



ROCKY MOUNTAIN
P R E S C H O O L

Parent Handbook

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PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

- **I WILL BE RESPECTFUL TO THOSE AROUND ME.** AVOID FOUL LANGUAGE, UNPROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR, VIOLENCE, HARRASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, OR YELLING.
- **I WILL KEEP MYSELF AND OTHERS SAFE.** MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW PROPER CHECK-IN/OUT PROCEDURE, KEEP FRIENDS AND FAMILY WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES, AND FOLLOW POLICIES REGARDING SCHOOL CLOSURES AND EMERGENCIES.
- **I WILL PAY FOR MY SERVICES BEFORE THEY ARE GIVEN.** TUITION IS DUE MONDAY OF EACH WEEK. PAST DUE TUITION WILL LEAD TO TERMINATION OF SERVICES.
- **I WILL SHARE MY OPINION WITH OTHERS.** WE WELCOME PARENTS TO TALK ABOUT ROCKY MOUNTAIN PRESCHOOL ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND RECOMMEND US TO THEIR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS. CRITICISM SHOULD BE SHARED DIRECTLY WITH MANAGEMENT SO WE CAN ADDRESS THE ISSUE AND BETTER SERVE YOU. AVOID SHARING NEGATIVE INFORMATION PUBLICLY THAT HARMS THE REPUTATION OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN PRESCHOOL.

Rocky Mountain Preschool (RMP)

Policies, Procedures and Practices

Introduction

This handbook is to acquaint you with our policies, procedures, and practices. It is very important that you read through it carefully. If you have any questions or concerns about one or more of our policies, procedures or practices, please feel free to discuss them with the Center Director.

Purpose/Philosophy

RMP supports families in raising their children by providing high quality care and education for each child in an environment that is nurturing, exciting and fun!

Curriculum

RMP provides a developmentally appropriate method of presenting areas of learning in an environment that encourages self-discovery, mastery, and an acceptable level of courage. When your child participates in a developmentally appropriate program, over a course of several months you will begin to see new words and ideas which come from your child. Self-esteem will thrive when your child masters the pre-academic skills that are required for grade school success. Our daily schedule will be consistent, yet flexible enough to encourage learning. We will have our meals/snacks, outside time, and rest times at the same time every day. We will be flexible in our length of time of certain activities, or changing the activities, to fit the needs of the children that day. We emphasize self-help skills so your child will be ready for Kindergarten. A good preschool program makes the difference between a satisfactory childcare environment and a quality preschool program. Good child care might be acceptable for a few hours a day, but your child deserves a stimulating age appropriate education when many hours of care are needed. RMP uses Creative Curriculum which covers the needs of the whole child. We want your child to start elementary school ready to learn and have fun!!

Hours of Operation

Normal hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

- Children under the age of 18 months may be dropped off between 7:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.
- Children over 18 months may be dropped off between 7:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.
- Children can be picked up during normal operating hours except nap time. Nap time will vary based on the age of your child and each classroom's schedule.
- Part-time students can attend up to 5 hours a day and full-time students can attend up to 10 hours a day.
- If you need to drop off your child late for any reason you must get approval from the center director 24 hours in advance.

At the end of the day, our Staff will check the attendance record and physically inspect each room to ensure all children have been picked up.

Holiday Schedule

We will be closed:

New Year's Day
President's Day (used as a Staff training day)
Memorial Day
July Fourth*
Labor Day
Thanksgiving and the Day After
Christmas Day*

*Should one of these holidays fall on a weekend, the center will close on Friday for Saturday holidays and Monday for Sunday holidays.

We will close early (1:00 p.m.) on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Regular tuition will be charged for the weeks holidays or snow days occur.

Enrollment of Children

RMP accepts enrollment for children ages 6 weeks to 6 years. RMP does not and will not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or any other protected characteristic under State and Federal law. We invite all parents interested in having RMP as their child's care provider to make an appointment with the Center Director and tour the facility.

When a new child enrolls at RMP, the following documentation needs to be completed and returned to the center before the child can begin care:

- **New Family Enrollment Form** – Completed by the child's parent/guardian.
- **Parent/Guardian Consent Form** – Completed by the child's Parent/guardian. Please read the Parent Handbook before signing this form.
- **CCAP Parent Policies Form** – (For CCAP families only)
- **Enrollment Checklist** – To be completed by the child's parent/guardian. This checklist helps parents setup their Kangarootime account and record important information including family and friends that you authorize to pick up your child from the center and information about your child's doctor and medical insurance.
- **Current Immunization Record*** – Can be obtained from your child's physician.
- **General Health Appraisal*** – Filled out by your child's physician. Be sure to have the physician mark that hearing, vision, and dental screenings have been performed.
- **Health Care Action Plan** – Required for children that may need medication and other health interventions while at school. This is filled out by your child's physician.

(Medical Forms can be faxed to us by your doctor at 303-793-0906)

A registration fee and the 1st week of tuition are required to reserve your spot prior to the child's first day of attendance.

*The Colorado Division of child Care requires every child entering a program to have proof of immunization upon enrollment as well as a General Health Appraisal signed by a physician, and must be on file within 30 days of enrollment.

Special Needs Children

RMP will be compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act relating to special needs children. Our goal is to help them adapt to our program, if appropriate, with reasonable accommodation. Please communicate with the Center Director openly regarding your child's special needs and your expectations of the Center. If your child has an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individual Education Program (IEP), we would like a copy of the plan so we can design learning activities that aid in meeting their goals. Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists are welcome to schedule appointments to work with their clients in their school environment during hours of operation. We maintain an open dialogue with Arapahoe/Douglas Mental Health and/or Child Find. We truly want to build a program that benefits you and your child.

Tuition/Fees

Tuition and fees are invoiced each Saturday for the following week and due by 6:00 p.m. on Monday. Should tuition and fees not be paid as agreed herein, child care services are subject to termination on Wednesday of the same week. Payments made for tuition and fees are non-refundable.

- A \$25.00 fee will be charged for a check returned for any reason.
- A fee of 2 weeks tuition will be charged for early termination. (See policy p.5)
- A fee of \$5 per minute is charged for late pickup. (See policy p.7)

SATURDAY	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY
Tuition/Fees Invoiced	Tuition/Fees Due	Termination of Services

Termination of Services

If services must be terminated for any reason, 2 weeks advance notice must be given to the Center Director in writing. If services are terminated without 2 weeks notice, RMP will charge an Early Termination Fee equal to 2 weeks of the child's tuition in order to compensate for the loss of business.

Attendance and Release of Children

To ensure each child is always safe and supervised, a parent or authorized guardian must accompany each child into the Center, sign them in, and ensure the child is under adult supervision before departing the Center. The Center will not assume any responsibility for any child who is not properly signed in and under supervision. Children may be released only to persons for whom the Center has written permission from the parents or guardian. The permission may be given through Kangarootime. In case of emergencies, we will accept permission by telephone. Children must be signed out before leaving the Center. Please notify your child's teacher before removing them from the group.

If an unauthorized person attempts to pick-up a child, the child will not be allowed to leave. If an unknown but authorized person attempts to pick up a child, identification will be required. If we are suspicious of any person picking up a child, or if aggression is used, the police will be notified immediately. The Center cannot legally deny release of any child to a natural parent unless we have a written court order.

Supervision of Children

All children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult while at the center. While inside the center, make sure everyone in your party always stays with you. Once the child is picked up at the end of the day, parents are responsible for their child(ren).

To avoid the possibility of a lost child, staff will always record regular attendance, constantly monitor all areas of the Center, report unknown absences to the Center Director, remind parents to sign in and out daily, call the parent immediately if a child is unaccounted for at the center, and keep children within sight and sound at all times. If a child is lost the teachers and administrators will inform the Center Director, conduct a search of the building and playground, inform the child's parents, and call the police.

Class Ratios

Teachers keep track of children throughout the day by doing headcounts and signing children in and out when they enter the classrooms. RMP hires additional staff to lower child to staff ratios in our classrooms by placing additional staff in the classroom during critical transition periods such as but not limited to curriculum, diapering, meal times, and rest time to give our teachers some additional assistance.

Absences and Vacations

If your child is going to be absent on a given day, please call the Center before 9:00 a.m. If your child has a contagious illness, please let the Center Director know as soon as possible.

Holidays, sick days or vacation time are not discounted. Since a child holds a space and teachers must still be paid, full tuition is due even when your child is absent. Should the Center close because of severe weather conditions, full tuition is due.

Late Pick-Up

The Center closes at 6:00 p.m. You are expected to pick-up your child(ren) so that you are out of the building by 6:00 p.m. When parents are late, this impacts operation expenses and the plans our teachers have after work. A late fee of **\$5.00 per minute** will be charged for every minute past 6:00 p.m. until the child leaves the building. In the event a child is not picked up within 30 minutes from closing (6:30 p.m.), and a parent or guardian cannot be contacted to make other arrangements, we will notify the proper authorities and agencies. If you have an emergency and are running late, please notify us immediately.

Visitors to the Center

Parents are encouraged to visit the Center at any time. Remember, all visitors, including parents, must sign-in whenever visiting the Center, for the safety of all our children. An appointment is not necessary, but we encourage you to wait until your child has fully adjusted to the center environment. Other visitors are welcome to visit the Center, but they must identify themselves and their purpose, sign in at the Front Desk in the lobby, and remain with a staff member throughout their stay. Strangers are not allowed to wander the Center on their own.

Sibling Visitation Procedure

Siblings can visit each other if it helps to ease their transition to school or for comfort. For safety and security reasons, visits take place in the younger child's classroom for 15 minutes.

Primary Caregiving Practices

Nurturing your child is important to RMP. To accomplish this, each child is cared for by the same two adults each day to promote formation of a strong emotional bond.

Transitions

When your child transitions to a new school we try to make them feel as comfortable as possible. Each child gets a class folder that tells parents about the teacher and includes a checklist of what to bring the first day. We encourage communication with teachers and we send photos of their first day with a message about how they are doing. We follow up with parents and teachers daily to resolve any problems with the transition.

When your child transitions to a new classroom we talk to parents about what to expect and then we setup a time for your child to visit the class and see how the transition goes. For most children they are ready for the next step, but we are sensitive to your child's readiness if they need to stay where they are a little longer. We are always available to discuss your child's development and classroom readiness. Your child's teacher addresses when your child will be changing classrooms at parent teacher conferences to give parents an idea of when the transition will happen.

When your child is old enough to be in the pre-school program, we do a Back to School night. It happens in August just before we start our new school year and parents and their children get to visit the new classroom, interact with the teacher and explore new materials in the learning domains of their new classroom. Class folders are given out to help parents learn more about what the class has to offer. Kindergarten Readiness Assessments are done periodically throughout the school year to track your child's progress and identify areas for improvement. Each child graduates with a copy of their last assessment so their new Kindergarten teacher can see the child's readiness for Kindergarten. RMP also encourages all Pre-K children to attend their "K" Roundup and become acquainted with their next school.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

We schedule regular parent/teacher conferences twice each year in March and September, or at any time you request, to discuss your child's behavior, progress, social and physical needs. Pre-K students have their conferences in May instead of March. The conferences are designed to outline your child's strengths and areas for improvement. For new students, the first conference will be a developmental screening within 90 days of enrollment or when the child changes classrooms. During a child assessment, teachers screen for developmental concerns. RMP makes a referral or provides referral information to the family during Parent/Teacher conferences or as appropriate for any child for whom a developmental concern has been identified. Services may be suggested such as but not limited to Child Find and the Arapahoe/Douglas Mental Health Network to help with suggestions for your child's development and learning.

Guidance

We strive to build programs which encompass a wide array of learning styles in our classrooms, recognizing the values and individuality of each child. Our view of guidance is an opportunity to facilitate your child's growth in self-help skills, problem solving, and decision making. If a child harms or disrespects another child or adult by biting, scratching, kicking, spitting, etc., they will be immediately removed from the situation. When a child needs guidance, an adult will talk with him or her about the misbehavior and may use redirection, encouragement of an appropriate choice, change of an activity, or give an appropriate consequence. Corporal punishment, threats or coercion are never used. If the behavior continues, a meeting with the parent, teacher and the Center Director may be held to discuss a plan for eliminating the unacceptable behavior. Services may be suggested such as but not limited to Child Find and the Arapahoe/Douglas Mental Health Network to help with suggestions for guidance strategies. Dis-enrollment may occur in extreme cases.

Severe Weather Policy

As a rule, RMP will not open for the day if Cherry Creek Schools or Douglas County Schools are closed due to weather. In the event we experience severe weather after the center has opened, we will do all we can to avoid closing to prevent hardships for parents. However, should we have to close, we will provide care until all children are picked up. Outdoor play is a part of each day's activities. Please send your child prepared to play outside (coat, mittens, hat, and boots if necessary). If the outside temperature exceeds 90^o, or falls below 20^o, we will use our multi-purpose room for active play.

Sunscreen

We are asking parents to apply sunscreen to their children each morning before bringing them to school to give children as much outside time as possible. Sunscreen will be reapplied by the teachers each afternoon.

Accidents and Emergencies

We recognize accidents will happen. Most bumps, scrapes and nicks will be treated with loving, compassionate concern for the child, using appropriate First Aid supplies. A child who is injured will be given care or first aid by staff who are First Aid and CPR certified. We will also fill out an Incident/Accident Report.

If the injury is more significant, but not emergent (such as an ankle sprain, cut, or painful wound), every attempt to contact the parents will be made. If we can't reach you, we will call the emergency contact person, or the child's doctor.

The Center staff CANNOT transport your child to receive medical care. If we can treat your child at the Center until you arrive, we will. In the event of an emergency, 9-1-1 will be called. It then becomes their responsibility to evaluate whether transportation or more treatment is required, but we will make every attempt to continue reaching a parent or emergency contact. All payments and costs for emergency transportation or services are the responsibility of the parents.

Evacuation/Other Emergencies

Evacuation: The Fire Department will be notified, and the children will be evacuated from the building to the assembly area in an orderly manner as practiced in our fire drills. Children with special needs will be assigned a specific staff member during the evacuation. Attendance records are taken with the children to confirm the safety of each child. We also take all emergency numbers so that we can get in touch with all parents/guardians. Under no circumstances will the children be allowed to leave the assembly area unless accompanied by their parent or guardian. The teacher of each class is responsible to ensure every child gets reunited with a parent or guardian following the response and reports back to the director when the task is completed.

Other Emergencies: For shelter-in-place or lockdown emergencies, the same procedures as evacuation will be followed except that the children will be secured inside the building in a safe place until the emergency is over.

Closing Procedures

Before closing, staff will check the attendance record to make sure that all children have left the building. The building will also be carefully searched to make sure all children and parents have gone home before closing and going home for the night.

Transportation/Field Trips

Except in cases of emergency, RMP will not transport children to/from school or home. Children 3-6 may have occasional walking field trips, and if so, written parental permission slips are required for excursions outside of the Center. These must be signed by the parent prior to the trip, otherwise, the child may not go. If a child arrives late to the Center and misses a class trip, they will be placed in another class until their own class returns. Permission for emergency medical care is brought for each child participating in a field trip. Field trips are never required, and parents may decline having their children participate in any field trip. While on field trips, children will be strictly supervised by staff members at all times.

Family Events

RMP offers three annual events to get to know families and connect with their children. They are the Easter Egg hunt, the Fall Festival and the Holiday party with Santa and Mrs. Claus. In addition, the Pre-K class does Muffins for Mom, Donuts for Dad, and The First Thanksgiving Dinner where their parents are invited to attend. We also have our class parties where parents are invited to come visit. They would include Valentine's Day, Independence Day Parade and Halloween.

Videos/Television

RMP offers activities to your child that they don't normally experience at home. Our policy is no television or videos unless something is available that is 'G' rated and relates to what the children are learning. Teachers will preview the contents of each video before showing them to the children. The only other exception to this policy is when the Pre-K class earns their PJ party by filling their team marble jar. They earn a pizza/movie party during rest time.

Illness and Medication

If minor symptoms exist, the child will be monitored and an “under the weather” report will be prepared to inform the parent. Parents will be called to allow them to choose course of action. **Vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever over 100°F will result in immediate dismissal from the center.** Parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible. Under Colorado law, children may not be left in our care if ill when they arrive at the Center. We require that children be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the Center. This means symptom free without the use of a fever reducer such as Tylenol or Motrin. If antibiotics have been prescribed by the doctor, your child must have taken the antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to the center.

Only medication that is prescribed by a doctor may be given at the Center. The parent must provide a doctor’s note with the medication that is signed by the doctor and the parent and includes the “6 rights” to medication administration. Procedures for storing and administering children’s medicines and delegation of medication administration is in compliance with section 12-38-132, C.R.S., of the “Nurse Practice Act.”

Child Health Promotion

During enrollment, administration verifies that on the child’s general health appraisal they have received a hearing, vision, and dental screening. Resources for families on where to obtain these services such as Tri-County Health are provided if necessary.

Meals and Snacks

RMP serves breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Weekly menus are posted throughout the center. We follow USDA nutrient guidelines. It is imperative you inform us of any food allergies or special diet information that your child may have. This information must be documented by a physician and we must have a doctor’s approval to make any substitutions.

Diapering/Toilet Training

Parents must provide disposable diapers/pull-ups for their child in diapers or pull-ups. RMP provides baby wipes and changes all diapers on a schedule, or as needed. Potty training is a big step, and we want your child to be successful, so we’d love to make this a partnership between the parent and the teacher. We will start when you tell us your child is ready, or we see they are showing signs of being ready (and we have your approval). Our goal is to make it a great success for your child, with lots of encouragement and recognition.

Rest Time

Each child will have the advantage of taking an afternoon rest time. Children will rest on sanitized cots that are provided. Children who do not fall asleep will be provided with a quiet activity to do after a reasonable attempt to sleep or rest. All children need to bring a crib sheet and blanket. Pillow and stuffed toys are optional. Please LABEL all your children’s belongings. Each Friday these items should be taken home to be washed and returned on Monday.

Personal Belongings and Money

We have a large supply of toys and equipment that your child can play with. We appreciate parent's help in keeping personal belongings at home, *especially toys*. If your child does bring in a toy or money, it is *their* responsibility to safeguard it. RMP will not be held responsible for personal items that get broken or lost at the Center. All personal items, such as clothing, blankets, sheets, and/or stuffed animals for rest time **MUST BE LABELED**. It is important you make sure your child always has extra clothing. Children should wear sturdy shoes and comfortable play clothes. Remember that while children are at the Center, they are at "work." Your child's "job" is to explore, learn, run, move about, try new things, paint, play in water, and get dirty. While every effort will be made to protect your child's clothing, the Center will not be responsible for stains or wear and tear of their clothing.

Home Language

RMP honors the child's home language and encourages home language development by having at least one caregiver/teacher in each classroom who is bilingual if there is at least 30% of a dominant second language in the classroom. How this happens is when a dominant second language is identified or a new child is enrolled that does not yet communicate proficiently in English, staff members will be moved around or new staff will be hired so that at least one caregiver fluent in that language can be assigned to that class on a regular basis.

Students and parents can receive communication in their home language in the following ways: through a staff member or personal family member fluent in that language or a written document translated from English to another language with Google Translator. Examples include the use of a personal family member to interpret a conversation during a parent/teacher conference or the translation of the Parent Handbook to another language. Parents will be asked by staff if they need an interpreter when a suspected need arises.

Garden

RMP has a garden located outside by the playground. We grow strawberries and raspberries when they are in season. We do this so the children can watch the plants grow back each year, bloom, and turn from green to red berries. We also let the children eat the fruit.

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

RMP is always looking for ways to improve our level of care and education. RMP has a QIP that is updated annually. A copy of the QIP is available to parents in the front office. The QIP reflects goals, timelines, and outcomes for RMP's quality improvement. The QIP is also shared in monthly newsletters to parents and staff.

Confidentiality of Records

The information in your child's records is considered privileged and confidential. No one who is not directly related to the care of your child, or with Center management or the State licensing agency, will have access to the record without your written permission. **It is the parent's responsibility to update their information on Kangarootime regularly.** This is essential information that must be kept current in case of an emergency. Please remember that for your child's safety, we **MUST** always be able to reach you.

Reporting Child Abuse

It is the Center's intent to work with and support our families in all areas. Please let us know how we can help you. In compliance with the Colorado Department of Human Services Division of Child Care, RMP staff is mandated to report all cases of suspected abuse (physical, emotional or sexual) or neglect.

**The new Colorado Helpline is 1-844-CO-4-KIDS.
Noticing child abuse or neglect isn't easy. Calling is.**

The following situations would mandate a report:

- Unexplained marks or bruises on a child or marks that seem unlikely to have occurred as explained.
- Marks or bruises on a child that were caused by physical punishment.
- Reports by the child of abuse or neglectful behavior.
- Observations by the staff of verbal or physical abuse, neglected treatment.
- Failure of parents to obtain appropriate medical or dental care for their child.
- Failure of parents to properly provide safety restraints/car seats for their child while in their automobile.

Filing a Complaint

If a problem should occur, it is our hope that the parents will direct any questions or concerns to their child's teacher. If the problem cannot be handled at that level, the Center Director is available to help. Every effort will be made to rectify the problem. If you feel licensing is being violated, you may contact the State of Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care (1575 Sherman St., Denver, CO 80203 – phone 303 866-5958). We truly want to provide a safe and happy environment for your children. Your input is truly important!

Delinquent Accounts

Any delinquent account that is referred to a collection agency or an attorney will be charged an additional 40% of the balance due to defray the costs of collections. Your account will also be reported to the credit bureaus.

PLEASE GET INVOLVED! No one influences children more than their parents. You have chosen to trust your child to our care, and we regard that trust as a sacred responsibility. We will provide an environment in which children grow and develop. Your child's teacher has the experience and education to be of service to you and your child as an expert on child development and learning. To your child, our influence is secondary. Please take the time to ask our teaching team about your child's day and their lesson plans. We do our lesson plans with your child in mind. We have objectives when doing lesson plans. We would love your input and knowledge about your child (what do they like, not like, and what would you like them to know?). There are many wonderful opportunities for parents to participate and become involved at our Center!