



# Parent Handbook

Policy and Procedures for  
Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center

## **Mission Statement**

We are a community supported, not for profit child care center whose services are designed to foster early, quality education for children by providing a nurturing, positive environment of love to develop self-awareness and confidence while parents are either working, in school, or in training. Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center does not discriminate on the basis of income level, race/ethnicity, mental or physical handicap, sexual orientation, or religious preference in its hiring practices or in its admission of children or families to its childcare facility.

## **Philosophy**

- Allow every child to grow through the process of childhood in their own unique way.
- Enhance the development of self awareness, self-esteem, and self-confidence.
- Nurture trust through consistency and security with simple guidelines.
- Work closely with parent to meet the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive needs of each child.
- Surround each child with a happy positive, environment of love and many learning opportunities.

## **General Information**

### **Location:**

Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center

10655 Hwy 119

Black Hawk, CO 80422

Phone: 303-582-0895

Fax: 303-582-0887

**Director:** Cate Vermeer

**Days:** Monday - Friday

**Hours of operation:** 7:00a – 6:00p

**Parking:** Please park diagonally after circling the building following the one way arrow (counter clockwise). The safest way for all of our vehicles to enter and exit the parking lot is everyone moving in the same direction.

**Ages:** 6 weeks – to the end of kindergarten

### Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center Ratios:

We run smaller ratios than the required by Colorado Department of Human Services (Child Care Centers/Less than 24 Hours Care, 7.702.7.702.55.A.9)

- The Infant Room ratio is 1 teacher to 3 infants
- The Toddler Room ratio is 1 teacher to 5 toddlers
- The Preschool Room ratio is 1 teacher to 8 preschoolers

### We will not be open following dates:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- The Day after Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

\*If your child normally attends on a day that is a holiday closure you are still responsible for paying for that day. The Center overhead costs and salaries still need to be paid.

Sign In / Out: Parents must accompany their children into the classroom and make sure the teacher is aware of the child's presence. Children may not be left at the front door or in the hallway. All children must be signed in and out in the book located at the front desk. The center cannot be responsible for a child not signed in or out. A \$5.00 fee may be assessed each time your child is not signed in or out.

## **Enrollment**

### Admission Criteria:

- All of the registration paperwork must be completed prior to the first day of attendance. We will also need a copy of your child current immunization record and a current health authorization form from your doctor's office. These records must be on file while your child attends the center as required by Colorado Department of Human Services (Child Care Centers/Less than 24 Hours Care, 7.702.101)
- The child and parents must visit the center to meet his/her teacher prior to the first day of attendance as required by Colorado Department of Human Services (Child Care Centers/Less than 24 Hours Care, 7.702.61)

- The first week's tuition must be prepaid, with prepayment received before services are rendered. The non-refundable registration fee must be paid before the first day of attendance.

Trial Period: Each child will be enrolled on a trial basis, allowing both parents and the center to determine if the center is able to meet the child's needs. It is the policy of the Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center to enroll children without regard to race, creed, sex handicap, or national origin.

Special Needs Children: Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center will offer the appropriate services for children with special need in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (See Attached Document) as required by Colorado Department of Human Services (Child Care Centers/Less than 24 Hours Care, 7.702.41.C)

### **Scheduling**

Scheduling: Schedule/Tuition plan option must be selected at the time of enrollment. Any changes in permanent schedules must be approved. If your schedule goes from full-time to part-time, approval will be subject to space available.

Absences: Please notify us by phone if your child is ill, especially if the illness is communicable. We need to post a notice for communicable illness (confidentially is respected) to notify the parents of all children who may have been exposed. Please note that you are still responsible for paying tuition for the day(s) of the absence. Any unexpected absence for a period of two weeks without payment will result in your child being dropped from our enrollment. In order to re-enroll there must be space available, all past debits to Eagles' Nest Learning Center must be brought current, and a new registration fee will be charged.

### **Financial Information**

Non- Refundable Registration Fee: A one-time non-refundable child/family registration fee will be assessed when a child/family enrolls in the center. A new registration fee will be charged to re-enroll a child who previously left the center.

Tuition Rates: Current tuition rates for full-time, part-time, and drop-in care are available in the office.

Payments Due: All payments are due on Monday each week (before services are provided). If full payment has not been received by Thursday at 6pm, you will be charged a late payment fee of 10% on the total balance due.

Regular Payment: Because we are a not-for-profit center, we must count on current income for operation. Therefore, we must expect fees to be paid regularly. Delinquency in payment of tuition fees will result in your child's release.

- If the balance due is not paid by the last business day of the current week, the child/children will not be allowed to return to Eagles' Nest on/after the first business day of the following week.
- In order for the child/children to return to Eagles' Nest, the past due balance must be paid and payment for the following week must be made one week in advance.
- All payments for child/children enrolled must continue to be made one week in advance.
- If the child/children are not currently attending Eagles' Nest, any balance over 30 days past due will go to a collection agency immediately. In order to keep fees as low as possible, we rely on regular payment for each child as long as he/she is enrolled. Your regular fee is expected by Monday even when your child is absent due to illness, vacation, a holiday that falls on a weekday, unforeseen closure or any reason. If all families were given considerations for these absences, we would be unable to meet our financial obligations. Our operating expenses continue even when your child is absent.

Vacation (available to Full-Time attendees only): After your child has attended the center for a full consecutive year you will receive two weeks (10 days) of vacation credit per child. Vacation credit cannot be carried from one year to the next. Vacation credit cannot be used before the anniversary date on which it accrues. Please let the office know when you would like to use it. It will not be applied without your direction to do so. To be eligible for this benefit your account must be paid in full.

Late Pick-Up Fee:

- The Center closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. daily and does not offer after hours care. The late fee rate is \$2.00 per minute for every minute after 6:00 p.m. that the child remains at the center. This rate is assessed per child. If you are scheduled for a half-day, the late fee of \$2.00/minute begins when your half-day is scheduled to end. This charge will increase up to the full day rate.

This fee can possibly be avoided by calling someone on your child's pick-up list to come for your child as soon as you suspect you'll be late. In the event that a child is not picked up, and the center is not contacted by the parent, the classroom teacher will notify each person on the authorized pick-up list until someone contacted can pick-up the child. When guardians and those authorized on the list cannot be reached and it is past 7:00pm, the police department and child protective services must be contacted. It is our hope that the center would be contacted in an emergency situation that prevents a parent from promptly picking up a child to avoid the last step.

Parents who are consistently late may be asked to withdraw their child(ren) from the center.

Method of Payment: A weekly or monthly payment in advance will be arranged at the time of enrollment. Payment may be made by online payment, cash (exact change please), check, or money order. Payments should be deposited in the designated locked box outside of the office. Please do not leave payments on a desk to get lost. There will be a fee for any returned checks. Three returned checks will require that payments be made online, in cash, or by money order.

Withdrawal: The center must be given a two-week notice, in writing, if a child will be withdrawn from the center. Tuition charges will be assessed for the full amount of the child's normal schedule for those two weeks.

Significant Changes: The parent/guardian will be informed in writing of any significant changes in services, staff members, policies, or procedures within 48 hours. The director is available to discuss any and all grievances. Parents also have direct access to the Board of Directors.

Additional Late Fees: If a parent is notified to pick up a child due to illness or an emergency closing, the child must be picked up within one hour. If the child is not picked up within the hour, a \$5.00 per quarter hour fee will be assessed.

Sign-In/Out Fee: To ensure the safety of each child and compliance with child-care licensing regulations, parents are required to sign their child in and out daily. Please make each person on your child's pick-up list aware of this. Each time a child is not signed in or out a \$5.00 sign in/out fee will be assessed.

Diaper/Wipes Fee: Parents are required to provide an adequate supply of diapers and wipes. A fee of \$5.00 per diaper will be assessed after you have been notified that your child needs more diapers or wipes.

Returned Checks: There will be a fee for any returned checks. Three returned checks will require that payments be made online, in cash, or by money order.

### **Visitor / Volunteers**

All visitors are required to show identification and must sign in and out on the guest sign in / out sheet. Visitors will not be included in the staff count for ratio. Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center encourages volunteers in the classroom. Volunteers are asked to follow the classroom rules and routines and to consult with the teachers. Any volunteer working more than 90 hours a year must complete a C.B.I criminal records check and a Central registry review. A record of the dates and hours worked as a volunteer must be maintained by the center.

### **Weather**

The center will make every effort to remain open during inclement weather. In the event of situations involving severe ice or snow, it may be necessary to close the center for safety reasons. The center will attempt to reach everyone via the One Call Now notification system. Channel 9 will also be alerted when possible. When the Gilpin School is closed due to weather, Eagles' Nest will also be closed. On days that Gilpin School does not normally operate (i.e. Fridays, summer days, breaks, etc.) Eagles' Nest will call the Sheriff's Department to confirm whether travel is permissible. Parents are still responsible for paying tuition when the center is closed due to weather.

Hot Weather: When the weather is a high temperature the children will only be outside for short period of time. The teachers will make sure that water is available to all children at all times.

Blizzards: If blizzard conditions exist to the degree that parents cannot pick up their children, the center will continue operation until conditions make pick up possible.

## **Policy On Discipline**

Discipline is necessary during any phase of a child's development. We use a positive guidance approach to discipline. Discipline means necessary control - It is not the same as punishment. Discipline is helping children develop self-control. Discipline is setting limits and correcting misbehavior. It is also encouraging children, guiding them, helping them feel good about themselves, and teaching them how to think for themselves. Teachers of all age groups are knowledgeable on how to meet the age and individual guidance needs of children. The staff will use a positive approach and children are redirected from unacceptable behavior to acceptable behavior. At no time will physical discipline be used.

*The center reserves the right to dismiss any child due to circumstances that indicate the child's needs can no longer be met. This will occur only after parents and staff have consulted.*

## **Identifying Where Children Are and Releasing to Children to Parent/ Adult**

Procedure for Identifying where Children are at all times: Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center is committed to children's safety and has the following procedure for identifying where children are at all times. Accurate attendance records and sign in sheets are maintained and utilized to determine who is in attendance at the center at any given time. It is absolutely necessary that children are signed in by a parent/guardian. Furthermore, teachers are responsible for knowing where children in their care are at all times. This is guaranteed by giving teachers a primary group of children to be accountable for.

Supervision: The parent/adult dropping off or picking up a child is responsible for supervising the child until the child is signed in and acknowledged by a staff member. Children may at no time be unsupervised in the center or on the center grounds. Classroom staff will be responsible for supervising children from the time they are signed in until the child is signed out. Throughout the day, staff will do head counts and attendance checks. Children are never left unsupervised throughout the day. After signing out a child, the parent is again responsible for supervision (including the hallways and parking lot while on center grounds). If someone not recognized by the staff comes to pick up your child, identification will be checked before releasing a child. All persons sent to pick up children must already be listed on the authorized pick up list. Additions to this list must be received in writing. Parents may give permission over the telephone if emergency circumstances require it. Children will not be released to any individual who has not been authorized by a parent.

## **Emergencies and Drills**

Lost Child: In the unlikely event that a child is lost, the classroom teacher will page the director or designated person in charge to assist in locating the child. If any child has been lost from the center the local authorities and parents will be notified immediately.

Accident and Emergency Procedures: There are staff members present at all times who hold First Aid and Infant and Child CPR cards. These employees handle the everyday bumps and bruises that occur. Parents are notified when they pick up their child of any minor incidents and are required to sign an injury report that has been prepared by the teacher. For accidents that are not life threatening, but

require medical attention, the center will immediately notify a parent. If parents cannot be reached, designated persons on your emergency notification card will be notified. If the center cannot reach any of the emergency sources, the child's physician will be contacted and appropriate actions taken. Should a life-threatening accident occur, the center will call 911 emergency personnel immediately. After emergency assistance has been requested, the parent will be notified of the situation. If necessary, the child will be transported by ambulance to the closest hospital, Lutheran Medical Center, unless otherwise stated in your child's file. The center maintains a parental consent form that gives permission for medical care in an emergency situation.

#### Children with Disabilities and Those with Access and Functional Needs:

Staff will communicate with the parents and the nurse to give the child the best care possible. The staff will also work with the parents on what the child would need in case of an emergency. All children with disabilities will be included with the best to our abilities, lesson plans and activities will be modified so all children will be included.

#### Evacuation Procedure:

1. All staff must give children proper direction on exiting the facility.
2. All activities must stop immediately at the sound of the alarm, and everyone will proceed to the classroom door.
3. The staff on duty in the room will lead children out of the facility to the designated area.
4. The staff on duty in the room will check bathrooms, closets, and hallways to assure that all children have exited. Windows and doors will be closed on the way out.
5. One staff member in each room will bring the attendance and emergency contact records to the designated area.
6. In case of fire, the alarm system or a staff member will notify the fire department.
7. When the building cannot be reentered, children will be taken to the Gilpin School during the school year.
8. Parents will be notified by phone in an emergency situation.
9. No one will reenter the building unless given permission by the fire department or proper authority.
10. The director or director sub will complete the evacuation log at the end of each drill.
11. The local fire Marshall will be invited to observe a drill annually and teach staff the use of fire extinguishers.
12. In the event of a power failure, the emergency lighting system will come on automatically.
13. In the event of a tornado, children will proceed to the inside bathrooms and hallways with their bodies in the tornado position. (Crouched against wall, arms covering heads).
14. Staff will remain calm and speak to children in a reassuring manner.

Fire/ Tornado Drills: We conduct monthly fire drills to practice evacuation with the children. Routine fire inspections are conducted by the fire department. Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are routinely inspected for proper operation and the fire alarm system is monitored and tested daily. Attendance and sign-in sheets are kept to ensure that children are not left behind when moving from one area to another. Tornado drills are practiced on a regular basis.

## **Food**

Meals/Snacks: Healthy breakfasts, lunches, and snacks are provided daily at no extra charge. Please do not bring food from home. Weekly menus are posted in the lobby and in each classroom. Breakfast is served from 8:00am to 8:30am and will not be served to children arriving at the center after 8:30am. If you would like your child to be served breakfast, you will need to arrive before 8:30am.

Special Dietary Request: Children with food allergies or needing special diets must have a signed note from the child's physician. These special diets may require that some foods be brought from home.

Bottles: Each infant must bring enough clean bottles to cover each feeding during one day. At the time of feeding, our staff will prepare each bottle. Our staff will rinse (not wash) the bottles and send them home each evening. The parent will be responsible to bring back clean bottles each day. We cannot store premade formula or defrosted breast milk overnight. The center will provide a milk based formula, baby food and iron fortified infant cereal. Please let your teacher know when your infant is ready to start solid foods. Once an infant is eating table foods, he/she will eat from our regular weekly menus. Please provide your child's caregiver with a list of foods your child has tried at home. Due to center policy, only children in the infant room will be allowed to bring a bottle from home. Infants should never come with a bottle containing medication. We are not allowed to dispense medicine by mixing it with food or drink. Medicine can only be dispensed with a doctor's note.

## In the Classroom

Clothing/Belongings: Dress your child for active play. If your child wears sandals or cowboy boots, please bring a pair of tennis shoes to wear on the playground. Children experiment with various types of arts and crafts and some paints and markers labeled "washable" do not come out with laundering. We suggest you dress your child in comfortable clothes that are durable. Children will be assigned a cubby for their own belongings. **Please label all removable items and extra clothing with your child's name.** Send boots, mittens, snowsuits and hats when winter weather begins. Extras may be left in your child's cubby. Please provide a hat when the weather is hot. Provide at least one extra set of clothing (including underwear and socks) for your child's cubby. Provide an adequate supply of diapers and wipes for your child's daily use.

Naps: Each afternoon there is a scheduled naptime for the children. The center provides sheets. Your child may bring a favorite blanket (small, crib size) and/or 1 small nap time snuggle toy. Please send them to the center with your child's name on each item. Familiar items make nap time more comfortable. Please launder your child's blanket at least every two weeks.

Toys: With the exception of a nap time snuggle item, please leave toys at home. Often toys get lost or broken and this can lead to unnecessary trauma for a child.

Money: Children should not bring money in their personal belongings to the center.

Sunscreen: Parents are asked to supply sunscreen. Children should arrive with sunscreen already applied. Staff will reapply sunscreen as needed. In order to reapply sunscreen to children's exposed skin prior to outside play, the center must have written authorization for applying the sunscreen from parents on file. Children over 4 years of age may apply sunscreen to themselves under direct supervision of a staff member. Sunscreen must be labeled with the child's first and last name.

Mailbox: Upon a child's enrollment, parents are assigned a mailbox in the child's classroom. Important information for parents from the center is placed in each box, which should be checked regularly.

Procedure for Caring for Children who arrive Late and Their Class is Away from the Center: In the rare occurrence that a child arrives late and their class is away from the center, parents will need to make arrangements for their child to meet up with their class.

Biting Policy: In the center, children are never left unsupervised and staff are constantly alert in order to prevent biting incidents. Staff members use redirection (to prevent the incident before or as it is about to occur), a prepared environment, and age appropriate equipment as prevention strategies. Biting can happen when children of different ages and developmental stages come together. It is often a way for a child with limited verbal skills to express feelings, either in an affectionate way or an aggressive way. Biting can be frightening for both children. If a biting incident should occur, the parents of both children will be notified at the time of pick-up and will need to sign the injury report. Attention will be given to the bitten child first. The other child will be redirected to something that is acceptable to bite (like a teething ring or clean wet wash cloth) and told, "Biting hurts, no biting." in a calm, firm manner.

Birthdays: On the third of each month the center will do a Birthday celebration for all the kids birthday of the month.

Television, Computer and Video Viewing: Children will be engaged in interesting learning activities appropriate for their age and those activities will normally exclude the viewing of television and videos. The use of media will be permitted only with the written approval of a child's parent or guardian, including appropriate time limits. These activities will not contain violence or inappropriate content. Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a permission form authorizing your child to watch a video prior to doing so. All children will be provided an alternative activity once they lose interest in the media activity. The use of the classroom computer is a free choice activity with time limits of 10 minutes.

Walks & Field Trips: For short walks around the center, we have a one-time permission slip for parents to complete. Whenever a class is not in the room or on the adjacent playground, a note will be posted on the classroom door that describes the route taken, where the group is, when they left, and when they expect to return. Children must be preschool age or older to participate in field trips other than walking excursions. Parents will receive information prior to each field trip that requires transportation and will be asked to sign a permission slip allowing their child to attend the field trip. The name of the driver, method, itinerary, and destination will be posted for any field trip

Policy on Diapering and Potty Learning: Please provide an adequate supply of diapers and wipes for your child. Toilet training for children under 18 months of age must be approved by the parent or guardian and put in writing. Soiled/wet diapers and clothing will be changed promptly and be replaced with clean diapers and clothing whenever necessary. Children will be changed using the "Stop Disease Method of Changing Diapers". A \$5.00 per diaper fee will be charged for not providing diapers as needed. Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothing that they can learn to easily remove. Please avoid overalls, belts, suspenders, and other types of clothing that might make potty learning difficult for young children.

Parent-Teacher Conferences: There will be two formal conferences with parents per year. Parents or teachers may arrange for additional meetings by contacting the other, as needed throughout the year.

There will also be a transition conference when your child is getting ready to move to the next classroom. Informal inquiry is encouraged on a regular basis.

#### Policy on Children's Safety when riding in a Vehicle

- Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center is responsible for any children that it transports.
- We will obtain written permission from parents/guardians for any transportation of children during our hours. The name of the driver, route, itinerary, a roster, and destination will be posted for any field trip. Attendance will be verified each time children board or exit the vehicle.
- We will meet ratio at all times in the vehicles.
- Children will be secured in an individual restraint according to applicable state law and specific vehicle safety recommendations. Children will not occupy the front seat of a vehicle. Transportation arrangements must be by agreement between the center and parent/guardian.
- Children will remain seated at all times.
- Children will be loaded and unloaded out of the path of moving vehicles.
- Children will not be allowed to stand or sit on the floor of a moving vehicle and their arms, legs, and heads will remain inside the vehicle at all times.
- Children will not be left unattended in the vehicle.
- A first aid kit must be in each vehicle children are transported in.
- Emergency information must be kept in each vehicle children are transported in.

### **Medication / Illness**

Medication: In compliance with the Nurse Practice Act, prescriptive and non-prescriptive medication for ears, eyes, all oral medication, medication of lacerations or severe burns, and individual special medical procedures can be administered only on written order or prescription from a physician to the child's parent(s) or guardian(s), or to the center, with knowledge and written consent of the parent(s) or guardian(s). Medication must be kept in the original container. Prescriptive medicine containers must bear the original pharmacy label that shows the prescription number, name of medication, date filled, physician's name, child's first and last name, and directions for dosage. Medication must be signed in on a medication log by the parent or guardian for the staff to administer. Medication must be stored in a locked box in the classroom. It cannot remain in a child's backpack or cubby. When no longer needed, medication will be returned to parent or guardian or destroyed according to center policy and procedures. In compliance with Section 12-38-132, C.R.S., of the "Nurse Practice Act."

Medical Forms: At time of admission the center must have a current medical statement and immunization report on file for each child. Medical statements must be updated according to the following schedule: Infants - every two months/two-year health plan form required. Children ages 2-5 years - annual physical statement. Kindergarten and older- every three years. Immunization reports must be updated as your child receives immunizations.

Infection Control: Regular consultations are held with our consulting nurse. The center director will report certain communicable diseases to the health department and post notice for parents as required by law. Additional services are provided by the consulting nurse on an as needed basis.

If Your Child Becomes Ill During the Day: A child with any of the following symptoms: a fever of 100 degrees or more, diarrhea, vomiting, or contagious symptoms or illness must be sent home. The child must stay home the entire next day. If your child becomes ill during the day, he/she is immediately separated from the other children and a parent or other authorized person is notified. It is expected that the ill child will be picked up as soon as possible. If the ill child is not picked up within one hour of notification, the late fee will be assessed.

## **Filing A Complaint**

Complaints Concerning Suspected Licensing Violations

Call (303) 866-5958 or write The Division of Child Care, CO Dept. of Human Services, 1575 Sherman St., Denver, CO 80203-1714

## **Child Abuse**

Child care providers are required by law to report suspected child abuse. If child abuse is suspected, the center director will be notified and will report to the appropriate authorities at Gilpin County Human Services (303)582-5444. If at any time a parent/guardian suspects child abuse, he/she has the right to report this to the appropriate authorities.

# **THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) gives civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications. According to Title III of the ADA, child care center and family child care homes are public accommodations and must comply with this law. The ADA went into effect in January 1992. The ADA mandates that equal access be given to all children with disabilities in child care programs and that children with disabilities be fully integrated into the regular activities. The law not only covers the facility where child care is offered, but also features which are needed to access the facility such as sidewalks, doors and bathrooms. However, child care providers are not expected to do the impossible. Child care programs are required to make “readily achievable accommodations” for all children with disabilities. “Readily achievable” is defined as being “able to accomplish easily and without much difficulty or expense.” Programs are not required to make changes that would create an undue burden, which is most simply defined as creating significantly difficult or expense, or increasing safety or crime considerations.” For the purposes of the ADA, a disability is a “physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.” Short term or temporary illnesses or conditions do not qualify. Child care programs are required to make an individual assessment about whether it can meet the particular needs of the child without

fundamentally changing the program. The ADA generally does not require centers to hire additional staff or provide constant one-to-one supervision of a particular child with a disability.