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INTRODUCTION
Welcome to Colorado Academy’s Pre-Kindergarten Program. We are excited to start this new journey with you and your children! This handbook describes our goals, policies, and other pertinent information regarding our program. Parents will be notified of any significant changes to the following policies and procedures. This Pre-K Handbook is to be used in conjunction with CA’s Student/Parent Handbook that is posted on CA’s website.

OUR PHILOSOPHY & PROGRAM
We believe in the joy of acquiring knowledge, the importance of social interactions, the value of human diversity and the merit of being in the best environment to ensure that all of the above naturally occur. It is our goal to provide the kind of environment and the type of influences that encourage all children to become knowledgeable, creative, independent, responsible, fully functioning, self-directed individuals who can make good decisions for themselves on a regular basis. Our values and beliefs about children are deeply rooted in the history of early childhood education and incorporate the following:

• We believe all children have the right to the best education possible.
• We believe each person is a unique individual with his or her own needs, and each person has a right to meet those needs in his own way and in her own time. However, one of the responsibilities of having rights is recognizing and respecting the rights of others.
• We believe everyone is entitled to feelings, “good and bad,” as well as the trial and error process that goes with expressing those feelings in a social setting.
• We believe in appreciating and supporting the close ties between the child and the family and that all children are best understood in the context of their family, culture, and society.
• We believe creativity, self-expression, and curiosity are expressions of individuality and should be encouraged to develop in all children and adults.
• We believe in helping children and adults achieve their full potential in the contexts of relationships that are based on trust, respect, and positive regard.
• We believe that all of our educational and guidance decisions for children must be based on our collective knowledge of child development.
• We believe each child and family is due the respect for personal privacy demanded by professional ethics.

PROGRAM GOALS
The Colorado Academy Pre-Kindergarten offers children an introduction to a balanced program consisting of social interactions with both peers and adults and academic enrichment at an appropriate developmental level. Our program is child-centered with a strong focus on hands-on learning and a low student-to-teacher ratio. Our approach is individualized to meet each child’s needs. The classroom is organized and the environment is planned to stimulate imagination and creativity, and to encourage socialization and exploration. We encourage learning through play, which provides opportunities for children to solve problems and express feelings. Our goal is to challenge the mind and body to aid in the development of the whole child. Our professional faculty members encourage exploration and growth in a well-equipped environment that is stimulating, safe, consistent, and nurturing. We strive to enhance each child’s natural curiosity and love of learning. We are committed to working closely with parents toward the welfare of the child, the family and the community. For more detailed descriptions of our Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Computer Education and Physical Education curricula, please consult the Colorado Academy website.

ABSENCES
When your child is sick or will not be in for any reason, please email Lyric McKnight in the Lower School Office Lyric.McKnight@coloradoacademy.org and the prekteam@coloradoacademy.org

ADMISSION GUIDELINES
Students applying to Pre-Kindergarten go through the School’s admission process.
AGES SERVED
Children must turn 4 years old by September 1 of the year they are entering Pre-Kindergarten.

ARRIVALS/LATE ARRIVALS
Our classroom doors will open at 7:50 a.m. and no earlier. Each day, we require that the parent or authorized person sign his or her child in on the printed sign-in/out sheet. Teachers sign in children who ride the bus. A count of children in attendance is made early in the school day. All teachers are aware of that number and make certain that each child present is accounted for at all times during the school day. When a child leaves Pre-K, the parent or authorized person is required to sign out the child using the sign-in/out sheet. This is done regardless of the time of day the child leaves. The Pre-K sign-in/out sheet is an important document used to keep track of each child, and we require parents or authorized persons to fill out each space concerning times of arrival and departure and initialing in the appropriate spaces. This practice assists us as we ensure the safety and whereabouts of each child.

LATE ARRIVALS
We ask that all children arrive by 8:10 a.m. If this is not possible, please notify the Lower School office and administrative assistant Lyric McKnight. Any parent arriving at the Pre-Kindergarten building when the children and staff are not present should check the sign-in sheet for notification of their location. Please proceed to the Lower School Main Office if no information is provided.

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Students are expected to be at school every day and to report to their classes on time. While students may need to miss an occasional day due to illness or other unavoidable reasons, we need your help to ensure consistent class attendance. Frequent absences and tardiness seriously affect academic progress and are disruptive to the teaching environment. The School requests that parents and students thoughtfully consider the impact of any absence other than one of a medical or family emergency. Families are discouraged from taking students out of school prior to a school break. Absences for vacations will be considered unexcused.
Whenever possible, regularly scheduled medical appointments should be made after school hours. Students with excessive absences, excused or unexcused, may be denied re-enrollment or promotion. Should a child miss five days of school or accrue 5 tardies for any reason, the child’s attendance record will be reviewed by the principal and the Pre-K Director and a decision made as to whether to contact the parents. After 10 days of absence or 10 tardies, the principal will send a letter to bring the situation to parents’ attention and to invite a conversation to discuss solutions. In situations involving consistent absences (15 days or more in a school year or 10 in a trimester), the School reserves the right to deny class credit and/or grade-to-grade advancement.

Note: While our teachers do their best to support students after an illness-related absence, it is not possible to re-create a lesson or meet every student’s need. For absences related to family trips not taken during scheduled vacations or special student off-campus opportunities (choir trips, etc.), the responsibility to complete missed work is the responsibility of the student.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT
Staff members are required by Colorado law to report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect. Trainings regarding the indicators and warning signs of physical or emotional abuse are held annually for CA faculty and staff.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS
The Pre-Kindergarten Cottage and Casita have built-in wooden cubbies for each child. This is the area where your child will store his or her belongings, including the change of clothing requested at the beginning of the year and all projects or artwork to take home.

Clothing: Please bring two (2) changes of clothing for your child and have them available at all times. An extra pair of shoes is also beneficial. Flip-flops, Crocs, or any shoe that has open toes or heels will not be allowed on the playground. Please be sure that your child has appropriate outdoor wear that is labeled. Belongings should be placed in students’ cubbies.
Personal Belongings: Please bring only the items listed on your “What to Bring” form to school. A special blanket or small stuffed animal from home is allowed and encouraged.

DEPARTURES/LATE PICK-UP
Prior to the beginning of the school year, parents are asked to complete a Child Release form, listing any person(s) authorized to pick up their child from our school. Only the parent and/or the authorized person(s) listed on that form may pick up a child. Please update your information as necessary. In the event that someone other than parents, guardians, or other authorized persons attempt to pick up a child, we will immediately notify you and the school administration and request your authorization. Identification will be required upon pickup. We will not release a child to anyone that does not appear on that form without written permission from the child’s parents or guardians, except in the case of an emergency when verbal authorization will be allowed.

Teachers will check the sign-in/out sheet at the end of the school day to ensure that each child has been picked up or escorted to the bus. The teacher will initial the bottom of the sign-in/out sheet and put the time this check was made.

Note: In the rare event that a parent or authorized person becomes aware that he/she will be late to pick up a child from Pre-K, it is important to email the LS office immediately: lyric.mcknight@coloradoacademy.org, or call 303-914-2555. Please let the Pre-K team know as well: prekteam@coloradoacademy.org

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE/INJURY OR ILLNESS
The School will attempt to contact parents regarding student illness or injury occurring during the school day or as part of any school program. In circumstances that warrant immediate attention, school representatives and qualified medical personnel will make decisions regarding medical treatment as they deem necessary, including transportation by ambulance to a medical facility. Parents are responsible for the financial obligation related to such emergency medical treatment. Parents must ensure that Emergency Forms are kept up-to-date.
If a student arrives at school with a fever, it will be assumed that the student is contagious. The student will be isolated in the office and parents will be called to pick up the student. We also ask that students who experience diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting the night before remain home from school until that event is at least 24 hours in the past. It is in the best interest of students not to send them to school if they are ill or if they have a fever. Students must be free of a fever for at least 24 hours before returning to school, or if a doctor prescribes antibiotics for a student’s illness, the student must be on that medication for 24 hours before returning.

Students who become ill or injured during the school day will be taken to the Lower School division office. The School can provide basic first aid, and there is a cot for a sick student to rest. However, facilities and health care are quite limited. Therefore, parents or emergency contacts will be notified and a determination made as to whether the parent will pick up the student.

**EMERGENCY/INCIDENT REPORTS**
If a child is injured or involved in any type of accident while at CA, we will follow first aid procedures. Students with more serious injuries will be seen in the Health Office. Staff is required to complete incident reports for all injuries, regardless of severity. Parents will be contacted regarding all injuries. Please ensure your emergency contacts and specific instructions are indicated on all forms.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES/STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL**
Colorado Academy has written protocols for emergencies. Faculty and staff are trained in these procedures each school year. Colorado Academy has adopted the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) for student safety developed by the “i love u guys” Foundation. The SRP is based on four response actions:

- LOCKOUT
- LOCKDOWN
- EVACUATE
- SHELTER
If the incident at school is a weather event, a fire, an accident or a dangerous intruder on campus (active shooter), one (or more) of the four response protocols of the SRP will be the response.

FILING A COMPLAINT
In the event of a formal complaint regarding our center, the following chain of command is requested: Teaching Staff, Early Childhood Director, Business Manager, and then Head of School. In the event that you need to file a formal complaint contact:

**Colorado Department of Human Services**
**Division of Child Care**
**1575 Sherman Street**
**Denver, CO. 80203**
**(303) 866-5958**

GUIDANCE OF CHILDREN/CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT
We view classroom management as an integral part of our curriculum. Being part of a larger group of peers offers a young child the opportunity to learn some of life’s most valuable skills in a nurturing and supportive environment. Discipline is viewed as a positive way to help children gain an awareness of where the limits are set, how to maintain self-control, how to use language to express feelings, and how to problem-solve with others. Discipline is most effective when it allows for natural consequences. The following offers an overview of the way we incorporate Responsive Classroom techniques into the daily school life of your child:

- **Environment** - A place designed for children with thought given to create a cheerful atmosphere with child-sized furniture and materials using “hands on” experiences.
- **Logical Rules** - Such as using words to communicate disappointment and taking care of the learning environment. Children are encouraged to help develop these classroom rules themselves.
- **Curriculum** - Is developmentally appropriate, based on the children’s level of readiness and natural interests.
- **Redirection** - Often a teacher can interest a child in another activity, which will eliminate a potential difficulty. We might ask a child to help us or send a child to another area to play.
- **Positive Reminder** - Telling children what we expect of them or want
them to do, rather than using the terms “no” or “don’t” excessively.
(Example: “We walk indoors,” instead of “Don’t run.”

HEALTH PLANS / MEDICATION

ALL medications brought to school must be accompanied by a medication administration form signed by Parents and Doctor. Parents must bring the medication in the original packaging to the CA Health Office in the Lower School for review and approval by the Health Assistant. Once approved, the medication will be stored in a designated place out of the children’s reach in the Pre-Kindergarten buildings. At no time will a staff member dispense any medication or treat any condition without proper authorization from your pediatrician.

If your child has a medical condition (such as severe allergies, asthma, diabetes or seizures) that requires a health plan, we must have on file a current health care plan completed by the child’s doctor before your child can attend school. If the health care plan includes the possibility that CA faculty or staff would need to administer medication on an emergency basis (such as an Epi-Pen or inhaler), the medication must be dropped off at the CA Health Office (located in the Lower School office) prior to August 30. This allows the school to care for your child in the event of a medical emergency.

The school utilizes Magnus Health to gather student health information. Parents are asked to provide information on their child’s allergies or other health concerns. Parents can access the Magnus Health platform from the Resources page on the CA website.

HOLIDAYS/ PLANNING DAYS

The Pre-Kindergarten program follows the published Colorado Academy academic calendar, which is available on the CA website and in hard copy.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

We encourage parents to log into the CA website to find information that pertains specifically to you and your child, as well as your child’s class. Updated news stories are posted almost daily and can be found on the home page of the website. By checking the website each week, you will find
updates posted by the Head of School and by division principals. In addition, CA utilizes social media platforms for more frequent communication (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram). All-school communication comes directly to your email box each Friday morning with CA Today, a weekly electronic newsletter that helps you prepare for the week ahead. Each month, a digital newsletter, On Campus, is delivered by email. And twice each year, you will receive CA’s magazine, the CA Journal, which features alumni information, financial information, and news.

**HOURS**

Pre-Kindergarten program hours are Monday through Friday from 8:10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**LOST CHILDREN**

Staff members are trained in procedures to account for children at all times. In the event of a lost or missing child, the Director of Security will be immediately contacted. A thorough search of the building will begin involving the entire staff. Parents will then be notified as the search continues. The Director of Security will then call 911 or Lakewood Police if necessary. Finally, the Colorado Department of Human Services will be informed of the incident within 48 hours of the event. Protocols and procedures have been implemented to hold safety as the paramount role of all staff members.

**MEALS/SNACKS**

Meals and snacks are provided at the Dining Hall on campus. In addition, parents can volunteer to bring additional snacks. Sign-ups for this will occur online. Morning snack occurs at 8:30 a.m., lunch is from 11:15-11:50 a.m., and afternoon snack is at 2:30 p.m. The cost is covered by your CA tuition. Children are encouraged but not required to sample foods from the hot lunch, salad, and beverage bars. Sack lunches are provided for both students and parent volunteers on field trip days.

We will celebrate children’s birthdays at 3:00 p.m. on their birthdays. The CA Dining Hall provides supplies milk and napkins. If your child would like a change of pace, 100% pure fruit juice is a nice alternative, and you may
bring it if you would like. Please provide bowls and spoons if needed. Be aware that some children have food allergies, some of which may be life threatening. Please consult with your child’s teacher.

Please provide written instructions regarding any special dietary needs. Any food allergies must be reported upon enrollment. A Health Care Action Plan will be devised in conjunction with our Nurse Consultant and your Pediatrician. Any restrictions must be submitted with a doctor’s note.

*PLEASE SEE HEALTH CARE SECTION ON PAGE 10.

**NAP/REST TIME**

Pre-Kindergarten children attending school for more than five hours and 30 minutes are required to be provided with a rest period. During this time, mats will be provided and the environment will be made conducive for rest.

**PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held twice a year (in the fall and spring) to inform parents of students’ academic, physical, and social/emotional development and progress. Sign-up is done through the CA website.

**PARKING AND CAMPUS SAFETY**

- All children must be accompanied by an adult to and from the parking lot adjacent to our facility.
- Please maintain speeds lower than 10 miles an hour when driving through campus
- Be alert for pedestrians at all times.
- Hold your child’s hand when exiting or entering your vehicle until safely on the sidewalk

**STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION/SPECIAL SERVICES**

Colorado Academy does not discriminate in any of its programs, procedures, or practices on the basis of age, color, disability, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, military service, or other protected status. Each child’s particular needs will be assessed prior to enrollment to determine whether the services offered will meet the needs of the child and the parent(s) or
guardian(s).

SUNSCREEN USAGE/SKIN PROTECTION We request that sunscreen be applied daily at home prior to arrival. Sunscreen will be reapplied throughout the day with your written permission (form on Magnus Health portal). Parents may supply individual sunscreen labeled with the child’s name. In situations when the parent-provided sunscreen is not available, we use Coppertone Water Babies Lotion Spray, SPF 50. Each child should bring a protective hat and a weather-appropriate jacket.

TELEVISION/VIDEO VIEWING As a practice, TV and video viewing are not a part of our curriculum. There may be a rare occasion when we include a video or TV program in conjunction with a special event. The video will be “G” rated and suitable for young children. Parents will be informed prior and may request an alternate activity for their child during the viewing. A permission slip for all TV/video viewing is included on the Magnus Health portal.

TRANSPORTATION
The daily bus transportation to/from campus is available to Pre-Kindergarten students if they have an older sibling on the bus. If Pre-Kindergarten students go on an off-campus field trip, they will be transported in Colorado Academy school buses. An appropriate child restraint system compliant with State and Federal guidelines is utilized whenever Pre-K students are on a bus.

TUITION/FINANCIAL AID
At CA, our tuition is as comprehensive as possible so that each student enjoys a challenging and rewarding experience. Our tuition covers all basic educational expenses, including classroom supplies, field trips, computer use, and lunch and snack. Pre-Kindergarten (full day) for 2019-2020 is $22,770. Our priority is for all admitted students to have the opportunity to attend CA, regardless of their family's economic situation. Financial aid is awarded to current and newly admitted students on the basis of demonstrated need, as determined by factors such as income, family size, assets, and liabilities. Since financial aid is treated as a gift from the school to the receiving family, there are no repayment requirements. However, as
circumstances and tuition change each school year, families are required to complete the financial aid application process on a yearly basis.

**VISITORS**
We expect and encourage parents, grandparents, and other close family members to visit our Pre-K once the initial adjustments to the beginning of the school year are in place. We would love to have you accompany us on a field trip, assist with special projects, etc. We look forward to occasionally having you join us for lunch. Please let us know in advance of your visit in case we already have several visitors that day or some other special event is scheduled. All parents should have ID badges and wear them while on campus. These can be obtained from Janet Plant in the CA Book Store, located in the Campus Center. Other visitors should also obtain a visitor nametag from the divisional administrative assistant or Pre-K Director to wear while on campus and must sign in as they enter the Pre-Kindergarten.

**WEATHER CLOSINGS**
In inclement weather, or with extreme temperatures (above 90° or below 32°), outside time will be limited or canceled. We follow Colorado Academy’s schedule during inclement weather. Information about school closings will be broadcast on local television stations. The information will also be posted on the CA website and you may also call (303) 986-1501 for a recorded message.

**WITHDRAWAL OF SERVICES**
To end enrollment of your child/ren from Colorado Academy’s Pre-K program, we ask for 30 days written notice. If continued enrollment is deemed inappropriate for the child or family, parents will be notified in writing.