



2024

PARENT HANDBOOK

Mountain Sprouts Academy
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Copper Mountain, CO 80443

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WELCOME!

We are excited to welcome you and your child to Mountain Sprouts Academy (MSA)! Here at MSA we are dedicated to nurturing the innate curiosity, creativity, and wonder within every child while fostering a deep connection with nature.

Our Reggio Emilia inspired approach to early childhood education is rooted in the belief that children are capable, resourceful, and full of potential.

Our mission is to provide an immersive learning experience that empowers children to be active, engaged learners who appreciate the beauty and intricacies of the natural world. We believe that parents are an integral part of their child's learning process and need to be included in our everyday activities through communication and a collaborative learning plan.

In the following document you will find a summary of our school, practices, function, as well as parent resources and logistics. **Review and acknowledgment of the information in this handbook is required. Please complete and return the final page of this handbook.**

Thank you for choosing us to be a part of your child's growth and learning, and entrusting us with the care and well-being of your child. We are honored to play a role in creating a nurturing and enriching environment for your little one and feel privileged to be part of your child's early development.

Sincerely,

The Mountain Sprouts Academy team



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OUR PHILOSOPHY

What children learn does not follow as an automatic result from what is taught, rather it is in large part due to the children's own doing as a consequence of their activities and our resources.

Loris Malaguzzi

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Nature As Classroom
- Play-Based Learning
- Child-Centered Approach
- Collaborative Learning
- The Hundred Languages Of Children
- Inquiry And Reflection
- Respect And Inclusion
- Community Engagement

Our school follows the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. This approach is a unique and innovative educational philosophy that places a strong emphasis on the holistic development of children. Our core principals closely follow the Reggio Emilia's principles which shape the philosophy's perspective on child development.

We view child development as a dynamic and individualized process that unfolds as children engage with their environment and interact with others. Our child-centered approach aims to empower children to be active participants in their own learning, fostering curiosity, creativity, and a strong sense of identity and self-worth.

OUR PHILOSOPHY *continued*

Curriculum

Our curriculum at Mountain Sprouts Academy is an emergent, child-led curriculum, where teachers are co-collaborators with the children. Our core principles are the roots of our curriculum. Observation and documentation can be found throughout our school. WE also use Teaching Strategies to assess and document children's learning.

Classroom Environment

Our learning environments are designed to be inviting and captivating. We believe when the classroom is set up properly it can function as the "third teacher" allowing for children to guide their own learning based on curiosity and intrigue. In turn, this allows for teachers to spend more time on intentional teaching. Our learning environment is created using as many natural items and materials as possible, with the children's interests in mind. We strive to create an aesthetically pleasing environment that invokes curiosity and creativity.

Parent Involvement

We believe that parents are an integral part of their child's learning process and need to be included in our everyday activities through communication and a collaborative learning plan. We have an open-door policy and encourage parents to visit the school. Parent engagement allows for parents to continue their child's learning exploration at home adding their own unique points of view, culture, and family background.

Teacher Role

The role of the teacher in our environment is that of a co-constructor of learning. Our teachers acknowledge and respect children as partners in their own learning, while paying close attention to each child's individual needs, preferences, and interests. Our teachers follow the core principles of observation, assessment, and documentation as a framework for everyday learning and growth.

- **Observation**

While respecting child autonomy, our teachers observe the individual needs and interests of each child. They build relationships with the children as responsive and respectful teachers. Our teachers support the amazing things already happening in the classroom, while introducing additional interests into the child's classroom environment.

- **Assessment**

Through assessment our teachers can see a holistic view of a child's abilities and their development. Teachers use assessment to track progress of students to ensure each child is meeting their educational goals. Learning plans are tailored to each child based on teacher observations.

- **Documentation**

Our teachers record all communication. This allows our team to track progress of the teachers and children. Reflection allows for continuous improvement, enhanced critical thinking skills as well as professional development needs and the promotion of creativity.

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Located at Copper Mountain, our preschool offers the opportunity to accommodate the unique schedules of local employees and residents.

Our school is located in Snowbridge Square in Center Village at Copper Mountain Resort. Our space is 3,000 square feet and includes 1,800 square feet of outdoor play area. We have the capacity for 46 children: six infants, ten toddlers, and thirty preschool children ranging from 6 weeks to 6 years old.

Hours of Operation

Our Program is open Tuesday through Saturday, during the winter ski season and Tuesday through Friday during the months of May through October from 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM and Saturdays by reservation.

Calendar and Events

Parents will receive a yearly calendar with important dates and closures. Holiday closures as well as teacher training days are listed.

Throughout the year there will be special events or activities offered for children and their families. There may be parent workshops or fundraisers we would love to have you attend. Information on these events will be posted on our website, bulletin boards and via emails.

Child pick up policies:

All children must be picked up by 5:30. Staff will remain in the building until all the children have been picked up. In the event a child is not picked up, the staff will notify the administrative team.

If a parent is running late, they must call the center and let staff know they are going to be late. A late fee will be charged. \$5.00 for the first five minutes and then \$1.00 every minute after that. If a child is

not picked up and the parent makes no attempt to contact the center, then social services will be notified.

Skiing

Providing children with access to ski lessons (Trailblazers) at Copper Mountain, while enrolled in Mountain Sprouts Academy, not only fosters a love for physical activity and the outdoors but also cultivates essential skills such as balance, coordination, and teamwork, contributing to their overall physical and social development in a fun and scenic environment.

Hiking

Exploring the beautiful trails of Copper Mountain while with us at MSA, children are offered a unique opportunity to connect with nature, fostering a sense of adventure, resilience, and an appreciation for the great outdoors, all within a safe and supervised environment.

Woodward

Children enrolled at MSA will have access to Woodward which offers an exciting and enriching experience, where they can explore and develop skills in a state-of-the-art facility, fostering creativity, confidence, and a passion for active pursuits.

Cooking

Children will have the unique opportunity to participate in engaging cooking classes led by skilled chefs, allowing them to explore the culinary arts, develop valuable life skills, and cultivate a love for creativity in the kitchen.

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL *continued*

Staff Qualifications

All staff at Mountain Sprouts Academy are hired in compliance with state qualifications and requirements. All staff are required to complete 15 hours of continuing education annually. The trainings must include 3 hours of social emotional development. Other topics included in continuing education are child growth and development, health and safety, developmentally appropriate practices, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism. All staff members must have and stay current on CPR and Standard Precautions.

Child to Staff Ratios

All children are supervised constantly, and teachers go through active supervision training. All teachers receive scheduled breaks throughout the day to help ensure alertness. Our ratios are based on Colorado state licensing requirements but are kept below those ratios for quality.

- **Infants: 8 weeks to 18 months**
3 to 1 ratio with a maximum of 6 children
- **Toddlers: 18 months to 36 months**
5 to 1 with a maximum of 10 children
- **Young Preschool Room: 3 - 4 years**
7 to 1 with a maximum of 15 children
- **Older Preschool Room: 4 - 5 years**
7 to 1 with a maximum of 15 children

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are their child's first and most important teachers.

We believe parents are an integral part of their child's learning process and need to be included in our everyday activities through communication and a collaborative learning plan. We have an open-door policy and encourage parents to visit the school. Parent engagement allows for parents to continue their child's learning exploration at home adding their own unique points of view, culture, and family background.

Parent involvement helps to create a positive environment at our school and helps you get to know our teachers, as well as other families. As a parent, you can donate your time, materials, or participation in any fundraisers we may have. For field trips, we encourage parents to join their child on that day's adventure.

Visitors

All visitors to the center, will be admitted by administrators and must sign in and out in the visitor binder located at the front desk.

COMMUNICATIONS

Effective communication between parents and teachers is extremely important to our school. The following resources and procedures ensure every parent receives vital information about their child's development, needs, and progress.

General Communication

Regular and open communication allows parents to stay informed about their child's activities, social interactions, and educational milestones, fostering trust and collaboration. It enables teachers to gain valuable insights into a child's home life, enabling them to provide more personalized and effective care and education. When parents and teachers work together to maintain clear and consistent communication, they create a supportive environment that optimizes a child's early learning experience, promoting holistic development and laying a solid foundation for their future education. Communication will be translated into your home language by either email, hard copy, text, spoken language with an interpreter and or video messaging.

Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are another important way for families to feel connected to our school. Conferences are held twice yearly. During these conferences, we will discuss strengths, likes, dislikes, and learning styles. Together, we will set goals for your child's growth and development. Conferences may be requested at any time, and we encourage you to communicate any concerns with us.

Postings

Bulletin boards are located throughout our school with important information and documentation of your child's learning journey.

Calendar and Events

Parents will receive a yearly calendar with important dates and closures. Holiday closures as well as teacher training days are listed.

Surveys

Parent surveys are conducted on an annual basis. The results from the surveys will be used to drive the goals for a Quality Improvement Plan

Emergency Conditions

Emergency conditions, such as severe weather, power outages, or fire can disrupt our operations and interfere with work schedules and can potentially endanger children, families, and staff. Under any of these extreme circumstances, we may need to close our facility.

If we need to close, due to an emergency, families will be notified by either the Executive Director, Assistant Director, or Education Coordinator. Closings will also be posted on our website and emails will be sent.

ENROLLMENT & WAIT LIST

Enrollment and Tuition

All enrollment and admission forms must be completed, and any fees due must be paid prior to your child's first day of attendance. Enrollment forms are available on our website, at the front desk, or via email.



[Link to enrollment forms.](#)

Wait List and Priority Guidelines:

Upon availability of one or more vacancies, MSA will call parents of wait-listed children in order of priority to fill the vacancy immediately.

If a vacancy is declined when offered, the family may stay on the wait list. MSA will allow two working days for a parent to respond before offering the slot to the next individual on the wait list. If Mountain Sprouts Academy makes an attempt to place a child into a vacancy and the parent does not respond, the child will be removed from the wait list. A child can be removed from the wait list if the parent chooses to be removed.

After notification and acceptance of a vacancy, there is a two-week grace period in which the child must start.



[Link to wait list.](#)

Enrollment Priority

Enrollment priority for all ages is based on the following guidelines:

1. Children of MSA/VAC Staff
2. Children of Copper Mountain Staff & Children of Copper Business Employees/Owners – based on date of wait list sign up
3. Children currently enrolled wanting more days
4. Children of siblings currently enrolled
5. Children of Copper Mountain Homeowners/Full Time Residents

TUITION AND PAYMENTS

2024 Tuition Rates

Infant Room	Monthly Rate*	Daily Rate
4 Days	\$1,700.00	\$98.97
3 Days	\$1,350.00	\$103.85
2 Days	\$925.00	\$106.73
1 Day	\$500.00	\$115.38

Mixed Toddlers	Monthly Rate*	Daily Rate
4 Days	\$1,700.00	\$98.97
3 Days	\$1,350.00	\$103.85
2 Days	\$925.00	\$106.73
1 Day	\$500.00	\$115.38

Preschool	Monthly Rate*	Daily Rate
4 Days	\$1,550.00	\$89.42
3 Days	\$1,225.00	\$94.23
2 Days	\$850.00	\$98.07
1 Day	\$450.00	\$103.85

Saturday (by reservation) - \$125.00 per day (meals not provided on Saturday)

***Meal costs are included in tuition rates (breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, and milk)**

We will be a SPK/First Steps/UPK provider.

Tuition rates are subject to change.

Payments

Tuition is due on the 10th of each month for the current month. You may pay your tuition by check or cash each month or automatic withdrawal from your bank account.

Policies on Withdrawals and Refunds

Parents may withdraw their child from our program at any time during the enrollment year. If a child must be withdrawn, 2 weeks' notice must be given. If you wish to re-enroll your child at a later date, your child will be placed in a class on a space available/wait list basis.

If a Copper Employee resigns or is terminated from their position with a Copper Mountain business, they will be able to keep their child's spot with MSA academy for 30 days from the time of resignation or termination, unless there is a wait list spot that can fill the position. If a Copper Mountain employee is laid off, they will be able to keep their child's spot with proof of lay off.

DAILY ESSENTIALS

APPLICABLE TO ALL AGES

Please do not send valuables or money to school with your child. Please mail or give tuition money or other payments to the front desk, do not leave in your child's backpack. Please do not send any medication without notifying your child's teacher and completing the appropriate paperwork. MSA is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Labeling

Please be sure to label all your child's belongings. Unlabeled items will be marked by your child's teacher.

Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a cubby to use for the day. Please check your child's cubby daily for any items that may need to go home.

Toys From Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home to school unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity.

Sunscreen

Rocky Mountain Sunscreen will be provided for all children ages 6 months and over unless the family chooses to bring their own sunscreen.

Clothing

Dress your child in comfortable, simple clothing that is free of complicated fasteners and that can withstand messy activities. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities throughout the day including painting, outdoor play, sand, water, and other sensory activities.

Most age groups play outside every day. Please

make sure your child comes properly clothed for the outdoors and our mountain weather, including waterproof snow pants, hats, mittens, and snow or rubber boots. We will call parents if their child is missing any necessary clothing.

Footwear

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate footwear for children while at school as they make it difficult for children to participate in many of the planned activities.

Small Objects

In accordance with best practices on child health, safety, and welfare as indicated in Caring for Our Children (3rd edition, standard 6.4.1.2) small objects that could pose a choking hazard to children under the age of three are not allowed in areas designated for children in this age group. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, small objects that pose a choking hazard are less than 1.25" in diameter and between 1" to 2.5" deep. For this reason, children's jewelry including, but not limited to, items such as barrettes, bracelets, earrings, and necklaces are not allowed to be worn on children under the age of three.

As a precaution, drawstrings on clothing are not allowed at MSA.

DAILY ESSENTIALS *continued*

WHAT TO BRING: INFANTS

Please remember all the items listed below will need to be labeled with your child's name.

- Ready to feed bottles (already mixed, not dry formula) labeled and with the date on them
- Food for the day if your child is eating solids
- Diapers – you may bring diapers for the day or bring a whole bag that we will keep here and then notify you when they are almost gone. We are not allowed to use cloth diapers.
- Diapering ointments (i.e., Desitin, A&D ointment)- diaper cream requires a doctor's note that will be kept at the front desk.
- Favorite blanket or stuffed toy – please remember that infants are not allowed to sleep with these items, they are just for comfort.
- Change of clothing – at least one set, preferably two.
- Outdoor clothing appropriate for the season (sunhat, sunglasses, snowsuit, boots, mittens, warm hat)
- Sunscreen – Mountain Sprouts uses Rocky Mountain sunscreen. If would like your infant (over 6 months of age) to use something different, please bring us a bottle labeled with your child's name. Please discuss with your child's teacher if outside activities will be part of the day's activities at drop off.
- Sleep sack

WHAT TO BRING: TODDLERS

Please remember all the items listed below will need to be labeled with your child's name..

- Drinks in a cup – Please remember we will not serve juice
- If your child is NOT on the meal plan, hot or cold lunch in a lunch box/bag. Please remember that lunches cannot be reheated for children under the age of three.
- Diapers – you may bring daily or bring a whole bag that we will keep here
- Diapering ointment (i.e., Desitin, A&D ointment) Please remember that diaper cream requires a doctor's note that will be kept at the front desk
- Change of clothing – at least one full set
- Favorite blanket or stuffed animal to stay at school
- Season appropriate outdoor clothing (sunhat, swimsuit, sunglasses, snowsuit, boots, hat, mittens)
- Sunscreen – if you choose to bring your own

WHAT TO BRING: PRESCHOOLERS

Please remember all the items listed below will need to be labeled with your child's name..

- Full change of clothing
- If NOT on the meal plan, lunch and two snacks
- Water bottle filled with water only – we do not serve juice
- Favorite blanket or stuffed animal to stay at school
- Season appropriate outdoor clothing (sunhat, swimsuit, sunglasses, snowsuit, mittens, boots, etc.)
- Sunscreen – if you choose to bring your own

MEALS AND NUTRITION

Meals & Nutrition

Mountain Sprouts Academy offers a meal program based on the guidelines and requirements of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The menus and food are planned and prepared by MSA staff and provide a full day of nutritional requirements. Morning and afternoon snacks as well as lunch and milk are provided.

We ask that you give us 2 weeks' notice before beginning or ending the meal plan. The cost is included in your monthly tuition. We will do our best to accommodate dietary needs.

Food prepared for or at Mountain Sprouts will be planned, prepared, and portioned according to the CACFP guidelines and the state requirements for food service. You can find more information about this program at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care>.

Liquids

Water and milk are the only allowable drinks at MSA. Juice will not be served to children of any age.

Food Brought from Home

Children not enrolled in the meal program must bring a morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack and milk for the full day. Your child's meals must equal 50% of the daily recommendations. If it does not, Mountain Sprouts is required to supplement the meals. If we must supplement your child's meals, you will be billed a fee of \$3.00 per day.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make the appropriate substitutions for them. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated annually. Food allergies can be life threatening and any child with a food allergy must have an action plan for emergency care that is completed by the child's physician that MSA has on file at the center.

INFANT MEALTIMES

- Infants are fed "on demand" (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly)
- Bottle-fed infants are fed while being held or sitting up.
- Formula must be brought to school in a factory-sealed, pre-mixed container in a ready-to-feed strength.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child's family.
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing Mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. Fresh breast milk must be used within 48 hours. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months.

MEALS AND NUTRITION *continued*

TODDLER MEALTIMES (FOR MEAL PLAN AND NON-MEAL PLAN)

- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent of their abilities. Family style dining is encouraged where the table is set with plates, utensils, and the food is placed in small bowls from which the children can serve themselves. Teachers model, guide and encourage, never force, the children to eat and try a variety of new foods,
- Any foods, round or firm that could pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

PRESCHOOLER MEALTIMES

- Family style dining is offered for preschoolers. The table is set with plates and utensils, and the food is placed in small bowls from which the children can help themselves. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged by teachers.
- Monthly menus are posted for parents and teachers in the classrooms, on our website, and on our bulletin boards.

DAILY EXPECTATIONS

Rest Time

State licensing regulations require that any child attending a childcare program for more than 4 hours per day must be offered nap/quiet time.

After children finish lunch, all children under the age of 5 years participate in a quiet rest time. Please bring a labeled blanket and or favorite stuffed toy to help your child feel comfortable. After a reasonable amount of time, if children are not asleep, they may participate in quiet activities. Children are not forced to sleep, and we will not force a child to remain awake if he or she exhibits signs of fatigue. Please feel free to have a conversation about your child's sleep habits with their teachers.

Children sleep on cots so there is a slip provided in the enrollment packet for you to sign off on allowing your child to sleep on a cot.

Toilet Training

A strong family/teacher partnership is necessary for making the toilet learning experience as stress free and successful as possible. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 18-24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet learning occurs only after the child shows signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's wishes. State regulations prohibit the use of training toilets in childcare

facilities. There will not be any attempts on the part of Mountain Sprouts Academy to toilet train children under the age of 24 months.

Diapering

All children wearing diapers will be checked for wetness or feces at least every two hours, or whenever the child indicates discomfort or exhibits behavior that suggests they have a soiled or wet diaper. The child will be changed when found to be wet or soiled. A diaper changing station or changing area will be provided and located separate from any food preparation, storage, or serving area, and will comply with Colorado Department of Health and Environment Rules and Regulations Governing the Health and Sanitation of Childcare Facilities.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Physicals

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. A copy of your child's physical must be received before but not later than 6 weeks after your child starts our program. Families are responsible for ensuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the child's health assessment is provided to MSA.

Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Annually, we check with the Department of Public Health or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates on the recommended immunization schedule.

State regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. If your child is unimmunized you will need to provide an exemption form. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illnesses as directed by the State of Colorado Health Department of Public Health and Environment. For more information about state and federal requirements and recommendations visit: www.aap.org and www.usphs.gov.

Sunscreen

At Mountain Sprouts Academy we use Rocky Mountain sunscreen. If you prefer your child to use something different, please bring a labeled bottle of your preferred sunscreen and give it to your child's teacher. Sunscreen will be applied to the children 30 minutes prior to going outside in the morning and in the afternoon. Teachers will re-apply every 2 hours as needed. State regulations prohibit our staff from applying sunscreen to children under 6 months of age. The Infant room does spend time outside so parents, please communicate with the teachers about the daily activity schedule so that if you choose to apply sunscreen to your infant (under 6 months) you can as needed.

Sensory Play

Sensory play is an important part of children's development. Children will be offered many types of sensory material including water. All water play will be supervised, and precautions will be taken to make sure that communicable infectious diseases are not spread.

Screenings

Dental, vision, and hearing screenings will be offered once each year. Dental screenings are offered to all children and hearing and vision screening ages are dictated by Summit County Public Health.

Daily Health Check

A daily health check will be conducted each day to protect the wellbeing of all children in the program. When the child enters the center, we will look for skin rashes, elevated temperatures, itchy scalps, lethargy,

HEALTH AND SAFETY *continued*

and changes from usual behavior. These are just quick checks and by no means take the place of a physical conducted by your child's health care provider.

- If a child has had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to school is required.
- Children with head lice will not be allowed to return to school until they have been treated and no further head lice or nits are detected during a health check.

Illness

We understand that is difficult for family members to leave or miss work, but to protect other children, you may not bring a sick child to the preschool. MSA has the right to refuse care to a child who appears ill.

If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be called and asked to pick up your child. We will keep your child as comfortable as possible and her or she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive and kept in our sick area.



Communicable Disease

How sick is too sick?

Public guidance document

This document outlines guidance for routine decisions about when children and staff should stay home from school or child care. There may be situations where public health determines more stringent return-to-school requirements.

There are four main reasons for children and adults to stay home:

1. The child or staff member could infect others with a contagious illness, either because of symptoms, a diagnosis, or recent exposure to a contagious illness.
2. The child or staff member does not feel well enough to take part in usual activities. For example, a child is overly tired, fussy, or will not stop crying.
3. A child needs more care than teachers and staff can give while still caring for the other children.
4. The child or staff member has symptoms or an illness on this list, and staying home is required.

When to seek emergency medical attention

- **Trouble breathing**
- **Persistent pain or pressure in the chest**
- **Confusion**
- **Inability to wake or stay awake**
- **Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone**

These are not all possible indications of a medical emergency. Call 9-1-1 or your health care provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

HEALTH AND SAFETY *continued*

Guidance for symptoms not due to a specific disease	Child or staff must stay home?
<p>Severe or new cough</p>	<p>Yes - Severe cough is often present in people with infectious respiratory illness. A person with severe, uncontrolled coughing, wheezing, or rapid or difficulty breathing (if new or worsening from baseline) should not attend school or child care and should talk to a health care provider.</p> <p>If all symptoms are consistent with the usual symptoms of a known chronic condition and the person is otherwise well enough to return to school, no further evaluation is necessary.</p> <p>Students and staff may return to school following discussion with a health care provider, even if the cough is not fully resolved.</p>
<p>Diarrhea Frequent, loose, or watery stools (poop) compared to normal ones that are not caused by food or medicine</p>	<p>Yes - Unless the diarrhea is related to an existing chronic condition, is explained by a diagnosed condition not requiring the person to stay home, or is consistent with the person's baseline.</p> <p>The child or staff member may return to school or child care 24 hours after their last episode of diarrhea unless the diarrhea is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer. If the diarrhea is explained by a specific illness, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p>
<p>Fever Fever is a temperature of 100.4°F or greater. Babies who are 3 months or younger need to see a health care provider right away for a fever of 100°F or higher. Call your health care provider for any fever in an infant aged 6 months or younger.</p>	<p>Yes - The child or staff member may return to school or child care if the fever has been resolved for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications unless the fever is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer.</p> <p>If the fever is consistent with the usual symptoms of a known chronic condition and the person is otherwise well enough to return to school, no further evaluation is necessary.</p> <p>A temporary, elevated temperature due to overexertion or overdress, without other symptoms of illness, should not be considered a fever.</p> <p>For more information about fever, read Children's Hospital Colorado's recommendations on fever care for children.</p>
<p>Flu-like symptoms Fever with sore throat or cough</p> <p>Other flu symptoms can include runny nose, congestion, fatigue, body aches, vomiting and diarrhea.</p>	<p>Yes - Children and staff may return to school or child care as long as they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms are improving, unless the symptoms are caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer. If the symptoms can be explained by a specific illness, then follow the exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p>In consultation with a health care provider, additional evaluation for flu-like illnesses, sore throat, and upper respiratory symptoms may be appropriate, including evaluation for strep throat.</p>

HEALTH AND SAFETY *continued*

Guidance for symptoms not due to a specific disease	Child or staff must stay home?
Vomiting	<p>Yes - Unless the vomiting is related to an existing chronic condition or is explained by a diagnosed condition not requiring the person to stay home. If the vomiting is unexplained and inconsistent with the person's baseline state of health, the child or staff member may return 24 hours after their last episode of vomiting. If the vomiting can be explained by a specific illness, then follow the exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p>If a child with a recent head injury vomits, seek medical attention.</p>

Guidance for specific diagnosed illnesses	Child or staff must stay home?
Chicken Pox	<p>Yes - Exclude until the blisters have dried and crusted (usually 6 days), or in immunized people without crusting, until no new lesions within 24-hour period.</p>
Conjunctivitis (pink eye) Pink color of eye and thick yellow/green discharge	<p>No - Children and adults do not need to stay home unless they have a fever or are not able to participate in usual activities. Practice good hand hygiene.</p>
COVID-19 (clinical diagnosis, symptoms after known exposure without testing, or a positive diagnostic test)	<p>Yes - Children and staff who have suspected COVID-19 (have symptoms following a known exposure) or who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 must be excluded and follow CDC's isolation guidance.</p> <p>If a COVID-19 test is negative and the symptoms are explained by a specific illness other than COVID-19, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p>If the COVID-19 test is negative and the illness is not explained by a new illness or a known chronic condition, the person may return to school as long as all symptoms are improving and fever, diarrhea, and vomiting have been fully resolved for 24 hours.</p>
Fifth's Disease (parvovirus)	<p>No - The illness is no longer contagious once the rash appears.</p>
Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie virus)	<p>No - Exclusion is not necessary unless the child or adult meets other exclusion criteria, is drooling uncontrollably, and has mouth sores or is not able to take part in usual activities.</p>
Head Lice or Scabies	<p>Yes - Children and staff may stay at school or child care until the end of the day, but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment.</p>
Hepatitis A, Salmonella, Shigella, or Shiga Toxin-Producing E. coli	<p>Yes - Children and staff may return to school or child care when cleared by the health department.</p>

HEALTH AND SAFETY *continued*

Guidance for specific diagnosed illnesses	Child or staff must stay home?
Herpes	No - Exclusion is not necessary unless there are open sores that cannot be covered or there is uncontrollable drooling.
Impetigo	Yes - Children and adults need to stay home until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has started.
Influenza	Yes - Children and staff should stay home until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have been improving for 24 hours.
Norovirus	Yes - Exclude children and staff for at least 48 hours after their last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea. During an outbreak, exclusion may be increased to 72 hours after the last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea.
Ringworm	Yes - Children may stay at school or child care until the end of the day, but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment. Keep the area covered for the first three days if participating in activities with person to person contact.
Roseola	No - Exclusion is not necessary unless there is a fever or behavior changes.
Croup, RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)	Yes - Children and staff should remain out of school or child care until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have been improving for 24 hours. During an outbreak or when case rates are high, exclusion times may be increased to protect hospital capacity.
Strep Throat	Yes - Exclude for 12 hours after starting antibiotics.
Other vaccine-preventable diseases Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Yes - Children and staff can return to school once they are no longer contagious (see Infectious Disease Guidelines). Public health consultation may be necessary.
Yeast infections Thrush or Candida diaper rash	No - Follow good hand washing and hygiene practices.
Other Symptoms or illnesses not listed	Contact the child care center director or school health staff to see if the child or staff member needs to stay home (see Infectious Disease Guidelines). Public health consultation may be necessary.

HEALTH AND SAFETY *continued*

Children who have been ill may return when*:

- The child is free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours
- The child has been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours
- The child can participate comfortably in all usual activities
- The child are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething)

*Unless:

- The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and the involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage (where applicable) and that the child may return to school.

Medication

Please also reference Appendix B for Medication Administration Policy.

All medications must be handed to an administrative staff member with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in a child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Staff with medication administration responsibility will ensure that the medication is given according to the directions and recorded. All medication will be kept out of reach of children. If medication requires refrigeration, it will be stored in a separate container in the kitchen, out of reach of children.

- Prescription medications require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication must meet the following requirements: the child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medication must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). The prescribing doctor must specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
- Non-prescription medications require a note signed by the child's physician. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.
- Non-prescription topical ointments (e.g., diaper cream) require a note signed by the child's physician, specifying the frequency and dosage to be administered.

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify the school regarding any food or environmental allergies their child may have. If your child does have an allergy, you are required to provide us with a letter from the doctor, detailing your child's symptoms, reactions, treatments, and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area, the kitchen and teachers will all be aware. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

HEALTH AND SAFETY *continued*

Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the school has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families via school signage about exposure so children can receive preventative treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella
- Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness

Safety / Injuries

Daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside of the facility to prevent injuries. First Aid will be administered by a trained caregiver if your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). An incident/accident report will be completed detailing the incident and the course of action that was taken for you to sign. If the injury produces any type of swelling or we feel it needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit that meets State of Colorado regulations. Each classroom also has outdoor/field trip backpacks that are equipped with first aid kits.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we try to contact you or one of your emergency contacts.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

INCLUSION, NON-DISCRIMINATION, CONFIDENTIALITY

Inclusion

At Mountain Sprouts Academy we believe that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities, acceptance, and belonging in our center. We make every reasonable accommodation and encourage full and active participation of all children in our center. The inclusion or exclusion of children with special needs will be determined by the Executive Director based upon the severity and nature of the condition. The Executive Director will refer parents to special services if he/she decides that the child's needs are better met in a different program or with special services. For children 0-3, referrals will be made to Early Intervention. For children 3+, referrals will be made to The Summit School District. Please see the Appendix at the end of this handbook for a flow chart. All facilities licensed under the Childcare Act are subject to titles I through V of the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended and its implementing regulation, Title 29CFR, Part 1630. Decisions related to enrollment, placement, or dismissal of a child with a disability or chronic condition must be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The facility must provide reasonable accommodations for the child with a disability who has special needs. Efforts must be made to accommodate the child's needs and to integrate the child with his or her peers who do not have disabilities.

Non-Discrimination

At Mountain Sprouts Academy, equal educational opportunities are available to all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. All educational programs are designed to meet the needs of all children enrolled in our center.

Confidentiality

All information regarding your child will not be released unless we receive written consent from you, the parent. All records concerning children at our program are confidential. Occasionally, we will take photos of the children participating in various activities. By signing the acknowledgment of receiving and reviewing this handbook, along with signing the enrollment packet, you are giving Mountain Sprouts Academy the permission to use any photos taken during school activities for promotion of Mountain Sprouts Academy. When we use these photos, there will be no names, ages, or other personal information DISCLOSED.

SCHOOL OUTINGS

Field Trips

From time to time, there will be supervised field trips or walking excursions and we encourage you to join your child on the trip. During these outings, children are always accounted for and kept safe. A permission statement for these outings is in our enrollment packet. If your child is going to be late for an outing or field trip, the parent is responsible for meeting up with the group or keeping the child with you until the group returns.

DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Creating and planning thoughtful, engaging and aesthetically pleasing environments helps to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating clear, consistent rules and involving children in problem solving helps children develop the ability to become self-disciplined. We always encourage children to be fair and respectful of others, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Children are guided and encouraged to treat each other and adults with kindness. If a child becomes physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all children.

When challenging behaviors occur, we guide children in and help them solve the problem using appropriate interactions. When needed, discipline is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child.

Physical restraint is never used or permitted. There are rare instances when we must ensure the safety of the child and others around them, we may hold the child gently for as long as necessary to control the situation. If a child's behavior or a particular circumstance becomes a concern, we will communicate with the parents as the first step in understanding the child's needs. We will work together to evaluate the needs in the context of our program.

We are here to serve and protect all the children in our care. For children displaying chronic disruptive behavior or development concerns which have been determined to be upsetting to the physical or emotional well-being of another child or staff member, they will be required to go through the following steps:

- Initial consultation with the Executive Director, Lead Teacher, and parents to meet for a conference. The issue/situation will be defined on paper and goals will be established by the parent and teacher to help in resolving the concern.
- If the initial plan for helping the child fails, the parents will again be required to meet with the teacher and Director. Another attempt will be made to identify the concern, outline a new approach to the problem which could include Child Find assessments, DECA, The Early Childhood Social Emotional Wellness Program, and the Ages and Stages Screening Tool and discuss the consequences if progress is not made.
- The Executive Director reserves the right to immediately suspend a child at any time if he/she exhibits behavior which is harmful to him/her or others. A parent may be called from work or home anytime a child exhibits uncontrollable behavior that cannot be modified by staff. The parent may be asked to take the child home immediately.

On very rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care.

Examples of such instances are:

- Continuation of care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES *continued*

DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS (cont.)

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development among infants and toddlers and occasionally even preschoolers. Most young children will try it at least once. When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child that was bitten, and then to help the biter learn a more appropriate outlet for their frustration. We will focus on teaching and guiding the child to more effective behaviors that can help address the reason for biting. Incident/accident reports will be written and given to both families and we will work together to develop strategies for change.

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If these behaviors occur, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your child from our care.

SAFETY POLICIES

Procedure For Identifying Where Children Are At All Times Including During Transitions:

Parents will check-in and check-out their child using the ELV kiosk app. A list will be maintained of who is authorized to pick up each child. Identification will be check and cross-referenced with the authorized pick-up list and all employees will be notified if someone unfamiliar arrives to collect a child.

Attendance will be kept accurate throughout the day, documenting each child's presence, and updated to reflect any changes in attendance or enrollment.

There will be open communication with parents or guardians regarding their child's schedule and any deviations from the norm. Parents will be notified promptly if a child is absent without prior notice.

Staff are trained in active supervision and count the children in their care constantly. They know where each child is at all times.

All staff members are responsible for the supervision of children in their care. The Administration team is ultimately responsible for the care and supervision of all children in the building. The Director or a Director qualified individual will be present at least 60% of any day the center is open.

Smoking

Mountain Sprouts Academy realizes that the poisons in secondhand smoke are extremely harmful to young children and their developing bodies, therefore all areas, indoor and outdoor at our center, as well as vehicles used by the center are always non-smoking areas. The use of tobacco in any form is strictly prohibited from our premises.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES *continued*

SAFETY POLICIES (cont.)

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on Mountain Sprouts Academy premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized, potentially toxic substances is prohibited. Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately, this includes parents picking up children. The children will stay on the premises and social services will be called.

Dangerous Weapons

Any dangerous weapon, gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, can inflict bodily harm is prohibited. Families, children, staff, or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called, and the individual (s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. Mountain Sprouts Academy is legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriated state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective agency will determine appropriate action and may investigate. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are being met. Mountain Sprouts Academy will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

Procedure for filing a complaint about childcare:

If an individual feels the need to file a complaint they may contact the Division of Early Care and Learning at 303-866-5958 / Monday - Friday/ 8:00-5:00

Call 911 immediately if you witness a child in a life-threatening situation.

Report Child Abuse or Neglect - 24/7 Hotline: Call 1-844-CO-4-KIDS (844-264-5437)

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES *continued*

EMERGENCIES

The Procedure for Releasing Children From the Center

Children will be released only to those individuals, other than parents/guardians, whom the parents have designated as emergency contacts in the child's enrollment form and who we have written authorization for. All individuals not known to the administrative team will be asked to show identification before the child can be released to them.

The procedure for releasing children during an emergency is outlined in the emergency handbook. If an emergency occurs during operating hours, and children must be moved from the center, the following steps will be taken:

Before an Emergency

- Ensure parents/guardians have completed the Emergency Release Form
- Inform parents/guardians in advance of primary and secondary evacuation sites if an evacuation is required;
- Ensure there is a phone number of a family member or trusted friend out of the area such as a grandparent or other relative who can be contacted to locate the parents/guardians;
- Establish an emergency number for the childcare center outside the area that parents/ guardians can contact to learn where their child or children have been relocated;
- Take and maintain a current digital photo of each child enrolled in the childcare center that can be posted to aid in reunification; with the parents'/guardians' permission, email a copy of the photo files to a location outside the area for use in reuniting children with their parents/guardians during an emergency;
- Become familiar with national and local registries that are in place to assist with family reunification during an emergency;
- The American Red Cross' Safe and Well Program: <https://bit.ly/3SZ7pyt>

During an Emergency

- Affix the Child Identification Card on each child (e.g. to the back of their shirt) that will help reunite the child with his or her parents/guardians or other trusted individuals;
- Assign an individual (staff member or assistant) and a backup person to be responsible for each child's safety during the event;
- Release children only to individuals the parents/guardians have designated as approved to take the child from the childcare center and require such individuals to show photo identification before releasing a child to them;
- Document the release of the child on the Emergency Release Form
- Keep parents/guardians informed.

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child along with the Copper Security Team. If the child is not located within 10 minutes, the family and police will be notified.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES *continued*

EMERGENCIES (cont.)

Fire Safety

Mountain Sprouts Academy is fully equipped with alarms, back-up lighting, rolling cribs, fire extinguishers, and disaster kits. We have an extensive Emergency Handbook that is reviewed with staff. Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff monthly. Lockdown drills and full evacuation drills are practiced. Parents will be notified when these practice drills occur.

Evacuation Sites

In the event we need to evacuate our facility and are unable to return to the building, there are two designated evacuation sites. The primary location is Copper Mountain Fire Department, 477 Copper Road (970- 262-510). If we are unable to walk there, we will locate to Copper Mountain Chapel, 630 Copper Road (970-485-2690). You will be notified through emails, telephone calls, or text messages letting you know where we are. Our staff will walk the children to one of these sites and if safe to do so, you (or an emergency contact) will be expected to pick your child up at the specified location. We will have contact information at the evacuation site to verify whether we can release your child. Please be prepared to manually sign your child out. Please make sure that your emergency contacts are always up to date and that they know they must have an ID when picking up your child.

Emergency Transportation

If your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, and we are unable to contact an authorized emergency contact for your child, an ambulance will be called for transportation. An administrator will accompany and stay with your child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

In the case of an emergency where a child may need to be transported from our facility in a car, the child will be accompanied by an administrator (either driving or riding in the back seat if there is someone else available to drive). The child will be seat belted in the back seat.

Emergency Conditions

Emergency conditions, such as severe weather, power outages, or fire can disrupt our operations and interfere with work schedules and can potentially endanger children, families, and staff. Under any of these extreme circumstances, we may need to close our facility.

If we need to close, due to an emergency, families will be notified by either the Executive Director, Assistant Director, or Education Coordinator. Closings will also be posted on our website and emails will be sent.

DEVELOPMENTAL AND CULTURAL POLICIES

Cell Phone Policy

We ask parents to not use cell phones when in our building. Drop off and pick up are important opportunities for you to connect with teachers and reconnect with your child free of distractions.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES *continued*

DEVELOPMENTAL AND CULTURAL POLICIES (cont.)

Screen Time

Screen time occurs only in the preschool classrooms and on a very limited basis. The focus of any screen-time is to provide your child with positive and developmentally appropriate educational experiences. Children will only be exposed to screen time for 30 minutes throughout the course of the week in suggested time periods of 15 minutes twice per week or 10 minutes three times per week.

Electronic Media

Electronic media, such as Internet sites and software, are pre-screened to contain non-violence and high-quality educational content.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism helps to set social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment. MSA uses books, music, games, and many other activities to teach children respect for our world as well as diversity.

Celebrations

All our holiday celebrations aim to create an enhanced understanding and respect for the cultures and beliefs of all children, families, staff, and our Mountain Sprouts community. If you are bringing treats to school to share, they must be pre-packaged or commercially prepared. If you have any concerns, please let your child's teacher know so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Rest Time

State licensing regulations require that any child attending a childcare program for more than 4 hours per day must be offered nap/quiet time.

After children finish lunch, all children under the age of 5 years participate in a quiet rest time. Please bring a labeled blanket and or favorite stuffed toy to help your child feel comfortable. After a reasonable amount of time, if children are not asleep, they may participate in quiet activities. Children are not forced to sleep, and we will not force a child to remain awake if he or she exhibits signs of fatigue. Please feel free to have a conversation about your child's sleep habits with their teachers.

Children sleep on cots so there is a slip provided in the enrollment packet for you to sign off on allowing your child to sleep on a cot.

Transitions

We want your child's transition into our care to be a positive experience. We will collaborate with you and your child to ensure the smoothest transition occurs as new routines and people are introduced to them. There are several times your child will encounter transitions:

- From home to our center: Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour our facility, meet with your child's teachers and communicate any essential information we need to know.
- Transition between learning programs: Children will be transitioned to the next classroom based on age, developmental readiness, State of Colorado licensing regulations, and space availability. During this

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES *continued*

DEVELOPMENTAL AND CULTURAL POLICIES (cont.)

transition time, your child's current teacher and future teacher will discuss with you a plan to introduce your child into their new classroom.

Toilet Training

A strong family/teacher partnership is necessary for making the toilet learning experience as stress free and successful as possible. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 18-24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet learning occurs only after the child shows signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's wishes. State regulations prohibit the use of training toilets in childcare facilities. There will not be any attempts on the part of Mountain Sprouts Academy to toilet train children under the age of 24 months.

Diapering

All children wearing diapers will be checked for wetness or feces at least every two hours, or whenever the child indicates discomfort or exhibits behavior that suggests they have a soiled or wet diaper. The child will be changed when found to be wet or soiled. A diaper changing station or changing area will be provided and located separate from any food preparation, storage, or serving area, and will comply with Colorado Department of Health and Environment Rules and Regulations Governing the Health and Sanitation of Childcare Facilities.

Parents must provide only disposable diapers for their child, if prescription diaper cream is needed, a doctor's note must be provided.

Babysitting

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with any of our staff (babysitting). If you do choose to enter into an arrangement with any member of our staff outside of what we offer here at Mountain Sprouts Academy it is considered a private matter and is in no way connected to our facility. Staff may not be hired as babysitters if it interferes with their regularly scheduled workdays at MSA.

Resources

Summit County has an abundance of resources available for parents in many different areas including, mental health, general health, developmental delays in young children and other educational needs. The following is the procedure for accessing these resources:

- Teachers may refer families to any agency of need. You may refer to the resource guide located at the front desk.
- Referral forms need to be filled out if you feel there is a developmental or educational delay. Referral

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES *continued*

DEVELOPMENTAL AND CULTURAL POLICIES (cont.)

forms may be obtained from the front desk and the director will send the referral to the appropriate agency, either Early Intervention or to the Summit School District.

- Parents will then be contacted by the referral agency to determine next steps.
- The referral agency will then be in contact with Mountain Sprouts to coordinate any needs or services for the child.

APPENDIX

Appendix A - Summit County Child Find

Appendix B - Medication Administration Policy

Appendix C - Safe Infant Sleep

Appendix D - Core Principles

Appendix E - Ideas For Children's Healthy Eating

Appendix F - Acknowledgment



Summit County Child Find



If you feel that your child has a developmental delay or is experiencing abnormal patterns of development, such as a delay in communication/language, motor skills, problem-solving or social and adaptive behavior, Summit County has resources for Parents and Teachers. Summit County uses the ASQ-3 as a community wide screening tool to make sure that children who may have a delay in gross motor/fine motor, problem solving, or communication is identified and provided the needed services. Summit County works in partnership with Early Intervention and Summit School District to identify and provide services.

Early Intervention:

If your child is between the ages of 0-3 and you have concerns about their development please contact Early Intervention Colorado at 1-888-777-4041 or visit their website at https://coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.secure.force.com/eicolorado/EI_Home?=en



Child Find at Summit School District – Preschool

For children ages 3-5 who may have developmental delays, they are referred to The Summit School District for assessment and identification of any potential educational disabilities. This process begins with an appointment with the Child-Find Team. A developmental screening will be performed by the child's teacher, parent, doctor, or another agency. Information gathered from the screening will help determine if further assessment is necessary to determine eligibility for preschool special education. If the child is found to be eligible, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed with specific goals to address the child's specific needs. All special education services and any related services are provided at no cost to the family. Please contact Tricia King at tricia.king@summitk12.org to schedule an appointment for a developmental screening.



Medication Administration Policy



Best Practice

Families should check with their child’s physician to see if a dose schedule can be arranged that does not involve the hours the child is in the childcare facility.

Intent Statement

This policy is intended to ensure safe administration of medication to children with chronic conditions, mild illnesses, or special health needs for whom a plan has been made and the plan has been approved by the Executive Director.

Background

Almost all children require medication at some point in time. Administration of medicine poses a liability and an extra burden for staff, and having medication in the facility is a safety hazard. Administration of medication requires clear and accurate instruction, and knowledge of why the child needs the medication. Childcare providers need to be aware of what the child is receiving, when it is to be given, how to read the label directions in relation to the measured doses, expiration dates, and be aware of any side effects. This policy applies to all medication administration for any child within the facility. Only staff with current Medication Administration Training and Delegation by our Health Professional are allowed to administer medication.

Procedure/Practice

Medication will be administered only if the parent/legal guardian has provided a medical provider’s written, signed, and dated consent to include:

1. Child’s first and last name
2. Name of medication
3. Time the medication should be given and how often
4. Criteria for the administration of the medication
5. How much medicine to give
6. Manner in which the medication shall be administered (oral, topical, inhaled, injection, etc.)
7. Medication conditions, possible allergic reactions, or any precautions to follow length of time the authorization is valid

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Physician Signature: _____

Date: _____

Medication will not be given if it is:

- Not in the original container
- Beyond the date of expiration on the container
- Without written authorization
- Beyond expiration of the parent/legal guardian AND physician's consent
- Without the written instructions provided by the physician or other health professional legally authorized to prescribe the medication
- In any manner not authorized by the child's parent/legal guardian and/or health professional
- For non-medical reasons, such as to induce sleep
- Unlicensed by the FDA (herbal, supplemental, experimental, etc.)

Receipt, Storage, and Disposal

- All medication brought into the childcare center will be given to: _____
_____ for review and approval
- Medication will be stored in a sturdy, locked container that is inaccessible to children and prevents spillage. The container is located: _____

- Emergency medication may be left unlocked so long as they are stored out of reach of children, in a cabinet at least 5 feet above the floor. If you have a child with an emergency medication, the medication, plan, and documentation will be stored in the child's classroom located (if applicable):
 - _____ in the _____ rm
 - _____ in the _____ rm
 - _____ in the _____ rm
 - _____ in the _____ rm
- NOTE: wherever the child goes, the medication goes as well; remember to bring (in a staff backpack) the medication, the plan, and the documentation for ANY off-site excursion.
- Medications will be stored at the temperature recommended for that type of medication. It shall not be stored above food. A lock box can be kept in a designated refrigerator not accessible to children to hold medications. Medications that need to be refrigerated will be stored _____

- Non-prescription diaper creams shall be stored out of reach of children in a cabinet or counter at least 5 feet above the floor but are not required to be in a locked storage.
- Any medications remaining after the course of treatment is completed or authorization is withdrawn will be returned to the parent/legal guardian within 72 hours.



Safe Infant Sleep

POLICY FOR USE IN CHILDCARE CENTERS



Providing infants with a safe place to grow and learn is very important. Mountain Sprouts Academy has a policy on safe sleep practices for infants up to 1-year-old. We follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission to provide a safe sleep environment and to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is described as the sudden death of an infant under the age of one and remains unexplained after thorough investigation is completed. All staff working with infants and toddlers will complete the mandatory Safe Sleep Training on PDIS yearly.

Sleep Position

- All infants will be placed flat on their backs to sleep every time unless there is an up-to-date physician's signed waiver in the child's file. The waiver must contain detailed sleep position information, a medical explanation that indicates why an alternative sleep position is necessary, the parent's signature, and an end date. If there is a waiver, it will be posted on the infant's crib without identifying medical information. The full waiver will be kept in the child's file.
- Infants will NOT be placed on their side or belly to sleep.
- Devices such as wedges or infant positioners will NOT be used. There is no evidence to prove that they help to reduce SIDS.
- Infants who use pacifiers will be offered their pacifier when they are placed in the crib to sleep. It will not be put back in should it fall out once the infant is asleep. Pacifiers will NOT be attached to blankets or stuffed animals.
- Pacifiers will be cleaned between each use, checked for any tears, and will NOT be coated in any sweet or other solution.
- Parents are asked to provide replacement pacifiers on a regular basis.
- Swaddling is NOT recommended. There is evidence that swaddling increases the risk of serious health outcomes including SIDS and hip dysplasia. There is a waiver for swaddling as well and would need to be signed by a physician and the parent and kept on file at the school.

Sleep Environment

- We use Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines when purchasing cribs and mattresses and only buy what is approved for use in a childcare setting.
- Crib slats will be less than 2 3/8" apart.
- Infants will not be left in the crib with the drop side down.
- Infants will not be placed to sleep on any standard bed, waterbeds, couches, air mattresses, or on other soft surfaces.
- Only one infant will be placed to sleep in each crib. Siblings, including twins and triplets, will all be placed in separate cribs.
- The crib will have a firm tight-fitting mattress covered by a fitted sheet and will be free from blankets, loose bedding, toys, and any other soft objects (i.e. pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, etc.)
- To avoid overheating, the temperature of the room where infants sleep will be checked consistently and kept at a level that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.

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- Sleep clothing, such as sleepers, sleep sacks, and wearable blankets, may be used as alternatives to blankets if arms are free.
 - Bibs and pacifiers will not be tied around an infant's neck or clipped on to an infant's clothing during sleep.
 - Smoking is NOT allowed in or near Mountain Sprouts Academy.

Supervision

- When infants are in their cribs, they will be always within hearing and sight of all staff.
- A staff member will visibly check on the sleeping infants at least every ten minutes.
- When an infant is awake, they will be supervised for "tummy time" which could be 20-30 minutes throughout the day. Tummy time helps infants to strengthen their muscles and with normal development.
- Infants will spend VERY LIMITED time in things such as car seats, or bouncers when they are awake.

Training

- All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at Mountain Sprouts Academy, who supervise the sleep environment, will be trained on safe sleep policies and practices.
- Safe sleep practices will be reviewed with all staff and volunteers on a yearly basis. Training specific to these policies will be completed prior to any individual being allowed to care for infants.
- Documentation will be kept in staff and volunteers file stating that they have read and understand these safe sleep policies.
- All staff and volunteers at Mountain Sprouts Academy will be trained on first aid and CPR for unresponsive infants as well as what to do when they have a question or need assistance before they are allowed to care for infants.

When this Policy Applies

This policy applies to all staff, parents, and volunteers when they place an infant to sleep at Mountain Sprouts Academy.

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arents will review and sign this policy upon enrolling their child at Mountain Sprouts Academy. Parents are asked to follow this same policy when the infant is at home. These policies are posted within our center and the infant room. Information regarding safe sleep practices, safe sleep environments, reducing SIDS in childcare as well as other program health and safety practices will be shared if any changes are made. A copy of this policy is also available in our employee handbook.

Contact For Questions

Executive Director: Courtney Drabik – cdrabik@copper-ra.com

Assistant Director: Deanna Cunningham

Education Coordinator: Lizz Holm

Health Professional Contact: Kathryn Van Iderstine, RN – Kathryn.vaniderstine@summitcountyco.gov



Our Core Principles

GUIDED BY THE REGGIO EMILIA APPROACH



Nature As Our Classroom: At Mountain Sprouts Academy we embrace the mountainous landscape as an integral part of our curriculum. We strive to connect children with the natural world, fostering a deep appreciation for the environment. Through daily outdoor exploration, children are provided opportunities to explore, observe, and connect with the changing seasons and the wonders of the natural world. We inspire a profound connection to the natural world, encouraging children to become stewards of the environment.

Play-Based Learning: We recognize that play is the vehicle through which children make sense of the world, it is the cornerstone of childhood and has immense educational value. Play is not only a means of expression but also a way to develop problem-solving skills, creativity, and social-emotional intelligence. Our educators facilitate play experiences and provocations that are both joyful, educational, and based on what is of interest to the child, to help promote cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Children engage in open-ended activities that encourage self-expression and collaboration with peers.

Child-Centered Learning: We believe that children are natural explorers and learners. We honor and respect each child's unique abilities, interests, and curiosity. Our role is to create an environment that invites, questions, encourages inquiry, and celebrates the joy of discovery. We understand that children have their own timelines for growth and learning, and we provide a nurturing space where they can develop at their own pace.

Collaborative Learning: We believe that children learn best when they collaborate with their peers and engage in meaningful projects. Our classrooms are designed to encourage group exploration, dialogue, and problem solving. We recognize the importance of involving parents, families, and the broader community in our educational journey. Collaborative partnerships with parents are encouraged, as we believe that a strong home-school connection enriches the child's overall learning experience.

The Hundred Languages: Inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy, we view children as capable of expressing themselves in countless ways. We provide opportunities for children to communicate and express themselves through art, music, movement, and more.

Inquiry and Reflection: We encourage children to ask questions, investigate their surroundings, and reflect on their experiences. This process of inquiry and reflection helps children develop critical thinking skills and lifelong love of learning.

Respect and Inclusion: We foster an inclusive and respectful environment where every child, family, and staff member are valued and heard. We celebrate diversity and teach children the importance of kindness and empathy.

Emergent Curriculum: We embrace the Reggio Emilia philosophy's commitment to an emergent curriculum. Our provocations and activities are responsive to the interests and questions of the children. Teachers and children embark on learning journeys together, co-creating experiences that lead to deep and

meaningful discoveries. Documentation of children's work and reflections on their learning experiences are central to our approach, as they help guide our curriculum development.

Sustainable Practices: As stewards of the mountain environment, we are committed to sustainable practices. We teach children about conservation and responsible living, encouraging them to be caretakers of the Earth. Our facilities and daily operations reflect our commitment to minimizing our ecological footprint. Our philosophy is a guiding light that leads us on a journey of discovery, exploration, and growth. We strive to create a nurturing, inspiring, and respectful environment where children can flourish, connecting with the world around them and laying the foundation for a lifetime of joyful learning and environmental stewardship.

Role of the Teacher: The teacher in a Reggio Emilia inspired center has three key roles and responsibilities in the Reggio Emilia approach. The first is that of facilitator of learning rather than a direct instructor. Teachers create environments for children that foster exploration, curiosity, and inquiry. They observe children closely to identify their interests, questions, and needs and then use the information to guide the learning process. Teachers are seen as collaborators and co-learners with the children. They engage in projects and activities alongside the children and value the idea that everyone in the learning community can contribute knowledge. Teachers bring their own expertise and interests into the classroom to enrich the learning experiences and create interesting and inviting provocations for the children.

Observation, Documentation, and Assessment: Observation, Documentation and Assessment are fundamental aspects of the Reggio Emilia inspired classroom. Teachers observe the children in their care, document what they are seeing and noticing about the children's learning processes, thoughts, and discoveries using various methods, including photos, videos, and written notes. The documentation is then assessed and used to reflect on and then make the children's learning visible, both for the children and the adults in the learning community.

Environment Design: Teachers play a crucial role in creating a rich and stimulating learning environment. They organize and design the physical space to encourage exploration, creativity, and interaction with peers and adults. Materials are carefully chosen and arranged to provoke children's interests and imaginations.

Responsive Planning: Lesson plans are not predetermined, and themes are not chosen by the teacher for the children. Plans are responsive to children's interests and curiosities. Teachers adapt plans based on the emerging interests and needs of the children. This approach allows flexibility and integration of topics that the children want to learn about.

Communication and Collaboration: Teachers maintain open and ongoing communication with families. They involve parents in the learning process and seek their input as well as their knowledge. They build and foster a strong partnership between home and school. Collaboration with colleagues is also important, as teachers work together to plan, assess, and reflect on their teaching practices.

Nurturer of Curiosity and Critical Thinking: Teachers encourage children to ask questions, explore, and think critically about the world around them. They value curiosity as a driving force in learning. They support children in finding answers to their questions through research and investigation.

Respect For Children's Rights: Teachers in a Reggio Emilia inspired centers respect children as

competent and capable individuals with rights. They listen to children's voices and involve them in decision making processes whenever possible.

Environment as the Third Teacher: In the Reggio Emilia philosophy, the concept of the environment as the "third teacher" emphasizes the idea that the physical environment in which learning takes place plays a crucial role in a child's education. This philosophy acknowledges three key "teachers" in a child's development: the first is the child themselves, the second teacher is the educator, and the third teacher is the physical space and materials within the classroom. The classroom is thought of as a dynamic and interactive learning environment that can inspire and provoke a child's curiosity, creativity, and exploration. It is designed to be aesthetically pleasing and engaging as well as adaptable to support the diverse needs and interests of the children. In essence, the classroom as the third teacher recognizes that the physical surroundings have a profound impact on children's learning experiences. By carefully crafting and curating the classroom environment, teachers aim to inspire and support children's natural curiosity, creativity, and self-directed learning.



Ideas for Children's Healthy Eating



- 1. Offer a wide range of healthy foods.** Options include fresh vegetables and fruits, low-fat dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheeses) or dairy substitutes, lean proteins (beans, chicken, turkey, fish lean hamburger, tofu, eggs), and whole-grain cereals and bread.
- 2. Children should not be expected to “clean their plates”.** Offer appropriate portion sizes and let your child choose their own portion sizes. It is okay if children do not eat everything on their plate. They should learn to know when they are full. Encourage children to try new foods, but do not pressure them to eat.
- 3. Offer regular mealtimes and snack times and sit together.** Try to limit “grazing” throughout the day so children are more likely to eat at mealtimes. Create a calm environment for eating.
- 4. Limit processed foods and sugary drinks** that can lead to cavities and unhealthy weight gain.
- 5. The best drinks for children are water and milk.** Milk, including non-dairy milk provides calcium and vitamin D to help build strong bones. Whole fruit is preferable to fruit juice. Mountain Sprouts Academy serves only water and milk to children while they are with us.
- 6. Small portions for small children.** It is important to pay attention to portion sizes. Children need smaller portions than adults. Children should be encouraged to choose their own serving size, but use smaller plates, bowls, and cups.
- 7. At Mountain Sprouts Academy, we encourage family style dining.** Children serve themselves (with help from teachers, if needed) and everyone sits together. During meals, teachers build connections with children by encouraging rich conversation and communication, talking about the foods they are eating and whatever else is of interest to the children.

Acknowledgment



Handbook Acknowledgment

I certify that I have reviewed the Mountain Sprouts Academy Parent Handbook in its entirety and will comply with all policies stated.

Parent Name (print): _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return this page to the front desk of Mountain Sprouts Academy.