's name. We are not responsible for lost or broken items.

Naps: Naps are provided based on each child's individual needs for rest rather than a set schedule; unless a set schedule is provided by the parent. Teachers will watch each child closely for signs of tiredness and will respond to every infant's unique need for calming and comforting. All sheets will be provided by LCI; all sheets will be changed weekly or when soiled.

Diapering: All children will be checked a minimum of every two hours. All children's diapers will be changed as soon as the teacher/caregiver is aware that they are soiled or wet. Parents are to provide all diapers, creams and lotions needed for your child's specific diapering needs.

Cause for Termination: Lighthouse Center for infants reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment if the director and staff feel the center is not a good fit for the child or family. This list includes but is not limited to the reasons why your child's contract can be terminated from LCI: failure to provide all needed forms within the first 30 days of enrollment, excessive early drop off or late pickup, and continued late payment. LCI has a strict no bullying policy; failure to be kind and respectful to all participating parties at LCI examples include name calling/bullying of the child, their family and/or staff, not allowing staff to intervene in a situation of misbehavior or placing your hands on another child; will lead to immediate termination of your child's enrollment.

Feeding and Storage of Bottles and Solid Foods:

Feeding

An individual feeding plan will be developed for each child at time of enrollment and updated at least every 4 months. Because of the wide variety of formulas and baby food available and each parent's personal preferences; parents will provide formula, breast milk, cereal, and/or finger food for those children who are eating solid food. All food, bottles, and breast milk will be labeled with each child's name and properly stored upon arrival at school. Staff will prepare breastmilk, formula, cereal, or food according to the package directions and in accordance with LCI infant feeding policies. LCI will provide two age appropriate, nutritious snacks for those children who are eating solid foods. Snack schedules are posted in the kitchen and available at need.

LCI policy is to feed an infant based on his/her cues unless the child's parent/guardian and/or medical provider should provide written instructions otherwise. Responding to the infant's feeding cues provides feelings of trust and security, meeting the nutritional and emotional needs of the infant. Cues such as turning away from the nipple, increased attention to surroundings, and closed mouth, are all indications of satiation. Feeding time is a social occasion, and is an excellent time to build a close relationship with an infant. Caregivers will sit at eye level, make eye contact, and communicate with the baby while feeding. Whenever possible, the same caregiver will feed an infant for most of or all of that infant's feedings. When the caregiver is consistent, she is more likely to understand the infant and know how to respond appropriately.

Age-appropriate solid foods may be introduced no sooner than when the child has reached the age of four months, but preferably six months and as indicated by the individual child's nutritional and developmental needs.

Storage of Food and Bottles: Each child has an individual basket in the refrigerator and on our counter, labeled with their full name solely for the purpose of his or her food and bottle storage.

Nursing Mothers: For those mothers who are breastfeeding and have the ability to come to the center to feed their child, a comfortable area is provided in the center for this purpose.

Breast Milk Precautions: Breast milk is a body fluid and should be treated as such. Breast milk spills will be cleaned up like any other body fluid:

- Spills wiped up wearing disposable gloves.
- Area cleaned with hydrogen peroxide

A child should never drink another child's breast milk: If this should happen, the incident will be taken seriously. Although the risk of any illness being transmitted is very small, should it occur, proceed as follows:

- Parent/guardian of the child given the wrong bottle will be informed that the child drank another child's breast milk.
- The parent/guardian will be asked to notify his or her child's physician immediately.
- The mother whose milk was consumed will be informed about the switch and asked: how the milk was handled before it was brought to the center and if she would be willing to share any pertinent medical information or be tested for any communicable illnesses
- Is she willing to allow a confidential call between her doctor and the other child's pediatrician

Preparing and Feeding an Infant a Bottle: LCI's procedures for storing bottles of formula/breast milk, preparing and warming a bottle for feeding are as follows. Breastmilk is a bodily fluid and will be handled based on how it is received. If received frozen, it will be dethawed in warm water, once fully dethawed it will be transferred to the child's bottle and continued to be heated to the desired temperature. If breastmilk is received thawed we will transfer to a bottle if necessary and warm to the needed temperature.

Formula can be brought in ready to feed concentrations, and will be heated as necessary. Powdered formula is welcomed and we will use our filtered water to prepare a room temperature bottle following the instructions on the label in the desired amount stated by the parent. Only the scoop that comes with the can of formula will be used for measuring purposes as these may vary between manufacturers and products.

Infants younger than 12 months will not be fed cow's milk; and only whole milk will be fed to children between 12 to 24 months of age whose parent has given consent when milk is a part of the daily snack. No other milk products, i.e., skim milk, milk containing 1% or 2% butterfat or reconstituted nonfat dry milk will be fed to any child unless under the direction of the parent and the child's health care provider.

Teachers will refrigerate bottles of premade formula and breastmilk immediately. Separate storage bins for each infant's feedings are provided and clearly labeled with the child's full name.

Snacks: LCI will provide two snacks a day for those children that are eating solid food. Morning snacks will be served at 9am. The afternoon snack will be served at 2pm unless children indicate they are hungry earlier. LCI will provide a variety of fresh healthy finger foods. We serve whole milk and water to drink.

Health and Safety Policies and Procedures:

Health Check: A health check will be done upon each child's arrival. This health check is to ensure that each child is healthy and ready for the day's activities. If any illness is recognized at that time or after, to ensure the health and safety of all the children, the parents will need to retrieve their child from the center in a timely manner.

Illness: Our priority at Lighthouse Center for Infants is providing a healthy, safe environment for all children. Lighthouse Center for Infants reserves the right to make final determinations of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from your child's pediatrician's office stating the child is not contagious. A child who becomes ill while at Lighthouse Center for Infants must be removed from the classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable diseases; the first contact parent will be called and it is required for them (or an approved pickup) to come and retrieve your child within the hour.

Please notify the center if you or your child is exposed to a contagious disease.

Please be sure that all phone numbers on identification and emergency forms are current. If we cannot contact a parent we will call the persons listed on the identification and emergency list in the order in which they appear.

Children will be sent home if any of the following is experienced: an illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by staff); that results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in the center and/or a child experiencing any of the following conditions:

- **Blood in stools:** not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stool. Your child may return when their pediatrician has given a written note clearing the child of illness.
- **Chicken pox:** Child may not return until all sores have dried and crusted, usually 6 days, note clearing the child from illness is required from the child's physician.
- **Coronavirus:** Depending on yours and your child's vaccination status a plan will be made; average wait to return is 5 days with no symptoms and 10 days with symptoms.
- **Diarrhea:** (not associated with diet changes or medications) Child may not return until diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not to be infectious by your child's pediatrician.

- **Fever:** Once the child's temperature has reached 100 or more, the child may not return to school until fever free for 48 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- **Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease:** Child may not return until all sores have dried and crusted, up to 10 days, note clearing the child from illness is required from the child's physician.
- **Head lice:** Child may not return until after treatment has been completed.
- **Hepatitis A virus:** Child may not return until after 1 week since onset of illness, note clearing the child from illness is required from the child's physician.
- **Herpes simplex:** With uncontrolled drooling, note required from child's physician stating that the simplex is not contagious.
- **Impetigo:** Child may not return until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- **Measles:** Child may not return until 4 days after onset of rash, note clearing the child from sickness is required from the child's physician stating that the illness is no longer contagious.
- **Mouth sores with drooling:** Child may not return until sores have closed, unless the child's physician determines the sores are not contagious.
- **Mumps:** Child may not return until 9 days after the onset of symptoms, a note clearing the child from illness is required from the child's physician.
- **Persistent abdominal pain:** That continues more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness. A note clearing the child of illness is required from their physician.
- **Pertussis:** Child may not return until after 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed, a note clearing the child from illness is required from the child's physician.
- **Pink eye:** Also known as conjunctivitis, your child may not return until after treatment has been initiated. A note clearing the child of illness is required from their physician.
- **Rabella:** Child may not return until after 6 days of the onset of rash, a note clearing the child from illness is required from the child's physician.
- **Rash with fever/behavior change:** Child may not return until a physician determines these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
- **RSV:** Child may not return until after 10 days, or if their physician releases them sooner.
- **Scabies:** Child may not return until after treatment has been completed, a note clearing the child from illness is required from the child's physician.
- **Signs/symptoms of severe illness:** This includes: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing. A note clearing the child of illness is appreciated but not required.

- **Strep throat:** Child may not return until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and their fever ended for 48 hours.
- **Tuberculosis:** Child may not return until their healthcare provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care.
- **Unspecified respiratory tract illness:** Child may return once their physician clears them of illness.
- **Vomiting:** Child may not return until vomiting resolves for 24 hours or until a healthcare provider determines the cause for the vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration

Medications: We will not administer medication of any kind (over the counter or prescription) **without** a written consent form completed, signed and dated by parents. All prescription medication must be in the original bottle, package or container with the prescription clearly labeled with the child’s name and the dosage. Parents must give all medications to the director or a teacher. ***Do not leave medication in a child’s diaper bag or cubby.***

Items to bring to Center:

Please label, label, label, everything with your child’s name! We are not responsible for children’s items. We do our best to keep children’s belongings in their cubbies, and items can be misplaced, but generally show up the next day.

Items to bring daily

- Childs food
- Extra clothes
- Shoes
- Jacket

Items to leave at center

- Baby bottles
- Water bottle
- Sleep sack
- Sunscreen/Sun hat

- Extra clothes

Items to bring as needed:

- Diapers
- Wipes (if desired)
- Diaper creams
- Extra clothe

Parent Signature(s)

Mother/Guardian Signature Date:

I _____ verify that I have read and understand the Lighthouse Center for Infants Parent Handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures therein. _____

Father/Guardian Signature Date:

I _____ verify that I have read, understand the Lighthouse Center for Infants Parent Handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures therein. _____

A copy of this will be kept in the child file.