



Early Childhood Education
3850 Pony Tracks Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80922
719-494-8840

PARENT HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024



LOCATIONS:

Ridgeview Preschool

6573 Shimmering Creek Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80923
719-495-5254

Springs Ranch Preschool

4350 Centerville Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80922
719-494-8608

Odyssey Preschool

6275 Bridlespur Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80922
719-494-8627

Remington Preschool

2825 Pony Tracks Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80922
719-495-5266

Inspiration View Preschool

9233 Vista del Pico Boulevard
Colorado Springs, CO 80927
719-495-5356

Stetson Preschool

4910 Jedediah Smith
Colorado Springs, CO 80922
719-494-8714

Woodmen Hills Preschool

8308 Del Rio Road
Peyton, CO 80831
719-495-5499

Meridian Ranch Preschool

10480 Rainbow Bridge Road
Peyton, CO 80831
719-494-2908

Bennett Ranch Preschool

11243 Londonderry
Peyton, CO 80831
719-495-1149 ext. 4410

Falcon Preschool

10250 Falcon Hwy
Peyton, CO 80831
719-495-5284

Early Childhood Education Office

3850 Pony Tracks Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80922
business hours: Mo-Fr 8AM-4PM

(These phones ring directly to the classroom. Please try to call before or after class hours.)

WELCOME TO THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS!

We hope this parent handbook will answer any questions you may have about our early childhood centers and that you will take a moment to read our operating procedures. We want you to be a part of your school, participating in activities or volunteer opportunities, offering suggestions, comments, and constructive criticisms as well as financial and moral support.

Our early childhood programs are licensed by the State of Colorado and open to all children regardless of race, disability, nationality, or creed, who may benefit from our type of program. Each child must be at least three years old, potty trained and not yet eligible for kindergarten. (Children identified with a disability are an exception to the potty training requirement.) Our preschools are non-profit, non-sectarian and non-political. We are a part of School District 49.

Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity

The District 49 Board of Education is committed to provide a safe learning and work environment where all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. No otherwise qualified student or employee shall be excluded for participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any district program or activity on the basis of being a member of a protected class as recognized by the United States Supreme Court, the United States District Court for the state of Colorado or the Colorado Supreme Court or Court of Appeals. *Please see School District 49 Policy AC.*

MISSION STATEMENT –SCHOOL DISTRICT 49

The Best Choice to Learn, Work and Lead

MISSION STATEMENT – DISTRICT 49 EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS

We are committed to providing preschool children a foundation for lifetime learning and success.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

School District 49 believes that a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of the family and community. To accomplish this, the district will provide a developmentally appropriate program for all children.

The concept of Developmentally Appropriate has two primary dimensions which we will focus on: Age and Individually Appropriate Programs.

AGE APPROPRIATENESS

There are universal, predictable sequences of growth and change that occur in children during the first nine years of life. These changes occur in all domains of development – physical, emotional, social and cognitive. Knowledge of typical development of children within these age spans provides a framework from which teachers prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences.

INDIVIDUAL APPROPRIATENESS

Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style, and family background. Both the curriculum and adult interaction with children must be responsive to individual differences. Learning in young children is the result of interaction between the child's thoughts and experiences with materials, ideas and people. These experiences will match the child's developing abilities, while also challenging the child's understanding and interest.

Staff members are experienced early childhood educators. All participate in a continuous program of in-service education and studies for professional advancement in order to remain alert to the ever-changing needs of today's families and to the findings of current research.

Our early childhood centers attempt to meet the needs of all children, including those with identified special needs. Support staff to include, speech-language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, school nurses, social workers, psychologists, audiologists, behavior specialists, and teachers of the visual or hearing impaired are available for consultation and/or direct services as the child's IEP indicates.

****The primary objective of our programs is to serve preschool students residing within the boundaries of School District 49 who have been identified with a disability as mandated by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).*

PROGRAMS OFFERED to children ages 3 years until they are eligible to attend kindergarten and residents of District 49:

- **Preschool classes - Children must be potty trained**
- **Special Needs Services** - Children with a current Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- **Universal Preschool Colorado (UPK)**- State funded for children the year before kindergarten and/or 3 year old children with eligibility factors that affect overall learning readiness according to Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC).

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Once accepted to the program, parents will be notified and given instructions for online registration. Policies and procedures will be discussed along with a plan for payment of fees (tuition for children identified with a disability who have a current IEP and/or a UPK match is funded by the state). All registration information must be completed and turned in at least three full days prior to attendance.

BEFORE YOUR CHILD CAN ATTEND THE CENTER WE MUST HAVE:

- Emergency Information and Medical Treatment Forms
- Current physical (which must be renewed each year)
- Immunization Record
- Birth Certificate
- Photo Permission Form
- A complete change of clothing, including socks and underwear

CLASS DAYS/TIMES

Classes are offered Monday - Thursday either three hours in the morning or three hours in the afternoon. Class times vary by location, check with your school for start/end times. Our preschool programs follow the District 49 school calendar for closures and breaks.

CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS

At registration, your child will be placed in the morning or afternoon class, according to availability. We will try to honor your request whenever possible. Once your child starts in the program, we **do not** change from one class to another. If you have a situation where your child absolutely must move from one class to another after school has been in session, the change will only be considered after a full evaluation of your request, and approval by the Preschool Council or Early Childhood Coordinator. See your child's teacher to make a formal request. Changes will only be made based on the **educational** needs of your child.

TUITION AND PAYMENT REQUIREMENTS

Tuition: *\$402 per month. ***Tuition for children with an active IEP or enrolled through UPK is funded by the State of Colorado.* *Prices subject to change per board approval.

The first tuition payment is due the first day of preschool in August and then on the first day of each month thereafter (September-May). Tuition is divided into 10 equal monthly payments of \$402. The district does not deduct for months with breaks or holidays, nor does it charge more for full months. Total tuition for the school year is based on 360 contact hours (120 school days) as required by the State. Since our calendar includes attendance days above the 120 required school days, **we do not adjust tuition for snow days or delayed starts.**

We do not send out monthly reminders. You can access your child's tuition account at any time through your parent portal. The most timely and preferred way to pay is online through your parent portal. There is a small, per-transaction fee to pay online. We also accept checks or money orders **made out to School District 49, with your child's full name and school on the memo line.** Checks/money orders can be given to your child's teacher who will bring them to the Early Childhood Office for processing.

Remember, payments for each month's tuition are due on the first of the month. A \$50 late payment fee will be assessed if payments **are not received in the office by the 15th** of the month. Unpaid tuition will result in your child being withdrawn from the preschool program. Unless you have made prior arrangements with the Early Childhood Office, tuition received late three times during the school year will result in your child being withdrawn from the preschool program without additional notice. Returned checks will be handled by our district finance office and unpaid balances will be turned over for collection. We require one week's notice for termination from the program.

TUITION IS NOT ADJUSTED WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT.

ATTENDANCE

One criterion of a student's success in school is regular and punctual attendance. Frequent absences may lead to poor academic work, lack of social development, and possible academic failure. No single factor may interfere with a student's progress more quickly than frequent tardiness or absence. Please see School District 49 policy JH for more information about the district's attendance policy. We expect children to attend class **on time every day**. This means that children should have no more than 10 unexcused absences during the school year. Report your child's absence directly to your Center/child's teacher by phone call or email. If you have a family emergency and/or your child must be absent for an extended period of time, it is your responsibility to notify the Early Childhood Office (preschool@d49.org) to determine whether your child can remain enrolled in their current placement. Failure to notify the Early Childhood Office may result in those days being marked as unexcused absences. Your child may be withdrawn from the program if their absences exceed more than 10 unexcused absences during the school year.

ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP

Children must be accompanied into and out of the building **by an adult** and signed in and out **by an adult** on the daily attendance sign-in-and-out sheet. Parents are not allowed to enter the building during drop off and pick up, they will sign their child(ren) in and out at a designated location outside of the classroom (please refer to your preschool site for designated door or area for drop off/pick up). Sign your child in and out in accordance with the site's policy. Please park in designated areas only and do not leave other children unattended in your vehicle while dropping off or picking up your child.

We ask that you bring your child at the scheduled arrival time and be sure to pick up your child promptly when class is over.

OVERTIME CHARGES

Children will be allowed in the classroom at the publicized start time for the class, and parents need to pick the child up promptly at the end of class. For every 15 minutes (or part thereof), you are late, a fee of \$10 per child is assessed. If this happens frequently, the center reserves the right to withdraw your child/children from the program.

If you know you are going to be detained, please notify your center immediately so that we can reassure your child. Because our centers have no provision for care after the end of class, parents MUST be prompt or make other arrangements for someone to pick up their child. REMEMBER, WE MUST HAVE PRIOR WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION FOR THESE CHANGES.

If you need to drop your child off or pick them up during class times, you will need to check in through the school's main office. Classroom doors will not be opened for parents during class times. If you need to be in the building, we ask that you keep all children with you and to wait quietly as students are working in nearby classrooms.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP CHILD

All adults bringing in or picking up a child must sign in and out on the daily sign-in/out sheet. Release of students will **ONLY** be made to the individuals you have designated in writing, **after** they have produced the proper picture identification to us.

Photo identification of individuals not known by the staff will be required in all cases. Any person not providing the required information will be asked to leave the premises. If they refuse, the police will be called immediately. For safety reasons, doors are locked during the day.

Please realize that it is legal for either parent to pick up a child unless we have a copy of a court order restricting visitation.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents are required to arrange transportation unless specified in the students IEP.

FAILURE OF PARENT TO PICK UP CHILD

If a parent has not arrived by the end of class time, calls will be made first to the parents and then to all other emergency contact person(s) listed on the "emergency information" paperwork to determine the nature of the delay and arrange for someone to pick up the child.

In the event that a parent has not picked up the child within 30 minutes from the end of class time, the center staff will notify the El Paso County Department of Human Services. The center director or designee will remain with the child until the DHS representative arrives. The DHS representative will sign the child out of the Center and follow up with the family.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM

If you choose to withdraw your child from the program, please notify your child's teacher who will provide you with a withdrawal form. No tuition refunds will be granted for the month you withdraw your child.

TEACHER / STUDENT RATIO

Our early childhood centers maintain the required staff/child ratio of 1 teacher to 8 children (or lower) to promote an optimum learning environment. Classes are typically capped at 16 students with one teacher and two paraprofessional educators.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Our staff works to eliminate as many discipline problems as possible by structuring the classroom in a way that will promote self-discipline, by setting up guidelines for safe conduct within the school, by providing alternatives to unacceptable behavior and by positive reinforcement for acceptable behaviors. We are committed to providing a loving and nurturing environment in which children can develop their individual personalities. If a child chooses to persist in activities that endanger him and/or others, the teacher may separate the child from the group for a determined time. In extreme cases, the school will contact the parent in an attempt to work together to resolve the problem.

TOYS AND OTHER OBJECTS FROM HOME

Please DO NOT allow your child to bring toys, costumes or other objects from home to the center, unless arranged by the teacher. These items can be very distracting in the classroom setting, and we cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to any personal possessions.

CLOTHING / BELONGINGS

Each child has an individually labeled space, where clothing and a backpack can be hung up. Please dress your child in washable, comfortable play clothes that your child can manage by himself/herself during class time. Please send your child to school in secure closed-toe shoes, as they are preferred for safety as well as comfort. **YOUR CHILD'S OUTER GARMENTS (coats, hats, gloves) SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S FULL NAME.**

IMPORTANT: Please provide a complete set of extra clothing, including underwear and socks, **MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.** We will place these items in a bag/container marked with your child's name. Extra clothes are sometimes needed for emergencies caused by toileting accidents, spilled beverages, or getting wet playing at the water table.

EXCESSIVELY HOT / COLD WEATHER POLICY

Outside playtime is scheduled each day as part of our program. This outside time provides opportunities for the children to develop gross motor skills and socialization. Please dress your child appropriately for outside play according to the different seasons (or have additional outerwear for weather changes in the backpack). You should include boots, mittens and a hat during colder weather.

Playground staff will monitor outside temperatures. In the event of excessively hot or cold temperatures, or any other adverse weather conditions, the children will remain inside the buildings.

DIAPERING & TOILET TRAINING

One of the guidelines for admission to our centers is that children be potty-trained. We realize **occasional** accidents will happen, so parents have been asked to provide a complete change of clothing for these occasions. Your child's clothes will be changed and soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag for you to wash. Parents are responsible to see that there is always a complete change of clothing available at the center. Please check occasionally to make sure we have appropriate clothing for the current weather season.

Exception: Children who receive special education services through an IEP may have potty training considered. In addition to a change of clothing, parents will be asked to provide disposable diapers or pull-ups and baby wipes as needed.

SNACKS

Morning and afternoon snack time is included in the preschool schedule. The center and/or parents/guardians (through donation) provide **healthy snacks** in accordance with Health Department regulations and the District's wellness policies (ADF/ADF-R) within their child's individual classroom. Our schools are peanut/nut protected. **All snacks must be store-bought, non-perishable, and unopened.** Please check with your child's teacher for a list of preferred snack items. If your child has a specific dietary restriction, you may need to send something each day for your child to eat/drink.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Your child is welcome to bring **healthy** birthday treats (or prize) as specified above for his/her class. These treats will be shared at the regularly scheduled snack time. Please check with the classroom teacher for the number of students and approved treats to bring.

TEACHER/PARENT COMMUNICATION

Class events such as class pictures, classroom activities, holiday breaks and upcoming schedule changes will be sent to parents through a variety of means which may include newsletters, e-mail, class DoJo, etc. Classroom teachers will also post the information relating to classroom activities in or outside their classrooms. **PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ THIS INFORMATION, AS IT OFTEN ANSWERS MANY QUESTIONS REGARDING CHANGES IN SCHEDULE OR ACTIVITIES YOUR CHILD IS PARTICIPATING IN.**

VISITOR INFORMATION

ALL VISITORS MUST SIGN IN AT DESIGNATED SIGN-IN LOCATION IN THEIR BUILDING . Visitors will be asked to state their purpose for visiting and show legal photo identification. If a person refuses to provide the required information and identification, they will be asked to leave the premises. If a person refuses to comply, security/police will be called immediately.

PROGRESS REPORTS / CONFERENCES

Official parent teacher conferences may be held two times during the school year. Aside from these conferences, we will provide progress reports during the school year. You may visit the center at any time. We welcome your questions or suggestions, but ask that you contact your child's teacher during non-instructional time to talk or schedule a meeting or additional conference. Your child is with us for such a limited time, we want to give them our full attention. Please inform your child's teacher if any problems arise concerning your child, whether at home or at school, as we are here to help make the preschool experience a positive one.

VOLUNTEERS/SPECIAL EVENTS/CLASS PARTIES

Parent volunteers are a very important part of our centers. Teachers will send home information on special events or projects that may require parent volunteers or special programs for parents to participate in; parents are encouraged to participate whenever possible. You are also welcome to check with your child's classroom teacher to volunteer as a classroom helper when needed. **DHS licensing guidelines require alternate care arrangements for any siblings as we are limited to only having enrolled students in the classroom. Parents must go through the main office to receive a badge to enter the classroom. Parents are also asked to sign-in on our visitor sign-in sheet.**

Parents who volunteer must follow District 49 guidelines for volunteers. Please visit our "Volunteer Opportunities in District 49" webpage (d49.org/volunteer) or call Human Resources at 719-495-1100 for more information. Parents are required to sign in and out on the visitor/volunteer log in the classroom.

FIELD TRIPS

Due to Department of Transportation safety regulations, we do not take children on field trips outside the centers. Walking trips on the school grounds are occasionally taken (e.g. to collect leaves for a collage or pick dandelions for an art project). If a student arrives late and their class is on a walking field trip, the parent has the choice of taking the child home or waiting with their child until the class returns. **Children are not to be left in the building alone.**

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Technology (to include the use of television and video viewing) are to be used to enhance school-related, educational activities **ONLY**. We prefer to emphasize the curriculum during the short time we have the students in class. Parent permission must be obtained before television or video viewing.

PARENT EMERGENCY INFORMATION CHANGES

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT that you notify the classroom staff to update your child's information **IMMEDIATELY** when any information changes (e.g., a new home address, home phone number, work number, or cell phone number, etc.) It is also important to have an alternate person to contact in the event that we cannot reach you in an emergency situation (e.g. if your child becomes ill during school time.) Emergency information is available through our student information system in case of evacuation or lockdown. In addition, each child's emergency information, medical treatment permission forms and medications are carried with our preschool staff during all fire drills and evacuations; therefore, it is very important that these records are up to date.

YEARLY MEDICAL REQUIREMENT

According to The Department of Human Services regulations, parents of each child **MUST** provide a current physical statement dated and signed by a physician and proof of all immunizations the child has received **BEFORE HE OR SHE BEGINS THE PROGRAM**. Physical examinations are considered current for 1 year from the date it was given. The physical form must be updated again, by the expiration date if a child is to continue in the program. We can provide a physical form for you to take to your child's doctor when you register your child or we can accept your doctor's form. The form **MUST** include the expiration date to meet DHS licensing requirements. **If you fail to obtain a new physical before the required date, you will need to keep your child home until you can provide a new physical. Tuition will not be waived during this time.**

MEDICAL RESTRICTIONS FOR ATTENDANCE

According to State Licensing requirements, and for the protection of all the children, **YOUR CHILD MUST BE KEPT HOME IF HE/SHE SHOWS ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:**

- An oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher (please do not medicate your child with fever-reducing medications and send them to school). A student may return to preschool once they have been fever-free for a full 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications if other symptoms listed below have also resolved.

- Diarrhea or vomiting within the previous 24 hours
- Any undiagnosed rash
- Sore or discharging eyes or ears
- Green nasal discharge
- Productive cough
- Head lice that has NOT been treated
- Sore throat
- Weeping cold sores or other lesions that have not been treated

If your child is unable to participate in the usual preschool activities and appears tired, irritable, and tearful, the Guidelines for Colorado Child Care Centers indicate exclusion from school is warranted.

If your child becomes ill at school, we will call you to *IMMEDIATELY* take your child home. **Please be sure we have your current home, work and cell phone numbers on file at each center.**

Pursuant to the regulations of the State Department of Public Health and Environment, the following communicable diseases must be reported to the Health Department:

CHILDREN SHOULD BE KEPT HOME AND CENTER NOTIFIED *IMMEDIATELY* if they have been exposed to any contagious disease, such as Whooping Cough, German or regular Measles, Mumps, Chicken Pox, Pink Eye, Diphtheria, Pinworms or Scarlet Fever. If a report is received, the following lines of authority will be observed: Teacher reports to center director, center director reports to the school nurse and the school nurse will investigate and report to the Health Department.

IMMUNIZATION EXEMPTIONS

Our early childhood centers accept children whose parents have completed an immunization exemption. If we receive a report of a communicable disease at one of the centers, the parents of these children with immunization exemptions are required to keep their children home during the outbreak or incubation period.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS

To ensure safe and accurate administration of routine medications to all children in our centers, the school nurse will delegate and supervise the task of medication administration to the care providers who have completed the approved Medication Administration Curriculum Training.

Because the administration of medication requires extra staff time and safety considerations, parents should check with their healthcare provider to see if a dosage schedule can be arranged that does not involve the hours the child is in school. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home, to allow the parents to observe if the child has any type of reaction.

Nebulized medications and emergency injections (EpiPen) require an individualized health care plan completed by the RN consultant and/or the child's health care provider. These medications are delegated and supervised by the school's nursing staff.

If your child needs to take any medications (Prescription or Nonprescription drugs) during school hours, our staff or the school nurse can administer the medicine, **ONLY IF THE FOLLOWING MEDICATION POLICY IS FOLLOWED:**

Please be aware that Colorado State law governs our medication policy. If your child must take medication during school hours, you must provide the following before it can be administered: A written doctor's order (including drug name, dose, route, time, duration of treatment, **doctor** and parent's signature). **This includes all over-the-counter, prescription, and homeopathic medications.** PLEASE NOTE: The pharmacy label applied to the medication bottle will not suffice for a doctor's order. Medication must be in the original bottle, complete with labels and prescription information. Medication cannot be given if it comes in a baggie, envelope, plain bottle, etc.

NOTE: All medications will be locked in a designated area for immediate access.

Medical Restrictions for school attendance - Illness Guidelines: School District 49 follows the Illness Guidelines from the Colorado Department of Education/Children's Hospital Colorado. The illness guidelines are state licensing requirements, and for the protection of all the children. Please go to: www.D49.org > Student Services (blue tab) > nursing services > **How Sick is Too Sick** to see when students should stay at home due to illness. If your child is unable to participate in the usual preschool activities and appears tired, irritable, and tearful, the Guidelines for Colorado Child Care Centers indicates exclusion for school is warranted.

Immunizations: All students must have current and up-to-date required immunizations in order to participate in school. The only exception to this is if the parent completes a personal or religious exemption. PLEASE NOTE: All Religious and Personal exemptions are required to be updated annually (please see process for exemptions below). Medical exemption from your student's physician for immunizations is only required one time.

Immunization exemption process: For immunization exemptions, fill out the exemption form and send a copy to school so your child's records can be updated, you can also ask for this form from your student's school health room. Link to the exemption form: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/vaccine-exemptions>. You can also provide a written or email document indicating your student's name, DOB, type of exemption (personal/religious), vaccine you are choosing to exempt and your signature to your student's school health room. Please note that a new exemption form must be filled out annually in accordance with Colorado immunization exemption law.

All students need to be compliant with their immunizations or they can be excluded from attending school. The school health office will contact you soon after the beginning of the school year to inform you if your child is out of compliance, meaning he or she is missing immunizations. New students have 14 days to be in compliance or they may be excluded from school.

SUNSCREEN APPLICATION

The Colorado Office of Early Childhood and Colorado Department of Human Services requires that each child have sunscreen applied prior to sun exposure. In an effort to ensure time spent at school is productive and focused on instruction, we ask that you apply sunscreen before school or provide another form of sun protection. If you do not apply sunscreen to your child before class, the center will provide sunscreen for you to use. It is your responsibility to check the ingredients for allergies.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

INJURED CHILD POLICY

If a child is injured during school time, the school nurse and/or her aide is on the premises to administer first aid for minor injuries (scrapes & cuts). In the event of a more serious injury, the nurse, the health care assistant and center staff members are trained in First Aid and CPR/AED and will take the necessary steps to obtain emergency medical care if needed. Staff will call 911 and parents will be notified immediately. The signed "Emergency Information, Authorization for Treatment and Transportation" form allows the hospital to treat your child. If the paramedics decide they need to transport your child to the hospital, a center staff member will either ride in the ambulance with the child, or follow behind in a car.

Whenever a child is injured, the appropriate Accident/Incident forms will be completed and parents will receive a copy.

IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE DAY

Staff members must be aware of the location of children under their care at all times. A specific count will be taken during the first circle when attendance is completed, and at the following times throughout the class period.

- Children will be counted at all times when leaving and returning to their classrooms for an activity, including going to and coming back from the playground, school library, therapy sessions, walks, etc.
- Children will always be counted at the end of class, during final story time, and prior to dismissal.
- Children will also be counted at any other time during the class period as deemed necessary by staff.
- Children typically receive services inside the preschool classroom. However, if a child leaves the classroom for special services (Speech, O.T, P.T., etc.) the child's teacher will be informed and the specific location of the child will be known.

LOST CHILD POLICY

We are committed to providing a safe environment with adequate supervision at all times, but in the event that a child should become lost or separated from their class, the following procedure shall be used:

1. All available staff shall look for the child.
2. If the child has not been located within 10 minutes, the parent and the authorities will be notified.

FIRE AND TORNADO PROCEDURES

Fire escape and tornado maps are posted in each classroom, near the escape door. In the event of a fire or a practice drill, all staff will escort students out of the building via the correct escape route. If we have a tornado alert or practice drill, all staff will accompany the children to the designated area of the school immediately. Maps of fire exits and tornado shelter areas are available at your center. Preschool staff are required to take their emergency backpacks, containing class attendance lists, student medications, emergency information and treatment authorization for each child.

SCHOOL EVACUATION PLAN

Each preschool site is located within a District 49 elementary school. Each school building has a specific school evacuation plan in place, designating how and where your child will be taken if it becomes necessary to evacuate the building (loss of power, gas leak, etc.). Please check with your child's center director/teacher to obtain specific plans for your school.

SEVERE WEATHER ALERTS

If severe weather occurs, each center retains responsibility for all children on the premises until they are released to a parent, guardian, or other designated person specified in writing.

CENTER CLOSURES

SNOW DAY If the school district calls a “ **SNOW DAY**,” each preschool center will also be closed. Tuition will not be adjusted.

LATE START If the school district calls a “ **LATE START**,” due to weather or other emergency conditions, there will be **NO MORNING PRESCHOOL**. Tuition will not be adjusted.

Please watch television, listen to the radio, or check the district website, [Weather Conditions / Get Closure Updates](#), for information on how to receive notifications and announcements. If our afternoon classes have already started when the district makes the decision to close school for safety reasons, we will attempt to notify each family for immediate pick-up of your child. **Please be sure we have your current home, work and cell phone numbers on file.**

EARLY DISMISSAL

If a storm develops during the school day, and it becomes necessary to dismiss school early, there will be **NO AFTERNOON PRESCHOOL**. The decision to release school early will be made by 10:30 a.m. and the media will be notified. Listen for information on local radio and television stations. Tuition will not be adjusted.

HOLIDAYS

We follow the School District 49 calendar for our holidays and breaks. A copy of the preschool calendar is available on the District website, d49.org/preschool under the resources tab **or** District Info > School Year Calendars This calendar lists all days when our centers will be closed, [School Year Calendars](#) .

LICENSING

The Colorado Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Child Care licenses our preschool centers. Their current inspection report, the Health Department inspection report and the Fire Department inspection report are on file at each center and available to parents for review upon request. In the event of any concerns regarding suspected licensing violations, parents or staff may contact the State Department of Social Services located in Denver, Colorado to make an official report.

Colorado Department of Human Services
Toll Free Number: 1-800-799-5876
Division of Child Care 1575 Sherman
Street, First Floor Denver, Colorado
80203-1714

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

Under the "Child Protection Act of 1987" (C.R.S. 19-3-301) in the Colorado Children's Code, child care center workers are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect. The law at 19-3-304 states that if a child care worker has "reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect shall immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department or local law enforcement agency."

"Abuse" or "child abuse or neglect" means an act or omission in one of the following categories which threatens the health or welfare of a child: skin bruising, bleeding, tissue swelling, or death; any case in which a child is subjected to sexual assault or molestation, sexual exploitation, or prostitution; any case in which a child is in need of services because the child's parents, legal guardian, or custodian fails to take the same actions to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision that a prudent parent would take.

If at any time a staff member reasonably suspects child abuse, it's the responsibility of that staff member to report or to cause a report to be made of this suspicion to the local county department of social or human services at 719.444.5700 or the police department. It is not the staff's role to investigate suspected abuse, only to report it. Persons who make a good faith report are immune from civil and criminal liability. Additionally, the law provides for the protection of the identity of the reporting party.

A child care worker who fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect commits a class 3 misdemeanor and will be punished as provided in section 19-1-103(1)(A), C.R.S. The staff person could also be liable for damages "proximately caused thereby."

CHILD ABUSE INFORMATION

District 49 staff are mandated by Colorado State Law to report any evidence or knowledge of suspected child abuse or neglect. This information sheet explains your rights and how you may report suspected child abuse or neglect:

RECOGNIZING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child abuse is generally defined as non-accidental physical or mental injury caused by the acts or omissions of the child's parents or caretakers. This includes the four following types of abuse:

- **PHYSICAL ABUSE:** Non-accidental physical injury to a child.
- **PHYSICAL NEGLECT:** Failure on the part of the child's caretaker to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter or supervision.
- **EMOTIONAL MALTREATMENT:** The constant belittling and rejecting of a child, failure to provide a positive emotional atmosphere.
- **SEXUAL ABUSE:** Sexual exploitation, molestation or prostitution of a child.

WHO IS REQUIRED TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE? Section 19-3-304 of the Colorado Children's Code specifies that childcare providers in family care homes or centers are mandatory reporters. Child care providers need only a suspicion to report child abuse or neglect. Any person who fails to report can be prosecuted. Mandatory reporters who report in good faith are immune from liability; civil or criminal (Section 19-10-110 of the Children's Code).

HOW DO I REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE? Each child care center has a written policy regarding child abuse reporting, but **THE PERSON** who suspects that a child is being abused is legally responsible for making certain that the report is made to DHS or Youth and Victim Services. Inform your administrator or his/her designee of your concerns. Contact the school district child abuse/neglect team OR the Child Protective Services Unit of your county department of human services directly OR your local law enforcement agency.

AFTER A REPORT IS MADE: A member of DHS or law enforcement agency will investigate the case, notify the family a report has been filed and check the child's condition. If the child appears to be in immediate danger, he/she is placed in temporary protective custody. In severe cases, the court determines whether temporary or permanent separation from the family is necessary. Treatment of the child and/or family may be recommended or mandated. If no investigation is made and you continue to have concerns, it is important to call DHS. Repeated reports may make a difference.

TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE IN EL PASO COUNTY:

719-444-5700, 1-844-CO4KIDS or childabusereport@elpasoco.com

REMEMBER: THE WORST THING YOU CAN DO ABOUT CHILD ABUSE IS...NOTHING!!