



# FAMILY HANDBOOK

Little Village Learning Collective



# Welcome to Roots Eco School

**Dear Families,**

We're so grateful you're here. Roots grew from mothers who believed there was a more connected, meaningful way for children to learn. One that honors curiosity, childhood, and the natural world. Little Village is our small, nature-based early learning program within Roots Eco School. We gather weekly to explore, create, and learn together through the changing seasons. We're humbled to begin our first season as a school, nurturing a community of learners, explorers, and friends.

At Roots, we blend academic depth with nature-based exploration, nurturing the whole child. Learning here not only happens through lessons and projects, but through muddy hands, intentional nourishment, singing, and moments of discovery that can't be planned.

We know when children feel safe, seen, and connected to their environment, their capacity for curiosity and compassion blooms. And when families join in partnership — learning, volunteering, and celebrating side by side — we model the kind of community we hope our children will carry forward into the world.

This handbook is your guide to our rhythms, policies, and practical details — but more importantly, it shares the spirit of how we live and learn together. Like the school itself, it's growing and evolving with each season.

Thank you for your care, your support, and your vital role in this community. Together, we're not just shaping a school. We're cultivating a way of life rooted in connection, community, and reciprocity with the Earth.

**With gratitude,**

**Sophia, Emily, & Danielle**  
Co-Founders, Roots Eco School





# Vision, Mission & Educational Philosophy





## Our Vision

To be a living ecosystem of learning that inspires a brighter, more connected, and resilient world for generations to come.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to provide a regenerative learning environment that nurtures the whole child—mind, body, and spirit—while cultivating a thriving community. We strive to:

- Nurture curiosity through hands-on, nature-based learning.
- Foster community by bringing families together in shared learning, celebration, and stewardship of the land.
- Model regeneration by caring for our environment and one another, leaving things better than we found them.
- Inspire resilience by guiding children to see themselves as capable, connected, and essential to the living world.

# Our Educational Philosophy

At Little Village, education is a living relationship between child, community, and the natural world. Grounded in research on experiential and nature-based learning, we nurture the whole child—intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically—through connection, curiosity, and care.

## 01 Nature as Teacher

- Builds observation, inquiry, and problem-solving skills.
- Fosters flexibility, patience, and ecological awareness.
- Strengthens attention and emotional regulation through time outdoors.

## 02 Community & Village

- Grounds learning in relationships that mirror the web of life.
- Invites children to see themselves as contributors within a larger whole.
- Plants the seeds of agency and community-minded action.

## 03 Mixed-Age Learning

- Encourages leadership, empathy, and collaboration.
- Supports differentiated learning through peer modeling.
- Creates a family-like structure that nurtures motivation and security.

## 04 Practical Life Skills

- Builds executive functioning and fine motor skills.
- Promotes focus, independence, and responsibility.
- Encourages persistence and care for living things.

## 05 Creativity & Imagination

- Enhances language, memory, and abstract thinking.
- Strengthens creativity, innovation, and emotional expression.
- Connects academic learning to imagination and joy.





# Curriculum & Teaching Methods



At Little Village, we honor childhood as a sacred season of wonder, play, and discovery. Rooted in nature and guided by the rhythms of the earth, we cultivate a learning environment where creativity, curiosity, and community grow side by side.

# Our Curriculum

Here, learning flows through storytelling, song, movement, care for animals, and the living lessons of the natural world—nurturing the whole child and weaving connections between generations.

## Nature-based STEM

Children explore patterns, forces, and relationships through play and observation in the natural world.

## Waldorf Principles

Honoring natural rhythms, creativity, and story-rich learning to nurture imagination and emotional intelligence.

## Reggio Emilia Approach

Honoring each child's many languages of expression. Relationships and the environment guide learning.

Our curriculum focuses on the following key developmental areas:



**Social & Emotional Development**



**Language & Literacy**



**Early Math & Problem-Solving**



**Science & Discovery**



**Fine & Gross Motor Skills**



**Creativity & Imagination**

# Teaching Methods

Our guides use a combination of structured instruction and free play to create a well-balanced learning experience.



## 01 Hands-On Learning

Children engage in active exploration, using real-world materials to enhance understanding.



## 02 Teacher-Guided & Child-Led Learning

Encouraging curiosity and problem-solving through discovery-based experiences.



## 03 Outdoor Learning

Utilizing nature as a classroom to develop observation skills and appreciation for the environment.



## 04 Whole-Child Approach

Addressing cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development.



# Daily Schedule & Practical Details





All classes are **caregiver-attended**, creating opportunities for shared learning and connection. We operate following the New Albany School District calendar with an exception of summer break.

## Daily Rhythm

Sessions are held **on Fridays** from **10:00 AM-1:00 PM (EST)**

Arrive: 10:00AM (EST)



### Opening & Welcome Circle

Songs and stories to spark imagination and connection.



### Nature Exploration & Free Play

Time to explore, move, and dream in nature.



### Seasonal Craft Project

Creating with natural materials to honor the turning year.



### Snack & Tea

Sharing a nourishing snack and tea together.



### Closing Circle

Reflecting on the day we had together.

Depart: 1:00 PM (EST)

### What to Wear

- Comfortable, play-appropriate clothing
- Weather-appropriate attire, we're outside rain or shine
- Shoes suitable for outdoor exploration

### What to Bring

- Reusable water bottle
- Extra set of clothes optional
- Lunch or extra snacks optional



We prioritize health and well-being. Our policies help create a safe, clean, and supportive environment for our community.

## Illness Policy

### When to Keep Your Child at Home

We're almost fully outdoors; if a child isn't well enough for active outdoor play, please rest at home. Children must stay home if they have:

- Fever of 100°F or higher (must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication to return).
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours.
- Unexplained rash, pink eye, or contagious illness.
- Oozing wounds; lice/infestation
- Persistent cough, difficulty breathing, or flu-like symptoms.
- Or if your child needs one-on-one care beyond what keeps the whole group safe.

Families will be notified of exposures to communicable diseases (without identifying individuals).

**A gentle reminder: An extra recovery day often protects the whole circle.**

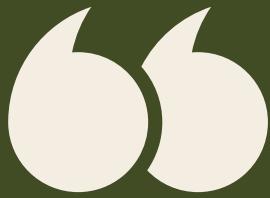
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## Additional Wellness & Safety Policies

During outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases, local-health-guided exclusions may apply.

Parents must disclose food allergies or dietary restrictions during enrollment.

Medications on site: Rescue meds (e.g., EpiPen/inhaler) must be administered and kept by caregivers/parents.



Core agreements: gentle hands, gentle voices, be good to one another and the Earth.

# Discipline & Conflict Resolution Policy

We keep a calm, kind rhythm outdoors where nature is the teacher. Adults co-regulate alongside children. Core agreements: gentle hands, gentle voices, be good to one another and the Earth.

We model language, name feelings, and offer simple choices. We redirect to purposeful, safe tasks; use visual/hand cues; invite short reset moments (breaths, water, a quiet sit spot); and use quick restorative “micro-circles” to repair when harm happens.

## When patterns persist...

We observe and note triggers. Partner with family to create a short, child-specific support plan.

Safety first—if behaviors risk harm (eloping, severe/targeted aggression, unsafe tool use), we may require a caregiver shadow, a brief pause from sessions, and a gentle re-entry plan.

# Tuition

We offer flexible payment plans to accommodate families' needs. Below are the tuition fees for the 2025-2026 school year:

## Tuition Rates (Per Child)

Monthly Plan (11 payments)	Quarterly Plan (4 payments)	Annual Tuition (48 sessions)
\$145 per month	\$385 per quarter	\$1,500 per year

**Tuition is due on the 1st of each month for monthly plans and the first of each quarter for quarterly plans.**

**Sibling Discount** Families enrolling more than one child receive a 50% discount on the second child's tuition. Applies to children over 2 years old.

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# Payment

We use **MoonClerk**, a secure online payment platform, to make tuition and program payments simple and flexible. Families can submit payments directly through our website or in the MoonClerk app using debit, credit, or bank transfer.

Monthly tuition is due on the first of each month, unless otherwise arranged. You'll receive an automated confirmation once payment is processed, and receipts are available in your MoonClerk dashboard.

If you ever need to adjust a payment method or schedule, please reach out to our team — we're happy to help ensure everything runs smoothly.

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# Communication Between School & Parents

We prioritize open and transparent communication with families. Below are the ways we keep parents informed:

## Regular Updates via App

Please Download **RemindChat App**

- We'll use it for weekly updates, reminders, and quick communication.
  - Create a free account using your email address or phone number
  - Join our group
    - In the app, tap "Join a class".
    - Enter our class code: @recos

## Email & Phone Support

We are available via email or phone call as needed

**Email Address:**  
rootsecoschool@gmail.com

**Phone Numbers:**  
Emily Farshchi: (614) 323-7879  
Danielle Joseph: (740) 632-8718  
Sophia Consantino (614) 323-6917



# Little Village Learning Collective

Planting a new model of learning & living

Contact Support

✉ hello@rootsecoschool.org  
👤 @rootsecoschool  
rootsecoschool.org

**Roots Eco School**  
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Download our Family  
Handbook by scanning the  
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