



PARENT HANDBOOK of Policies and Procedures

Our Philosophy and Mission:

At Wheat Ridge Learning Academy our philosophy is to create a place for children where they can run, play, explore, learn and grow – physically, mentally and spiritually.

Our goal is to provide a child care program that offers children a healthy, safe, loving environment to enhance each child's unique spirit.

Our mission is to provide children the opportunity for educational experiences along with emotional social, physical and cognitive growth under the loving guidance of our long-term, highly qualified staff.

We strive to enrich children's lives by offering a basis for learning which improves self-esteem and encourages individual creativity.

We believe that parents are an important part of children's learning experiences and are partners in the education and care of the children.

About Us:

Wheat Ridge Learning Academy is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services to care for children between the ages of six weeks to seven years old.

We accept children without regard to race, religion, sex or national origin. We are also in compliance with the federal regulations regarding the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). The ADA requires that equal access to facilities and services be provided to individuals with disabilities. We accept all children including those with special needs.

ADMISSION, REGISTRATION, FEES

Although enrollment is open, limited space and staff requires that classroom size be restricted. If you are not offered enrollment right away then your child's name will be placed on a wait list in the order in which it was received. Wheat Ridge Learning Academy ("The Center") will call once there is availability for your child. Please contact the office at (303) 456-4503 if you are interested in specific information regarding your position on the waitlist.

Upon acceptance into one of our classrooms, parents must pay a non-refundable registration fee, non-refundable deposit fee and complete and return all forms. This includes:

- Completed Enrollment Form including permissions for field trips, sunscreen, photographs, laying on mats and watching videos;
- Signed & dated Emergency Medical Care Authorization Form;
- Signed Tuition Agreement;
- Supplemental Information Form;
- Health Appraisal signed by physician stating that your child is well enough to attend;
- Copy of updated immunizations;

The Colorado Division of Child Care requires that we have your child's file complete with all the forms and information needed before they may attend.

Please let us know if you need copies of any of our paperwork translated into a different language. Requests for translations into different languages will be completed within one week of the request.

An annual activity fee will be charged (per child) to defray the costs of classroom supplies, teaching materials, special visitors, plays and performances, and special days like pizza parties.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability. We are dedicated to supporting the Americans with Disabilities Act. Children with disabilities must be able to operate within our established ratio and will be integrated into the regular classroom activities. If a child is unable to function within our ratio, parents must provide and pay for a classroom aide for their child.

To best ensure that their needs are met, when children with special needs are enrolled there will be consultations with the parents, the Center's nurse consultant, the staff who will be involved, and any other appropriate individuals. Additionally an assessment to determine the full scope of needs and appropriate services may be required. Assessments may be made on a periodic basis after a child with special needs is enrolled to ensure that the child is continuing to have his/her needs adequately met. If not, we will give parents time and assistance needed to find more appropriate care or the option to pay for an additional staff member to individually care for their child. If your child may require special accommodations for participation please call the office at (303) 456-4503.

HOURS OF OPERATION AND HOLIDAYS OBSERVED

We are open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

The Center will be closed twice per calendar year for Staff In-Service Training. The CO Department of Childcare requires that all of our staff complete a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education per year. These two in-service days allow them to complete this requirement. The two days the Center will be closed for in-service training will be announced at least one month ahead of time.

The Center is also closed to observe the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Friday after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Eve through New Year's Day. Should a holiday fall on a Saturday, the Center will be closed on Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the Center will be closed on Monday.

We feel that our employees deserve and need to be able to spend the holidays with their families. It would be impossible for us to pay them for those days off if families did not pay tuition. Therefore all families pay full tuition for in-service days and holidays whether or not their child was scheduled to attend that day.

ATTENDANCE

In order for us to maintain appropriate staff to child ratios it is important that you keep the office informed regarding any changes in the days your child will be attending. If you do need to change your schedule please check with the office first via email at Laura@WheatRidgeLearningAcademy.com to ensure we are able to meet your needs. Every effort will be made to accommodate your requests.

Wheat Ridge Learning Academy is not a drop-in childcare center. All children are enrolled based on an agreement of their schedule. Children who do not follow an agreed upon weekly schedule cannot be brought to the Center and dropped off without a Director's permission. Please contact us via email at Laura@WheatRidgeLearningAcademy.com if your child has not maintained regular attendance if you would like to have them attend the center.

TUITION

Tuition is due on or before the first of the month in which service will be provided. A \$25 late fee will be assessed if tuition has not been paid in full by the 3rd of the month. Families who have not paid tuition in full by the fifteenth of the month will be asked not to return until all tuition is caught up. Any past due balances will be reported to credit agencies at the discretion of the Center.

You are required to pay tuition even if your child is absent. Full tuition is collected regardless of absences due to illness, vacations, and Center closures for snow days, holidays and in-service training days.

If your check is returned a \$25.00 fee will be charged. Should you have more than one check returned the Center will request that all future payments be made by cash or money order. All cash should be dropped off at the office for a receipt.

CCAP Parental Fees are due on the first of the month. If you are on the CCAP Program and your care is denied, you will be responsible for the full amount of your child's tuition. Families receiving CCAP must swipe their child in on the POS machine within one week of enrollment. The receipt tape must show that the child is "approved" in order for the child to be dropped off for the day. If your CCAP card is declined for any reason, you will not be able to drop off your child without paying tuition for that day first. In addition, families are responsible for back swiping on Friday's for any days attended that week or they will be responsible for tuition.

For parents that claim childcare as a deduction on income taxes, the tax ID for the Center is 45-4085768. Tuition receipts are available upon request.

SIBLING DISCOUNT

We offer discounts for families with more than one child enrolled at our Center. The discount is 10% off the older child's tuition rate.

SNOW DAYS AND CENTER CLOSURES

The Center will be closed on very snowy days. We typically follow the Jefferson County Public Schools in regards to snow days, late openings or early closures. School closures or late start will be announced on local television stations beginning at 5:00 a.m.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In cases of extreme heat when activities are scheduled outdoors, the activity time will be shortened. The children will then be moved indoors. In cases of rain, lightning, or a tornado warning the activity will be moved indoors. If the Center closes due to weather for any other reason, parents will be notified by telephone.

STAFF

The staff at the Center includes qualified Directors, a substitute Director, Early Childhood Educators, Staff Aides and a Cook. Our staff members have on average ten years experience working with young children and they all meet or exceed state requirements. They are dedicated to teaching, loving, and providing for the children. In the interest of safety, background checks and fingerprinting are completed on each individual working at our center. All of our teachers are current on the First Aid and CPR Certifications. In addition all of our Directors and teachers complete a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education every year.

PARKING

Parents may park in the back parking lot and use the entrance to their child's classroom. Do not leave children unattended in cars, leave purses on seats, or cars running. Please keep children on the sidewalk and off the rocks and landscaping. Licensing requires that anyone picking up a child to use the safe practice of securing the child in a car seat.

FIRST DAY AT THE CENTER

Separation can be stressful for parents as well children. We are here to help in this sometimes difficult but very common developmental process. Sometimes children are upset during their first few weeks and some don't express anxiety until a few weeks later. This is a completely understandable because they are in a new environment with people they don't know yet. It will take them a little time to develop bonds and relationships with the teachers and children in their classroom.

Please know that we will comfort and reassure your child. The teachers will acknowledge and talk about the child's feelings and we will ask you to do the same. Keep in mind that children are very sensitive to the feelings of their parents. If you don't feel good about leaving your child at the Center they won't feel good about it either. Please talk about your child's experiences in a positive and supportive way.

When you leave your child at the Center please don't sneak out. Make the "good-bye" and hug something he/she can count on even if it brings some tears at first. When it's time for you to leave the classroom, after you say your good-byes, make the departure definite. Lingering can make a child uncertain of what is expected of him/her. It is helpful when parents develop a routine (leave after reading a book together, washing hands, greeting the teacher, etc.). Consistency is the key. Over time your child will be accustomed to this routine and learn that you always come back when you say you will. Together we will work through this important developmental process.

If your child is upset when you leave the Center feel free to call back later to check on your child's progress. We will call you if your child does not settle down. Most children quiet down quickly as they are reassured by the teacher and become interested in the classroom activities and other children.

ITEMS SUPPLIED BY THE CENTER

- Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack based on a USDA guidelines and on a rotating menu. This includes whole milk to children 1 to 2 years old, 2% milk to children older than 2 years old, and juice and water as indicated on the menu.

ITEMS SUPPLIED BY PARENTS

- Parents of infants not old enough to yet be drinking whole milk must supply bottles and either formula or breast milk, or any combination.
- Specific brands or particular items based on personal preferences (i.e. soy milk or organic items) must be supplied by parents and labeled with the child's name.
- Parents of children not yet fully potty trained must provide diapers or pull-ups and wipes.
- Diaper cream, sunscreen, or any medications or topical ointments must be supplied by the parents and accompanied by a consent form (available in the office).
- Every child must have a complete change of clothes at the Center at all times, including underwear and socks. Children who are not yet fully potty trained must have 3 extra changes in their lockers each day. Parents should check every day for soiled clothing to be taken home and periodically make sure that the clothes still fit and are appropriate for the season.
- Licensing requires that every parent provide a sheet and blanket for their child during nap time. Infants do not sleep with blankets however parents may bring a sleep sack if they would like to do so.
- Children may bring a special blanket or security toy which will be kept in their locker/cubby. Weapons and "fighting toys" may not be brought to the Center. Parents and children should be aware that when toys and other items are brought to the Center there is a chance of breakage or loss. The Center cannot assume responsibility in the case of breakage or loss.

CHILD SUPERVISION AND AUTHORIZED PICK UP

Teachers will continuously monitor the presence of children throughout the day in the classroom and on the playground. Please assist them by following the school's procedures at all times:

- Licensing requires that all children be signed in and signed out daily so that the Sign-in/Sign-out sheets provide a clear record of attendance. Children may not sign themselves in or out of the Center.
- Children will be released only to those on the authorized pick up list unless parents provide verbal authorization over the phone.
- Authorized persons not known to the staff by sight will be required to provide a photo I.D. before the child will be released to them.
- If an unauthorized or incapacitated person attempts to pick up your child we will politely tell them to leave and/or call 911.

LATE PICK-UP/FAILURE TO PICK UP

Please contact the Center if you are going to be late. A late fee of \$1 per minute per child will be charged for any pick up that occurs after the Center's closing time. This must be paid before the child can return to the Center. Please note that a late fee will be collected even when parents give advance notice. After 30 minutes the child may be placed in the custody of the local authorities.

LATE ARRIVALS

If you plan to drop your child off after 10:00 a.m. please call the Center so that we can assure proper staffing and also plan for how many children will be having lunch with us. Any child brought to the Center after 10:00 a.m. without having called first might not be able to attend that day with the exception of special circumstances that have been arranged with the Director.

CUSTODY SITUATIONS

It is common for custody of a child to be shared by parents and/or guardians. It is presumed that the parent or guardian who signs the enrollment paperwork has the legal right to the child. If there are any custodial arrangements that may affect the child during participation at the Center it is the enrolling parent's responsibility to provide written documentation of all such legal arrangements.

CHILDREN WHO BECOME ILL

It is not our intent to allow children who are truly sick to stay at the Center but it is also not our intent to exclude children who are only mildly ill. We rely on parents to make good decisions regarding your child's health so please do not bring them to the Center when they are sick.

The staff will assess and monitor the health of all children in the program and will need to decide if a child is too ill to attend. Please provide the teachers with accurate information about your child's health so they can make the best decision for the welfare of your child as well as the other children in the program. We understand it can often be difficult to determine the seriousness of the situation when a child isn't feeling well. We encourage you to consult with your physician as well as the Center staff to help you determine if your child is too sick to attend.

Every situation is different but we will use three criteria to determine if a child needs to be excluded:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in our daily routine and activities.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- The illness shows symptoms which suggest strong possibility of being contagious to others.

State health department and licensing requires that a child be able to participate in all daily activities including outside play. If you have to administer medication related to the presenting condition/illness or are concerned about your child being able to go outside to play then your child is probably not well enough to attend school.

Please keep in mind that children cannot be given fever-reducers such as Tylenol just prior to attending the Center in an effort to lower a fever. The medicine will wear off and if a child is truly sick he/she will relapse quickly and will most likely be sent home.

Parents will be contacted to make arrangements to pick up their child if an illness develops during school hours. If a parent cannot be contacted (all numbers called – home, work, call, etc.) then an emergency contact will be called to pick up the child.

When a child is sent home due to an illness, he/she cannot return to the Center until he/she has been free from symptoms for at least 24 hours. This is to allow ample time for your child to recover and also stop the spread of illness to other children. On rare occasions if a health concern persists the Center may request that a physician examine the child prior to the child returning to the Center.

The following is a partial list of reasons why a child might be sent home:

- Fever of over 100 degrees;
- Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness;
- Uncontrolled persistent coughing;
- Inexplicable irritability or persistent crying;
- Wheezing or difficulty breathing;
- Diarrhea (3 times in one day or 2 times within one hour);
- Blood in stools not explained by dietary change, medication or hard stools;
- Vomiting (two or more episodes of vomiting within 24 hours);
- Mouth sores with drooling until a physician determines the child is noninfectious;
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease;
- Pediculosis (head lice) until child is nit free;
- Strep throat until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- Chickenpox until all sores are dried and crusted (usually 6 days);
- Scabies, Tuberculosis, Impetigo, Pertussis, Mumps, Hepatitis A virus, Rubella until cleared by a physician to return to the Center;
- Other symptoms or signs unusual for the child;
- Any diagnosis of a communicable disease not referred to above;

Parents must report to the Center any possible exposure to communicable illnesses outside the Center (flu, strep, pink eye, ringworm, lice, etc.). For the safety of others the child will then be excluded from the Center for the period of time prescribed by the child's physician or the local health department.

In addition the Center follows all State Health Department guidelines in regards to reporting cases of communicable disease.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES AT SCHOOL

The goal of our Center is to prevent accidents and to also deal effectively with accidents if they do occur. An accident is defined as any occurrence that involves injury and requires first aid. At least one staff member with some advanced first aid training will be on the premises at all times. A staff member with first aid training must also accompany children on any excursions outside of the Center. Parents are required to sign a release to transport their child by ambulance at the parent's cost. This disclaimer is a part of the Center's enrollment form.

If a child receives an injury or has an accident while in our care trained staff will administer first aid (e.g. cleaning, band aids, ice). Minor scrapes and bumps will be reported to the parent/guardian when they arrive to pick up their child. An accident report will be documented and signed by the teacher on duty and a Director.

If the injury is more serious parents or emergency contacts will be called. If the school staff cannot reach the parents or emergency contacts on the emergency card the child will be transported to the hospital or doctor's office by ambulance.

In the event of any accident or injury, the Center staff are responsible for making sure that the injured child is cared for while also ensuring that any other children in that classroom are supervised by another staff member or adult. A full report of the incident will be written by the staff concerned, in accordance with the relevant Licensing Regulations and Occupational Health and Safety Act. Should it be deemed necessary, the Childcare Licensing Division will also be notified.

STORING AND ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Please notify the Director if your child needs any type of prescription or over the counter medication while at school or if your child needs special medical attention due to allergies. Parents need to meet with the Director in advance to set up a Health Care Plan specific to your child. If the proper paperwork has not been completed parents will be notified and asked to return to the Center to administer medication. Parents should check with

their health care provider to see if a dosage schedule can be arranged that does not involve the hours the child is at the Center.

According to the Colorado State regulations and the Nurse Practice Act, medication given to a child at the Center must be authorized with a written statement from the child's doctor to the school with knowledge and written consent of the parent/guardian. This authorization must be renewed with each new prescription and in the case of long-term medication, on an annual basis.

Non-prescription medications will only be administered by school staff with written consent from a doctor. Only those trained in Medication Administration are authorized to administer medication. Confidentiality of the child will be maintained at all times. All medications will be kept in a locked cabinet away from children except for emergency medications such as epi-pens. All procedures for storing and administering children's medicines and delegation of medication administration are in compliance with the Nurse Practice Act.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND LOST CHILDREN

All staff are trained in the Center's safety procedures. Drills are held to familiarize staff and children on procedures to follow in the event of an emergency such as fire, tornado or severe weather.

In the event that the fire alarms go off, teachers will pick up their roll call sheets and escort the children safely out of the building to the designated safe spot outside. Once they are safely outside the teachers will take attendance and then wait for the all-clear signal from the Fire Department.

In the event that staff hears the tornado siren or is alerted by the Director that there is a tornado warning children will be moved to the designated tornado safe spot. Teachers will take attendance once they are safely in the designated areas. Once the Director receives an all-clear signal from the Police Department children will return to the classroom.

Children are actively supervised while at the Center however in the unlikely event that a child is missing the following emergency plan will be put into effect:

1. The staff will thoroughly search the school and grounds for the child.
2. After ten minutes the parents/guardians and the police will be contacted.
3. The staff will start to search the area surrounding the school.

UNFORESEEN EVENTS

The Center endeavors to open and run each day of the calendar year with the exception of holidays previously noted. However some resources needed in order to have a safe environment are outside of the Center's control. In the event a vital resource to the school is cut off (i.e. water, electricity, etc.) the Center may contact the parents during the day to pick up their children.

Providing a safe and secure environment for the children in compliance with State licensing regulations is our number one priority. Please be aware there are many variables and an assessment of the entire situation must be made. The procedures that are followed when this type of event occurs are as follows:

1. Children are moved to a safe area if the areas where they are located are no longer deemed safe. Teachers will reassure children calmly giving them a brief idea of the situation.
2. The authority governing the resource (i.e. Denver Water, Excel Energy, etc.) is contacted by the Director to get an update on when the resource will be restored.
3. If the resource will not be available within acceptable time frames, parents will be contacted to immediately pick up their children.
4. You will be notified if an incident of this nature occurs during the school day.

CONDUCT IN THE CLASSROOM AND DISCIPLINE

In order to ensure a positive experience for all children we ask that three basic principles be observed:

1. Keep yourself safe.
2. Keep others safe.
3. Keep materials and equipment safe.

Our teachers use positive methods of guidance that encourage independence and a sense of responsibility. Redirection is a way to guide the child from inappropriate activity to more appropriate activity. Teachers communicate with and provide guidance to the children when solving problems in the classroom. This communication is brief and clear. Communication can include giving alternate choices to the child or assisting the child with problem solving. Behavior issues are handled on an individual basis as they arise.

When a child is repeatedly having trouble observing classroom guidelines the staff will discuss an appropriate plan of action for that individual child. Steps may include any or all of the following steps in a supportive manner with teacher involvement and support:

- Child takes a break from the group with the teacher. Separation is never punitive but used as a chance for the child to calm himself.
- Discuss with the child the inappropriate behavior before returning to the group.
- Parents will be notified of any problems during the day.

If a child's behavior continues to be a problem and/or the safety of others is at risk a decision could be made to suspend the child temporarily or the child may be removed from the program entirely.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

We will make every attempt to work with every child. However if there are continual discipline problems with severe, disruptive or aggressive behaviors the parents will be called in for a conference with the teachers and Director. Our goal is to work together to help your child. If needed we will call our Nurse Consultant to assist. We sometimes require parents to seek additional services beyond what is available at our Center. Parents must be cooperative with our efforts to seek assistance or additional services for their child. If a parent is not supportive or cooperative with our efforts we maintain the right to discontinue childcare.

In general we will take the following steps when working with a child who exhibits challenging behaviors in the classroom: the teacher, along with the Director, will meet with the parents; strategies will be implemented in the classroom to assist the child; referrals and recommendations will be made to the parents which need to be acted upon; other options such as changing classrooms or reducing childcare hours will be considered.

It is never our goal to discontinue childcare but that may be our final option if we do not feel we can meet the individual needs of the child/family or if the child's behavior is creating an unsafe environment for himself or others. Each situation will be evaluated on an individual basis and the final determination regarding a child's enrollment status will be made by our Center's Director.

TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN

If the children are transported by the Center it will only be by an insured, licensed driver trained in vehicle safety and emergency procedures on the road. All children must have appropriate car seats/booster seats and will be buckled in at all times.

FIELD TRIPS

Most field trips will be in town and the children will either walk or meet at the designated site. In the event a field trip is held that requires transportation the Center will send information home with the parents and ask that you sign a permission slip.

VIDEOS AND MOVIES

Videos are seldom used. However if teachers feel a particular video may enhance the learning process they will preview the materials and ensure the relevance to the lesson plan. On days when the weather does not permit outside play, movies may occasionally be played for the children. All videos will be rated G or PG.

PICTURES

Individual portraits are taken by a professional photographer for the option of purchasing. Teachers will take pictures throughout the year of their classrooms and children's activities. If you wish to have your child excluded from these classroom pictures please advise the Director in writing.

CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS

All children's belongings should be labeled with their name and stored in their locker or cubby. Although our staff makes an effort to monitor children's belongings, we cannot guarantee the security of your child's belongings. The Center is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

SUNSCREEN

Sunscreen should be applied to your child daily before arrival to the Center. Please provide the Center with sunscreen for your child and initial the clause on the Enrollment Form to give consent to staff to help your child re-apply sunscreen as needed.

MEALS AND NUTRITION

The Center currently provides breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack for the children. We plan nutritious, high quality, child oriented meals according to the USDA guidelines. Milk or juice are served at breakfast and lunch (whole milk for infants and 2% for all other children).

The weekly menus are posted on the Parents' Board in the front entry way. If your child is unable to eat food that is being served on a particular day parents must provide a substitute food or drink for their child.

Food to share with other children in a group may be brought to the Center for a celebration (i.e. birthdays, holidays, etc.). Please be aware that we do not believe in requiring children to eat particular foods if they decline nor do we ever withhold food as a punishment.

NAP TIME

The Department of Human Services requires that every child enrolled has a rest period. The duration of the rest period is based on the child's age. Every child needs to have a sheet and a blanket to cover up with. You may also bring a stuffed animal, doll or any other appropriate sleeping buddy for your child.

Please note that we do not recommend for children to be dropped off between 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Nap time is a difficult time to expect a young child to enter the classroom and can also be too disruptive for those who are napping.

Parents are responsible for taking home sheets and blankets on a weekly basis to launder them.

DIAPERING AND TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training for a child occurs over a period of time that can range from a few weeks to several months and include several stages of development. Regressions are not unusual during the process particularly if the child is affected by such things as illness, a move to a new home or childcare center, or a new baby in the family.

Accidents are to be expected and are never met with disapproval. Daytime control may occur earlier than nighttime control. Girls tend to develop complete control of the elimination process earlier than boys. Children rarely have the physical, understanding of the process, and the emotional maturity to successfully and consistently use the toilet prior to reaching 18 months of age, and, on average, not until the child is 2 ½ to 3 ½ years old.

Our staff will keep the parents informed of any signs of readiness observed at the Center. Parents should keep the staff aware of their child's movement through the developmental stages at home (see below). This will help ensure that staff are supportive and consistent with parental efforts with the child.

The stages of toilet training are:

1. Becoming aware of the process (i.e. developing vocabulary for the process, seeing others use the toilet, talking about being wet or having a bowel movement, imitating others by sitting on the toilet, or role playing with dolls about the process).
2. Communication with adults (i.e. "I'm wet," or "change my diaper," or "I need to use the potty.")
3. Develops sphincter muscle control as evidenced by 2-3 hours of dryness.
4. The child wants to use the toilet.

After the switch from diapers is agreed upon between parents and staff, parents are responsible for always maintaining at least 3 pairs of underpants and changes of clothes in the child's locker. Clothing should be easily removable (such as elastic waist pants) to help eliminate the frustration when the child attempts to use the toilet without help.

In the event of a toileting accident we will help the child change into their extra clothes and the soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag. If no extra clothing is provided the Center has limited clothing for

emergencies. Please return the loaned clothing promptly after it has been washed. In the event the Center does not have any extra clothing the parent/guardian will be called to bring a change of clothes to the Center.

Parents are responsible for providing an ample supply of diapers, pull-ups, wipes and changes of clothes for their child. Please check your child's supply often. The staff will try to notify you when your child is running low. Should your child run out of diapers or pull ups while at the Center, we will provide additional diapers or pull ups for an additional charge.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

Appropriate clothing is necessary to allow children freedom to participate fully at school. Licensing requires that all children will go outside every day (weather permitting) for outdoor learning and physical development. Any child that is well enough to attend school will be considered well enough to go outside. Children should wear "play clothes" to school. Closed-toe shoes (such as sneakers) are ideal for outdoor play. Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather each day. The children will not go outside when the temperature is below 30 degrees or above 90 degrees, or if it is raining, snowing or too wet to be outside.

Arts and crafts are typically messy but give the children opportunity to feel free to express themselves. Also consider the needs of your child when using the restroom. Clothing which the children cannot handle themselves, such as one-piece jump suits or complicated belts and buckles are not recommended. If your child wears snow boots to school please bring a change of shoes for the classroom.

CURRICULUM

We are committed to providing high quality childcare as well as Infant, Toddler and Preschool programs. Qualistar components support early childhood best practices and we follow Qualistar's model for scheduling the children's day. Each child participates in daily periods of group activity, individual play, outdoor play and quiet times. All activities are developmentally appropriate and strive to meet children's physical, emotional, social and cognitive needs. The imagination and curiosity of every child is valued.

CENTERS

The classrooms are set up with centers. Centers are learning stations throughout the classroom where children can move freely from place to place during designated "Center Time." This is purposeful play with specific goals planned.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Our program philosophy is based on the premise that children learn about the world around them through play – active involvement with other children, adults, and materials. Children need years of experience with real objects and events before they are ready to understand the meaning of symbols such as letters and numbers. Learning takes place as young children touch, manipulate and experiment with things while interacting with people.

The teacher's role is to create an environment that supports the ideas and experiences of children and invites them to observe, be active, make choices and experiment. The children's days are filled with planned and spontaneous moments of learning. There is time allowed for active outdoor play, imaginative games, independent discovery and group activities.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

6:30 am – 8:00 am	Greetings, Arrivals & Free Choice
8:00 am – 9:00 am	Breakfast, Diapers/Potty, Wash Hands & Free Choice
9:00 am – 10:00 am	Outdoor Time, Gross Motor Play & Free Choice
10:00 am – 11:00 am	Group Time, Projects & Free Choice
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Story Time, Lunch Set-Up, Diapers/Potty & Wash Hands
12:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Rest Time & Quiet Activities
2:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Diapers/Potty & Wash Hands
3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Snack & Free Choice
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Outdoor Time, Gross Motor Play & Free Choice
4:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Diapers/Potty & Wash Hands
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Departures, Free Choice, Diapers & Wash Hands

*Exact mealtimes, naptimes, outdoor and free play times will vary according to age groups. Please refer to the schedule posted in your child's classroom for specific times.

CENTER PROCEDURE FOR CLOSING AT THE END OF THE DAY

At the end of each day teachers will check their roll call sheets against their Sign-In/Sign-Out sheets to ensure that all children have been picked up. Prior to closing their classrooms each teacher will do a walk through to ensure that no children are still there. In addition, the teacher responsible for closing the building will check the roll call sheets and Sign-In/Sign-Out sheets for every classroom and do a walk through of the entire building prior to closing the Center.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEER POLICY

Parents may visit the classroom at any time. All visitors are required to check in with the office and sign-in on the Visitor's Log located in the office. Persons unknown to staff will be required to show a State issued photo ID for identification. All volunteers must complete a Volunteer Application and undergo a background check. If you are interested in volunteering please contact the Director.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

We believe in an open door policy and want our parents to feel involved in their child's learning. Parent conferences may be scheduled at any time. Activities are planned throughout the year to encourage interactions between staff and families.

Parent/Teacher conferences for our Preschool and Pre-K students are typically held twice a year to discuss child growth and plans for promoting learning in the classroom and at home. Each classroom will have a procedure for assigning times for conferences. Individualized conferences may be held at any time during the year at the request of a parent or teacher.

Please notify staff of events that may affect your child's day at school such as: home issues, birth of a new sibling, death or illness of someone important (including a pet) or upcoming events/trips/visitors. This helps staff to understand and handle behaviors that may stem from events that trouble or excite children.

Teachers keep parents informed of classroom happenings in a variety of ways such as Monthly Calendars, brief conversations before & after class, written notes sent home, telephone conversations and messages posted in the Sign-In/Sign-Out area.

VACATION DAYS AND DAYS OFF

Children will not receive tuition discounts for times they are absent due to being on vacation or days off.

DISENROLLMENT

The removal of a child from the program will always be a last resort after following the appropriate steps for the situation at hand. Reasons for dismissal may include:

- Non-payment of tuition or excessive late payment of fees;
- Required paperwork not up to date;
- If your child is absent for two weeks or more consecutively and no notice has been given to the office or the teachers;
- Not observing the policies of the Center as outlined in the Parent Handbook;
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by a parent/guardian;
- On-going chronic discipline problems;

WITHDRAWING YOUR CHILD

If you plan to withdraw your child from the Center we ask that you provide us with thirty day's notice in writing and drop it off in the office. Children are often on a waiting list. If notice is not given full tuition will be due for the thirty days whether or not your child attends. If there is any tuition balance remaining after your withdrawal and payment arrangements have not been made with the Director your account will be turned over to a collection agency.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

In the even of misunderstandings, personality conflicts, or specific complaints against the Center staff or about the Center policies, parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the Director to remedy such problems. Good communication makes problem solving a lot easier. Please take the time to get to know the staff and to let them know you.

FILING A COMPLAINT

If you have a complaint regarding suspected licensing violations at this or any other licensed childcare center you have the right to report your concerns to the Colorado Department of Childcare Licensing at 1575 Sherman Street, Denver CO or call (303) 866-5958.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

As a childcare facility each staff member is required to read and sign a statement clearly defining child abuse and neglect pursuant to state law and outlining the staff member's personal responsibility to report all incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect according to state law.

Should you suspect child abuse at our facility or any other childcare center a report of suspected child abuse must be made to the County Department of Social Services, Police Department, or other law enforcement agency in the county in which the facility is located. The phone number for the Denver County office is (720) 944-3000.

CHANGE OF POLICY

The Center reserves the right to adjust the policies and procedures with proper notification to parents/guardians.

REPORTING ABUSE/MAKING A COMPLAINT

Dear Parents,

Your child is enrolling in a child care program licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services and by the Department of Excise and Licenses. These licenses indicates that at the time of inspection the provider has met standards needed to operate a licensed Family Child Care Home, Child Care Center or School Age Child Care Center program.

These standards include:

- Written policies and procedures;
- Communications, emergency and security procedures;
- Personnel requirements for education, experience, and training and supervision.
- Requirements including procedures for admission: health care; personal hygiene; physical care; food and nutrition; discipline; overnight care; field trips and transportation; holiday schedules; and fee policies.
- Activities;
- Equipment and materials;
- Facility requirements;
- Fire and other safety requirements;
- Maintaining children's records;
- Administrative reports and records;

In addition to the above standards all licensed child care providers are required to report suspected physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of any of the children in their care.

As parent of a child/children in licensed child care, you may report any suspected abuse by calling CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE AT 844-264-5437.

If you wish to make a complaint or have a concern regarding your provider you may call:

COLORADO DIVISION OF CHILD CARE 303-866-5958
JEFFERSON COUNTY HEALTH INSPECTION DIVISION 303-271-5700

Your providers State Child Care License and Denver Department of Business and Excise License should be posted and available for you to see at your request. You may also review inspection reports at the facility upon request.

We hope the services you and your child/children receive in this licensed child care facility will be both positive and productive.

WHEAT RIDGE LEARNING ACADEMY

Infant Safe Sleep Policy

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the unexpected death of a seemingly healthy baby for whom no cause of death can be determined based on an autopsy, an investigation of the place where the infant died, and a review of the infant's medical history.

We believe that a safe sleep environment for infants helps lower the chances of an infant dying from SIDS, and that parents and child care providers can work together to provide a safe sleep environment. Wheat Ridge Learning Academy follows the following Safe Sleep Policy.

Safe Sleep Practices

1. All child care staff caring for infants and child care staff that may potentially care for infants will receive training on how to implement our infant Safe Sleep Policy.
2. Infants will always be placed on their **backs to sleep**, unless there is a signed *Alternate Sleep Position Waiver*- Health Care Professional Recommendation in the infant's file. A waiver notice will be posted at the infant's crib. Waivers will be retained in the children's record as long as they are enrolled.
3. When babies can easily turn over from the back to the stomach, they will be placed to sleep on their backs and then allowed to adopt the sleep position they prefer. This is in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations. Child care staff can further discuss with parents how to address circumstances when the baby turns onto their stomach or side.
4. Sleeping infants will be visually checked daily, every 15-20 minutes, by assigned staff. The sleep information will be recorded on a Sleep Chart. The Sleep Chart will be kept on file for one month after the reporting month. We will be especially alert to monitoring a sleeping infant during the first weeks the infant is in child care. We will check the infant for:
 - Normal skin color
 - Normal breathing by watching the rise and fall of the chest
 - His or her level of sleep
 - Signs of overheating: flushed skin color, increase in body temperature (touch the skin), and restlessness

5. Staff will reduce the risk of overheating by not over-dressing or over-wrapping the infants.
6. All parents/guardians of infants cared for in the facility will receive a written copy of our Infant Safe Sleep Policy before enrollment, will review the policy with staff, and sign a statement saying they received and reviewed the policy.
7. The temperature in the room where the infant(s) sleep will be kept between 68-75°F and monitored by the thermometer kept in the infant sleeping room.
8. To promote healthy development, awake infants will be given supervised "tummy time" for exercise and for play.

Safe Sleep Environment

9. Infants' heads will not be covered with blankets or bedding. Infants will not be covered with blankets or bedding. A sleep sack may be used at the parents' request instead of a blanket.
10. No loose bedding, pillows, bumper pads, etc. will be used in cribs.
11. Toys and stuffed animals will not be allowed in cribs.
12. Pacifiers will be allowed in infants' cribs while they sleep. When the pacifier falls out of the sleeping infant's mouth, it will not be reinserted into the infant's mouth. The pacifier is the only object we will allow in a crib.
13. A safety-approved crib with a firm mattress and tight fitting sheet will be used.
14. Each infant will sleep have his or her own crib. Only one infant will be in a crib at a time, unless we are evacuating infants in an emergency.
15. No smoking is permitted in the infant room or anywhere within the building.

Distribution: Parents and staff will review the policy and be informed of changes 14 days before the effective date. A copy of this policy is in every parent handbook and parents sign that they have received a copy of this policy and agree to it on their child's enrollment form.

Effective date(s): 7/1/14

Revision date(s): N/A

References: CO Rules & Regulations for Childcare Centers 7.702.73 E, G & I

WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING ON YOUR FIRST DAY

Wheat Ridge Learning Academy will provide:

- Hypoallergenic wipes;
- Whole milk for infants and toddlers and 2% milk for preschool;
- Breakfast, lunch and snack (table foods following USDA guidelines);

All families should provide on the first day & then continue to supply:

- Completed Enrollment Form, signed Emergency Medical Authorization Form and signed Tuition Agreement (if not previously turned in);
- Tuition for the first week;
- At least one change of clothes;
- Sunscreen labeled with your child's first and last name;
- A family picture;
- A crib sheet & blanket for nap time. Please take these home weekly to launder;
- A water bottle labeled with your child's first and last name (except Infants 1);
- Food for your child if they are on a special diet or have food allergies;

Within 30 days of enrollment all parents are required to provide a current Immunization Record and Health Appraisal sign by a physician. Wheat Ridge Learning Academy is required to have new Health Appraisals and Immunization Records for your child based on the Academy of Pediatrics schedule for routine health assessments & immunizations.

Parents of Infants should bring:

- Diapers and wipes;
- Baby food (jars, pouches, snacks, etc.);
- However many bottles you think the baby will need for the day (maybe even an extra bottle);
- Pacifier (if used);
- Sleep sack (if you want your child covered during nap);
- Diaper cream (if you choose & with a pediatrician's written authorization);
- Infant Tylenol/Ibuprofen (if you choose & with a pediatrician's written authorization);

Parents of Toddlers should bring:

- Diapers/ pull-ups and wipes;
- Change of clothes (if potty training please bring in more than one change of clothes)

Parents of Preschoolers should bring:

- Just the items listed above for all families: a change of clothes, sunscreen, a family picture, a crib sheet & blanket (taken home weekly to launder) and a water bottle labeled with your child's first & last name.

Parents of Schoolage Children should bring:

- Just the items listed above for all families: a change of clothes, sunscreen, a family picture and a water bottle labeled with your child's first & last name. On field trip days parents should bring a sack lunch that does not require refrigeration and any other appropriate items (i.e. swimsuits & towels on pool days).