



What's Changed July 2026

This handbook is still your guide to life at The Little Nest. A few details have changed since it was written — where they differ, the notes below apply.

● Our Rooms

Creche 7 months – 2 years | **Toddlers** 2 – 3 years | **Pre-K** 4 – 5 years

These replace the age ranges on page 5. Placement also depends on your child's readiness, and we always talk it through with you first.

● Parent Communication — our own Parent Portal

We no longer use StoryPark or Skoolbag (page 8). We have built **The Little Nest Parent Portal** — our own secure app, made for our families.

Daily updates, photos, notices, newsletters and direct messaging with your child's teacher, all in one place, in English and Kiswahili.

portal.thelittlenest-tz.com

● Late Pickup Fee

The late pickup fee (page 10) is now **TZS 2,500 (approx. USD 1.50) per half hour, per child**, charged when a child is collected after closing time.

If you know you are going to be delayed, please call us. We will settle your child and let them know you are on your way.

● Birthdays and Food

We love celebrating birthdays with your child. **Please speak with your child's teacher or the Centre Manager before bringing any food into the school**, including birthday treats.

Some of our children have allergies, so a quick word beforehand lets us plan the celebration and keep every child safe. This replaces the guidance on pages 13 and 14.

● A small correction

The Little Nest Early Years Regio Emilia Approach should read **The Reggio Emilia Approach** portal.thelittlenest-tz.com

www.thelittlenest-tz.com



Parent Handbook





WELCOME TO THE LITTLE NEST.

We welcome you and your children to what we trust will be an extension of your home. By working together we will provide an environment that promotes quality care and education to the individual child. If you need help understanding this Handbook in your preferred language, please let us know and we will try our best to assist.



The Little Nest was launched in 2020 to provide families with a new standard of early childhood experiences and education. Our School is founded upon a world-class educational philosophy and principles of 'Reggio Emilia'. Reggio Emilia is to child care what Leonardo Da Vinci is to art, Prada is to fashion and Maserati is to motor vehicles. Italy is a world leader in many industries and childhood education is no exception. The Reggio Emilia Approach is named after the Italian city itself and creates an environment for children here they are encouraged to create, trust, explore, discover and excel.

At The Little Nest we have taken the Reggio Emilia philosophies and adapted them to suit the Tanzanians climate and culture. Our Centre is warm with natural environments, utilizing premium finishes and textures, which are designed to be beautiful external extensions of your own home environment. Your child will be as comfortable and confident in our schools as they are in their own home. Regardless of whether you work full time or choose The Little Nest purely for the benefits of education and socialization, we aim to address the ever-changing needs of the modern family.

OUR ENVIRONMENT

At the Little Nest, we understand that you, as parents take a huge amount of pride in your homes to create a modern, warm and safe environment for your family, so it is only natural you seek the same standard from your chosen school. Your child's transition from home to The Little Nest should be seamless and it should feel like a home away from home where your child(ren) is comfortable, happy and inspired.

The Little Nest has been selected and carefully adapted to meet our philosophies and the highest expectations. Each room has been meticulously planned and we use premium fixtures and finishes with a coordinated choice of textures and natural tones. Spaces are filled with light and we avoid heavy materials, carpets or synthetic materials and offer up a wide range of toys, games and resources to assist in your child's learning. Children are encouraged to flow freely between the indoor and outdoor learning environments which include vegetable patches, relaxation spaces, areas to grow and care for living things, sand, a mud kitchen and carefully considered spaces. Mirrors are used to enable children to see things from different angles and spaces are adapted to suit the age group including babies, pre-kinder and kindergarten.

At the Little Nest we believe art and encouraging self-expression to be paramount to a child's development. Art is about enjoyment just as much as participation and pieces are displayed around the school, giving fellow students and families a chance to enjoy the artwork from students of all ages.

The Little Nest believes that regular communication between parents/ carers and the school is paramount to helping the children feel settled and happy. The Little Nest provides parents with the opportunity to engage and enjoy the environment, just as much as your children.

OUR CARERS

Every parent understands how difficult it is to entrust the care of your child to others and that is why the Little Nest employ the best carers and educators in the industry.

All the care educators here at Little Nest are dedicated to providing exceptional care and education. All interactions and learning takes place in a safe environment where children are encouraged to develop friendships, trusted bonds and are treated to a world of creative exploration.

All educators hold a diploma or certificate in Early Years or teaching and are encouraged to continually research the best practice in early education, to ensure we are offering an educational program that is of the highest standards.

STAFFING STRUCTURE

The Executive Centre Manager (ECM) is responsible for ensuring the smooth day to day running of the school and ensures that we are meeting and exceeding the local standards, regulations and laws. The ECM is responsible for responding to any requests and concerns regarding the centre such as enrolments, fees and staffing. Our ECM is diploma trained (or equivalent) and has an up to date first aid certificate. The Room Teacher is responsible for ensuring all children are provided with high quality education incorporating the Early Years Learning

Framework (EYLF) and the Reggio Emilia Approach. The room teacher is involved in researching best practice in early years education ensuring ongoing and valuable improvements within the school. All room teachers are diploma trained (or teacher trained) and have up to date first aid training.

Each room has a Room Assistant who assists the room teacher in creating a magical environment where all children feel safe and have all the resources and care they need to develop and shine.

Our cook is there to provide delicious, home cooked meals to your children and holds a food handling certificate.



PHILOSOPHY

At The Little Nest Years, our values and ethos are bound by a passion to provide young minds with the ability, means and skills to enable and sustain future growth and development. Our philosophy towards early education can be summed up as the following:

Our role as educators is to provide the environment and the educational support that will enable each child to both consolidate and develop further skills. Our environment is carefully designed to allow for individual, small group and large group work. Materials are arranged in an ordered and accessible manner, to allow the children to focus on the task at hand and engage with peers.

We build close relationships with families and encourage a high degree of involvement and participation.

Documentation enables parents to share in our observations of the children and follow the daily program.

All The Little Nest educators are provided with professional development opportunities. At The Little Nest we believe in creating a community of learners and as such acknowledge that learning is ongoing and lifelong.

OUR BELIEFS

We are inspired by the early childhood program developed in Italy known as 'Reggio Emilia', The Reggio Errata Approach is internationally recognized for the value it places on the education and care of children. A key principle of the 'Reggio Approach' is the understanding, that each child is capable and competent. Our role is to provide the materials, the environment and the educational support that will enable each child to both consolidate and to develop further skills.



1. We believe every child is an individual and has the right to make choices in regards to their learning.
2. We believe every child should feel a strong sense of well-being.
3. We believe that the environment should reflect our love of nature and our views on sustainability.
4. We believe that the environment is the 'third teacher and therefore it is essential that we set up the environment in a manner, that encourages engagement and support.
5. We believe in building relationships with families and encouraging a high degree of involvement and participation.
6. We believe the early years are the foundation years and by providing meaningful learning experiences we can nurture a love of learning.
7. We believe that learning is ongoing, and we constantly seek to develop our own knowledge and thereby offer richer experiences to the children in our care.

LEARNING

Here at The Little Nest we provide afterschool, weekend and holiday programs for school aged children. This may include indoor and outdoor play, games, music, arts, crafts and more. Nursery/Creche (Babies from 1 year)

At the Little Nest a great deal of attention is placed on our programs for babies. We understand and value the special level of trust placed in us by families and take extreme care when looking after every young child. Our carers demonstrate a highly nurturing personality plus extensive knowledge and are carefully chosen specifically for this age group.

Our program is developed to cater to your baby's unique patterns for play, feeding and sleeping. We use this as a guide to introduce daily activities that will spark their interest and promote healthy brain development. Lots of personal attention and interaction from our carers will also help to develop basic cognitive and social skills. Every activity carried out with your baby is designed to develop their physical strength and their hand-eye coordination, develop their senses and spatial orientation: develop skills in an environment rich with sights and sounds: and encourage social-emotional interaction, which helps to develop their communication skills.

Toddlers (2 to 3 Years of Age)

The Little Nest programs for toddlers teach the value of sharing and cooperation through group play. Children are encouraged to develop friendships and gain confidence as they interact with others plus we aim to identify and encourage every child's own unique set of skills and interests.

Our learning areas are focused on dramatic play, creative arts, language and sensory exploration whilst we promote social skill development through whole group instruction. We monitor their progress via observation-based assessments and it is always a delight to witness their rapidly developing skills, physical abilities and personalities. This is an important time in your child's life and regular communication with every parent is constantly maintained.

Pre-Kinder (Children from 3 to 5 Years of Age)

Between the ages of three and five are some of the most exciting years in your child's life. This is when their curiosity peaks and they absorb information around them like a sponge. They are interacting more with others and are willing to tackle complex ideas.

At The Little Nest Early School our curriculum is tailored to specifically meet these growing needs and encourage qualitative learning whilst laying down strong foundations which are so vital at this age. Each day has more structure and routine, and every child's progress is monitored by observation-based assessment and documentation. In addition, a portfolio of work is compiled for every child to capture their unique creativity and expression whilst regular communication is maintained to keep parents informed about the progress of your child's day.

CONSTANT COMMUNICATION IS MAINTAINED AND NURTURED WITH PARENTS AT ALL TIMES
DURING THIS VERY IMPORTANT TIME IN YOUR FAMILY AND CHILD'S LIFE



UNDERSTANDING REGGIO EMILIA

The Little Nest are inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach to early childhood education.

The Reggio Emilia Approach was developed in Italy post World War II and is at the forefront of early learning. As an evolving philosophy, it bears influences of Montessori, Piaget, Vygotsky and American theorists such as Bruner and Gardner and focuses on elements that educators know make sense.

The Reggio Emilia Approach derives its name from its birthplace and was developed by a teacher named Loris Malaguzzi as a means of rebuilding a community after the devastating effects of World War II. It was an approach that saw the importance of cultivating young minds today as investments for the future and has gained worldwide recognition as best practice for its unique take on early childhood education as an extension of natural curiosity.

It fosters the belief that the child, parent, community and natural environment are all essential to the learning process. The Reggio Emilia Approach has strong roots within nature and focuses on a learning environment enriched with creative and sensory experiences as avenues for growth allowing every child to reach their true potential.

The Reggio Emilia Approach has been adopted in countless cities throughout the world from New York to London and will provide the very best learning experiences for your child here in Arusha.

“Children desire to acquire knowledge and have much capacity for curiosity and amazement”

Loris Malaguzzi

PARENT COMMUNICATION

At the Little Nest we feel communication is very important. We use three great communication tools to keep our families updated all the time. This includes:

StoryPark

1. Fully customizable it is an easy and convenient way for teachers, parents and carers to share about the child's day and learning and keep regular communication.
2. Enhance Communication, receiving updates about your child and a place where parents can add comments.
3. Group messages, keeping up to date with notices, events, newsletters and daily diaries.
4. Direct messaging is possible between parents and staff.
5. Capturing and sharing learning as it happens through stories, photos and videos.
6. Easy way to capture a child's learning journey and interests.
7. With a unique child centered design even the child's voice can be captured and recorded. The child will be able to revisit the app even after they leave the school.

Skoolbag

Skoolbag provides families with an easy way to tell you everything you need to know, and it provides you with the most convenient way to receive school notifications.

No more lost paper in your child's bags! Newsletters, notices and alerts are communicated directly to your smartphone through the Skoolbag school Mobile App. Skoolbag is school Mobile App that communicates directly with iPhone, iPad, Android, and Windows Phones devices.

After you add the Skoolbag Mobile App to your phone, you can view our documents and notifications.

Skoolbag offers:

1. Permission notes
2. Unlimited free instant Push message Notifications (push anything instantly)
3. Unlimited Push message categories for parents to subscribe to
4. Alerts
5. Events
6. News
7. Newsletters
8. Information pages and much more.

www.skoolbag.com.au

FAMILY PARTICIPATION

At The Little Nest, families take an active role in the education of every child. Constant communication between the families, educators and children is fundamental to the security and happiness of your child and creates a rich social environment for everyone involved.

Documenting the entire learning process is also paramount and guarantees families are aware of the progress of their child over time and are able to assist educators in meeting each child's needs.

As early childhood educators, The Little Nest understands the pivotal role that a family plays in creating positive relationships between the child and school.

Families are viewed as 'partners' and we believe we have a shared goal in educating the children.

Parents and siblings will become closely acquainted with our schools and we encourage involvement through family events, visible documentation and providing a warm and nurturing environment and sharing daily experiences with families.

Participation from parents is always encouraged and sends strong messages to your child that you support them and are part of the care environment.

There are many ways to participate and the school will accommodate your availability wherever possible. Some opportunities to get involved include:

1. Participation in excursions;
2. Assistance with fund raising;
3. Attending special activities and functions at the school;
4. Volunteering;
5. Offering suggestions for programming;
6. Providing feedback about our services.

In addition, a parent meeting is held twice a year. These occasions are a wonderful opportunity to inform you of what is happening at The Little Nest Day, to speak with you about the services your family is receiving and provides a chance for you to stay up to date with your child's developmental progress. You will be advised with advanced notice when a parent meeting is scheduled and we welcome your participation.

The Little Nest operates with an 'open door policy' and parents, families and guardians are always welcome at our schools at all times.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Here at The Little Nest we aim to be inclusive of all children regardless of their abilities. Before enrolling your child at The Little Nest, it is important to discuss any special individual needs your child might have and how they can be met, including any cultural requirements for your child.

Planning for children with special needs requires careful thought and often the assistance of specialists where possible. It is important to know how your child's specific needs may affect learning and participation in activities. This information will help us to meet the needs of your child and seek assistance from specialist and support workers if or as required.

ENROLMENT AND PRIVACY

We understand time is precious for modern families and to make the process as simple and convenient for you as possible.

You are required to provide your most up-to-date contact details and enrolment preferences. When a vacancy arises you will be contacted by The Little Nest with an offer of placement.

Please note all enrolments must be completed in person as it is an important requirement of our Schools that we have the opportunity to meet all families and children prior to a confirmation of a placement.

The Executive Centre Manager will require a copy of your child's original birth certificate, passport photos and immunization records at the time of enrolment. Any information provided as part of the enrolment process is strictly confidential and is never revealed to people or organizations outside of The Little Nest without parent permission in writing. The only time an exception is made is if legal documentation is provided instructing us otherwise.

A parent may view all written observations and records relating to your child at any time.

FEES & PAYMENTS

Payment is required in advance either termly or yearly. If paying yearly there will be a discount.

If you fall behind in your payments your child may risk losing their place at The Little Nest. The deadline for payment is before the start day of the next term if this deadline is missed and you have fallen behind on your payments, your child may not be able to come to school until all outstanding payments have been made.

A terms notice is required for any cancellation or changes to the contracted days.

Late Pickup Fees

Parents and guardians are asked for co-operation in dropping off and collecting children within our operating hours.

If at any time you are going to be delayed, please contact the school as soon as possible our manager and staff can then allay your child's concerns and make plans for their own commitments. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child, will apply if your child is left at the Centre after closing time.

ATTENDANCE

Outlined below are a number of important guidelines to ensure The Little Nest can operate in a safe and efficient environment. Every parent and child is required to observe and adhere to the procedures at all times.

Sign In/Sign Out

Parents, guardians (and authorized contacts) should make certain the sign-in, sign-out system is followed at all times. This ensures that in the event of an emergency the school has a record of your child.

If your child is absent it is very much appreciated for you to call into the school to inform us.

Collecting Your Child

The Little Nest takes the security and safety of your child very seriously.

Anyone collecting a child for the first time (authorised person) will be asked to present photo ID. Educators or staff may request photo ID at any time. A child will not be released into the care of anyone under the age of 18 or anyone not listed on the enrolment form as an authorized person and/ or emergency contact. If you wish to nominate an additional person as an authorized contact, please advise a member of staff and this can be arranged.

ABSENCES

The Little Nests appreciates to be informed of planned or last minute absences at your earliest convenience.

A clearance letter from your child's doctor may be required if we have any doubt of your child's suitability to return to the school during times of illness

Full payment is charged for non-attendance.

INCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

In the event of a minor incident, first aid will be administered by educators and recorded. If a more serious incident occurs, parents will be contacted immediately. Please ensure the school has current contact telephone numbers for all parents and emergency contacts.

Changes for contact detail for any given day may be left with the Manager or written on the attendance sheet when leaving the child. In emergency situations, should the person in charge determine the injuries are serious enough the child will immediately be taken to Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre (ALMC).

The parent will incur the cost of any medical services incurred.

CHILDREN ARE ENCOURAGED TO FLOW FREELY BETWEEN
THE INDOOR AND OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS.



SUITABLE CLOTHING

Please send your child to The Little Nest in play-appropriate clothing. Clothes that can become a little dirty, enable uninhibited play and can be easily managed by the child are most suitable.

Children should also be dressed according to the climate at all times. In hotter months please dress your child in light cotton clothing that will provide protection from the sun and sandals.

Please ensure shoulders are always covered. In cooler months children should be dressed in warmer clothing layers that can be taken off as the day warms up, with enclosed shoes and socks.

It is encouraged that hats must be brought in and worn throughout the year, regardless of the season and weather conditions. You may prefer to leave a hat at the Centre to ensure there is always one available for your child to wear.

Please ensure also that your child brings or leaves a clearly labelled bottle of sun cream at Little Nest so we can ensure your child is adequately protected from the sun.

Please ensure every item brought to the school is clearly labelled with your child's name.

No responsibility will be taken by The Little Nest for any loss or damage to your child's belongings.



TOILET TRAINING

It is important your child wears clothing that will enable them to access the toilet quickly.

Overalls are not suitable. Elastic waisted pants are most suitable where possible and jeans are not recommended because of buttons and ties.

Self-dressing is recommended to develop self-help skills.

Therefore clothing with zips, buttons, pull-strings, ties and hoods is not recommended if possible. Any clothing that can be easily pulled up or down, or over your child's head is most suitable and will make self-dressing

as easy as possible for your child.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

At the Little Nest the child behaviour management policy is centred on the importance of respect and dignity for the child, acknowledging and accepting children's feelings and encouraging these feelings to be expressed. Steps that are taken towards establishing good behavior management

include:

1. Setting and maintaining appropriate limits of behavior
2. Explaining the appropriate uses of materials and equipment;
3. Reinforcing positive behavior with praise:
4. Explaining why a behavior is inappropriate or unacceptable and providing acceptable options:
5. Offering children choices and encouraging decision making;
6. Setting realistic expectations which are age and stage appropriate;
7. Remembering that what works for one child does not always work for another:
8. Ensuring the Executive Centre Manager is available to discuss and assist with any concern you may have about your child's behavior or participation in the program;

HEALTH AND SPECIALISED CARE

MEDICATION

All medication must be clearly marked with your child's name, name of the medication and the dosage clearly stated on the pharmacist's dispensing label. No medication will be dispensed to your child if the medication has expired.

Please do not leave medication of any nature in your child's bag. Instead, medication should be given to your child's Teacher or the Executive Centre Manager upon arrival at the school, at which time it will be stored in a designated area out of reach of children.

A medication form needs to be filled out upon arrival by parent or authorized person noted on the child's enrolment form.

If this is not done, medication cannot be given out. Over the counter medication will only be given for two consecutive days after which time a doctor's certificate will need to be provided. A non-prescription medication form also needs to be completed. There are no medications kept on the premises and parents will need to provide their own.

Verbal permission over the phone or in person is not acceptable and the medication form must be completed in every instance.

Long term medication forms are also required for children with ongoing medical considerations or long term medication needs (such as asthma or allergies).

Nappy creams will be administered to your child if it is provided and clearly marked with your child's full name.

HIGH TEMPERATURES

If your child unexpectedly develops a high temperature, (38 degrees or higher) you will be contacted to collect your child from school.

At the discretion of the Executive Centre Manager should you or another emergency contact not be able to collect the child quickly, they may be taken to ALMC to ensure the wellbeing of your child.

As previously stated, parents will be responsible for all medical costs incurred.

GERMS AND CONTRACTIBLE ILLNESSES

Children with contagious or contractible illnesses which can be transferred to others must not be in attendance at The Little Nest until they have been cleared by a doctor. If your child starts showing symptoms of an illness while they are at the school they will need to be taken home immediately.

The Little Nest are not responsible for any illness contracted by your child whilst in attendance and if your child has recently suffered from a contagious or contractible illness, a medical clearance must be provided before your child returns to school. This clearance must state there is no further risk of spread of infection and your child is fit to return to a group care environment.

Reasons you will be called to collect your child include but are not limited to, a high temperature, vomiting and diarrhea. We do insist that your child be free from such symptoms for 24 hours before they return to our care.

NUTRITION AND CUCINAS

At the Little Nest we provide a healthy, varied, menu for the children to enjoy. Our kitchens are inspired places where we create tasty and nutritious food fresh each day, to nurture your child's development and meet all their important daily dietary requirements.

We aim to instill in all children the importance of maintaining a lifelong respect for food with a particular focus on sustainability. It is important children understand where food comes from and our school endeavors to include fresh produce from our own vegetable garden wherever possible.

Meals and regular snacks supplied to the children every day. Breakfast is only supplied until 7.30am. The daily menu is displayed within the school for your reference and we are always willing to accept menu ideas and suggestions to provide plenty of new and nutritional options to the children.

We endeavor to meet all dietary requirements whether for medical reasons or religious reasons.

Each room has a copy of all dietary requirements and food allergies plus we encourage families to discuss this with the manager during the orientation process to discuss your child's specific needs.

To ensure strict compliance with all nutrition guidelines and due to children's allergies, we ask all families not to bring any food into our schools, including birthday treats.

REST

All children are encouraged to have a special time to relax or rest during the day as it enables them to gather their thoughts and strength for the rest of the day. If a child falls asleep, they are deemed to be in need of a rest and will not be woken unless personally requested by parents.

Some children may not need sleep, but will be encouraged to rest their bodies or sit and enjoy quiet experiences.

Quiet activities are available as an alternative option.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special times for children, here at The Little Nest we enjoy sharing the occasion amongst all educators, staff and children.

If parents would like to provide a cake/ treats to help their child to celebrate their birthday in school then they are more than welcome, however, parents must please discuss this in advance with their child's teacher or the centre manager. Celebration time can be timed to coincide with parents availability to join in, should they wish to do so.

TOYS AND TREASURES

At The Little there is a wide range of developmentally appropriate equipment and toys for the children to play with. Parents are asked to explain to children that the toys at the school are for everyone to share and cannot be taken home. Children are also asked not to bring any toys from home, due to breakage and loss.

Comforters are welcome but need to be clearly labelled with your child's name.

RAISING CONCERNS

The Little Nest invites you to raise any concerns that you may have about your child's care with the manager.

The manager is always pleased to discuss any aspect of your child's care and education. If you have any concerns, it is important they are answered or resolved as swiftly as possible so please do not hesitate to speak with the appropriate member of staff.

All concerns are managed in a confidential and professional manner. If parents/guardians would like to contact the Management Service about any unresolved or sensitive issue please contact the Operations Manager: inquiries@thelittlenest-tz.com

For more information and updates, please visit our website www.thelittlenest-tz.com

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Notes







www.thelittlenest-tz.com

BRINGING LEARNING TO LIFE.