



Blue Lake Preschool, Inc.

# Parent Handbook

Revision 2.9  
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**ABOUT BLUE LAKE PRESCHOOL.....2**

**Age Groups.....3**

**Classroom Policies.....4**

**Parental Involvement .....6**

**Health and Hygiene.....7**

**Safety ..... 11**

**Fee Policies ..... 13**

**Program Policies..... 15**

**Child & Family Health Resources ..... 17**

**Welcome to Blue Lake Preschool!** Blue Lake Preschool is a board-governed non-profit organization dedicated to enriching the lives of children and their families in the Roaring Fork Valley. The following handbook should answer most of your questions regarding the policies and programs that make Blue Lake Preschool so valuable for families. If you have any questions that are not covered in this handbook, please do not hesitate to speak with the Center Director. We want you to be happy with your decision to choose Blue Lake Preschool as the place for your child to learn and grow!

***Our two mid valley locations...***

Blue Lake Preschool  
0189 JW Drive Suite C  
Carbondale, CO 81623  
(970) 963-4380

Little Blue Preschool  
55 N 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Carbondale, CO 81623  
(970) 963-7415

# ABOUT BLUE LAKE PRESCHOOL, EL JEBEL

## *Our Mission and Philosophy*

Blue Lake Preschool is a quality preschool that is dedicated to nurturing and empowering young children to learn and grow in a safe and challenging environment. We believe in creating a setting for children that will foster positive self-esteem and prepare them for a successful, long-term, educational experience. Studies continually conclude a consistent routine, quality teachers, and lower student-teacher ratios are a strong foundation for providing an enriched classroom environment for our children. We pride ourselves in hiring teachers who are compassionate, enthusiastic, and dedicated to their role as a professional in early childhood education. We provide funding for our teachers to take additional college courses and reserve two in-service days where the school closes to prepare for the upcoming school year. In addition to parent orientation and meetings at your request, parent teacher conferences are available twice a year so that we can discuss your child's progress with you.

## Goals

### *For the Child*

- Maximize our teachers' personal involvement with each child by maintaining a teacher – child ratio lower than published requirements by the state.
- Provide opportunities for interacting with other children and developing social skills.
- Encourage safe appropriate play that contributes to the developmental needs of the child.
- Provide opportunities for meaningful play that will help empower the child to explore their abilities to communicate, investigate their environment, and express themselves.
- Cultivate an appreciation of the natural treasures of the Roaring Fork Valley with local field trips and by inviting local organizations to visit our school.

### *For the Parent*

- Children will be cared for in safe, nurturing environment by a professional, compassionate, staff.
- We will be available to meet with parents regarding their child's growth and development.
- Support commuting hours often necessary for parents in the valley by being open from 7:30am – 5:30pm
- Foster a family atmosphere by joining together for community picnics, carnivals, and local events.

### *For the Community*

- Participate and involve families in local events.
- Enhance the value of the surrounding communities by providing a high-quality childcare and preschool.
- Contribute to the growth and development of the future citizens of the community.

## *Licensing*

Blue Lake Preschool is licensed by the State of Colorado. We are inspected regularly to ensure that we meet or exceed health, safety, and other state requirements. Blue Lake Preschool is an equal opportunity provider. We accept applications for admission and employment without regard to race, religion, gender, national origin, color, creed, physical or mental disability, sexual preference, or any other protected status.

## **Age Groups**

### ***About our Teachers***

We pride ourselves in hiring teachers who are compassionate, enthusiastic, and dedicated to their role as a professional in early childhood education. Our teachers are encouraged to develop their own teaching style while following the guidelines of our child-centered philosophy. We provide funding for our teachers to take additional college courses at Colorado Mountain College as well as participate in local workshops and trainings. Each teacher has had a background check, completed state mandated trainings, and gone through our orientation process.

### ***In the Classrooms***

Studies continually conclude consistent routine, quality teachers, and lower student-teacher ratios are a strong foundation for providing an enriched classroom environment for our children. To this end, we have committed to following the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) guidelines for ratios and class sizes. As you can see below, these guidelines are lower than what is required by the State of Colorado. Your child will be cared for by the same two teachers each day to help promote the formation of a strong emotional bond.

### ***Infants (6 weeks to 18 months) Three teachers for ten children (State ratio = 1:5)***

The infant time period is perhaps the most significant period of development. Children begin learning at birth, so we have trained caregivers to assist in this important stage of development. We encourage babies to communicate by playing games like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake as well as learning basic sign language. Our curriculum supports a child's need to be nurtured and loved by caring adults. Through holding, singing, and talking to your child, we give individualized care and attention that helps develop the foundation for language and learning. Feeding, sleeping, and other activities are all individualized and will compliment your schedule at home.

### ***Waddlers & Toddlers, (1 to 3 years) Two teachers for eight - ten children (State ratio = 1:5 or 1:7)***

Our toddler teachers listen and talk with each child and try to anticipate individual needs. There are fun things to watch and touch and do. Since children learn through playing and exploring, we provide them with a wide range of activities throughout the day. We provide cooking and art experiences using a large variety of textures and substances. Language, self-help, and potty-training skills develop during this period. Toddler activities also help develop small and large muscle skills.

### ***Brave Badgers (2 ½ to 4 years) Two teachers for 16 children (State ratio = 1:10)***

We provide a safe environment for the children to have fun, explore their creativity, and make friends. We feel that building self-esteem is vital for them to grow and mature. We encourage this by respecting them as individuals and assisting them in problem solving, self-help skills, and effective communication. A child may join this room even if they are not potty trained. We provide encouragement through consistency and positive reinforcement. We believe that the classroom belongs to the children and should be structured in a way that caters to their needs and interests. Science, art, dramatic play, manipulative activities, blocks, music, and language centers are permanently set up in the classroom. The children are free to move around and explore their interests without time limitations. We want your child to look forward to and feel confident about being a part of our big, exciting world.

### ***Rockin' Raccoons (3 ½ to Kindergarten) Two teachers for 18 children (State ratio = 1:12)***

The pre-kindergarten room provides an environment that helps children prepare for kindergarten emotionally, socially, and intellectually. We stress cooperation and respect for one another, and we practice making good decisions and taking responsibility for our actions. We continue to promote play, songs, and art as a way to learn. We introduce letters and numbers casually, and plan games and art projects related to them. We help students write letters, work on beginning letter sounds, and pre math skills when they are interested. During the year we go on many exciting field trips to places like the library, ACES, the Fire Station, C.A.R.E., the Roaring Fork Conservancy, and the airport. We also arrange ski school, skating lessons, gymnastics, soccer and more!

### ***Clever Quails (5 as of Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> to Kindergarten) Two Teachers for 20 children (State ratio = 1:12)***

The Clever Quail classroom is a ¾ day kindergarten preparation class. These teachers and students focus on developmental skills to promote success as they navigate the independence of kindergarten. The kids hone their skills in communication, cooperation, and social/emotional awareness. This classroom still uses play-based learning to teach early reading, simple math skills, and creativity through manipulatives, block play and open-ended art projects. It is a priority of this class to participate in the activities our school plans in partnership with the community. They can attend ski school, skating lessons, gymnastics, soccer and more!

### ***BLAST & Camp (After School / Vacation Days / Summer Camp)***

Children who attend elementary school can take the bus to Blue Lake after school! We also offer on a sign-up basis, the option to attend BLPS during the public-school closures that we are open. The goal of our after-school program is to enrich and complement your child's school day experience. Our emphasis is on group and interpersonal skills. We strive to encourage children to use cooperation and approach all situations with constructive dialogue and mutual respect. Most after school activities are chosen by group decision with guidance from teachers and consideration given to individual needs. We realize the need for large motor stimulation after a day at school. Outdoor playtime and activities are a big part of the after-school curriculum. In the summer we offer a day camp that includes swimming, rock climbing, gymnastics, ACES and farm visits, Glenwood Adventure Park, and other various outdoor activities. We also care for this group during many of the public-school holiday breaks with exciting field trips and fun activities to make the time out of school feel special. It is a great opportunity for your child to make friends and continue the learning process while they are out of school.

## **Classroom Policies**

### ***Transitions***

Children will experience many transitions while at Blue Lake. We will help support you and your child in making each of these transitions as painless as possible! During each transition we will meet with you to ensure we have an individualized plan that is appropriate for your child, your family, and our program. Some examples of transitions you may experience are:

- ***Home to School*** – starting school is an exciting time for you and your child but can also be a time that causes nervousness or uncertainty. Before enrolling your child, we require that you and your child come and visit our program, meet the teachers, and ensure that our environment is a good fit for your family. We will work with each family on an individual basis to help ensure the transition is a smooth one.
- ***Breast to Bottle*** – we welcome parents of infants the opportunity to come by during the day and feed your child whenever possible. When you are ready to start your child on a bottle, we will work with you to ensure this is as easy as possible. We do understand that this is a gradual process that calls for patience and understanding from the parents and the teachers.
- ***Potty Training*** - to get through this phase in development, teamwork is key. We'll make every effort to coordinate our program with the one you start at home. We will not start any toilet training until you decide the time is right. (Many children will start around two years of age.) When you do decide to start the process, we will ask that you supply us with an ample amount of clothing for when accidents do happen. If your child has just started toilet training, he or she may still wear a diaper at rest time. We will support the child by encouraging them to try to use the toilet regularly including transition times, before/during/after outside time, and before going on any fieldtrip. We have lots of information that we can share with you to make this transition as easy as possible!
- ***Class to Class*** – kids often stay in a classroom for a typical school year and then move up together as a class. At times, a child may or may not be ready to move up and then we will work with you to decide what is best for your child. We will discuss these transitions during parent teacher conferences, at our Back-to-School BBQ, or at any other time that is necessary.
- ***Preschool to Kindergarten*** – the state cut-off birthdate for a child to enter kindergarten is October 1<sup>st</sup>. If your child is eligible for kindergarten, we will work with you to ensure you are aware of the opportunities in our valley, have the information to tour each elementary school, and know when the registration dates are. We plan a kindergarten information night where you will be able to meet a representative from many schools and ask

questions that are important to you and your family. Since this is an exciting time for everybody involved, we make this a fun time by hosting a graduation ceremony where we are all able to celebrate this milestone!

### ***Discipline***

Learning self-control is just a normal part of growing up. We believe that it is our responsibility to help all children learn to resolve their own conflicts. We encourage them to use their words to let another child know how they feel. A teacher will gently guide the child through this process so that it is in the child's power to resolve the situation, building on their abilities to interact socially. Most situations can be handled by redirecting a child to another, more appropriate activity. This approach is called positive redirection. Our discipline policy is for the purpose of learning and does not involve corporal or physical punishment.

### ***Daily Schedules***

Our schedules are meant to be a guide and are flexible. While we keep the routine the same, times may vary depending on the interests of the children. We stay with an activity for as long as it works for the group. All activities are planned to accommodate the range of abilities and ages in a particular room.

### ***Videos and Screen Time***

Videos are reserved for rare special occasions only. Children under two years do not use screens at any time at school. Older children do not use screens as a part of their regular activity and are reserved for special occasions no more frequently than every three months. All videos are specifically rated for children. During a special occasion video, if a child is not interested, they will always be provided with an opportunity to play in another area.

### ***Rest Time***

After hours of exciting, educational, and fun activities your child will need rest. The State of Colorado mandates a rest time of at least one hour although most of our classrooms have two hours dedicated to rest and quiet time. We provide the cot and a sheet. We ask that you bring a labeled blanket from home and take it to wash once a week.

### ***Outside Play Time***

Children are always learning. We consider the outdoors an extension of our classroom. Outdoor spaces and equipment are designed for active play and exploration to provide your child with good exercise, fresh air, and different learning activities. Even when we head outside, supervision is a top priority. Please note that sunscreen must be authorized by a parent. Although we do try to get kids outside on a daily basis, we use caution with extreme weather and temperatures. We will typically stay indoors if the weather is below 20 degrees or hotter than 90 degrees. On these occasions, each class is able to utilize the music and movement room for gross motor play.

### ***Personal Items***

At Blue Lake Preschool, your child will be playing with fun, educational toys every day. Therefore, we ask you to keep your child's toys or personal items, including money, at home for fear of loss or breakage. Occasionally there are show and tell and sharing times that when your child can bring in an item as long as it is safe, and it is labeled with his or her name. If your child is missing an item, please notify us immediately. Although we'll be more than happy to look, we cannot be held responsible for lost or damaged items. Items that pose a real or imaginary danger to other children are not allowed at school at any time. We also require that toy guns, swords, and action toys and figures be left at home as they may promote aggressive behavior.

### ***Field Trips and School Visits***

Throughout the year (and almost daily in the summer) we plan field trips for the older classes and invite specialists into the school for younger classes. Trips have included adventures to the ACES, Carbondale Clay Center, the Maroon Bells, Glenwood Caverns, True Nature Healing Arts, Sopris Alpaca Farm, the Carbondale Library, local pools, and lots of local parks in the valley. School visits include a visit from the Roaring Fork Conservatory, local fire departments, and CARE just to name a few. We take our buses or RFTA buses to these destinations, and often for the kids, the bus trip is as exciting as the destination! For all trips, parents will be asked to sign a permission slip to

keep on file that will include the departure time, the return time, the times of the activity, the address of the activity, the mode of travel, and the teachers present for the field trip. All field trips will be posted ahead of time to enable parents to prepare. If a child arrives after their group has left the school, the parent may bring the child to the location of the group. In case of an emergency teachers will administer first aid and will immediately call for assistance. Teachers carry cellphones for this reason. Many of these activities require an additional, nominal fee which will be charged to your account. These fees will be explained in the pre-summer information and included on your monthly bill. If you want your child to join these trips, and are concerned about the extra costs, please contact the director.

## **Parental Involvement**

### ***Parent and Teacher Partnership***

As part of our promise to provide the kind of care and education you want for your child, we feel you should be involved every step of the way. That's why we encourage you to visit anytime and join us for field trips or special family events at the preschool. Other family members or close friends may visit the school. We ask that these individuals ring the bell upon arrival and sign in. Notification of visitors ahead of time by parents is required. In addition to parent orientation and meetings at your request, we schedule parent teacher conferences twice a year so that we can discuss your child's social, emotional, and developmental progress with you. We publish a weekly newsletter with school news and events that are happening within the center. In addition, we send daily information through Brightwheel outlining our fun activities and learning for the day. Please refer to these Brightwheel communications for lesson plans, daily schedules, and other important classroom and school information. Infants and Waddlers receive individualized daily reports through Brightwheel as well, that explain how your child ate and slept during the day and what activities they did. Being an active, involved parent in your child's school is a commitment that pays off time and again!

### ***Home Language***

Our program 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 a dominant second language in the classroom. To ensure that families understand our program, policies, and information about their child and their development, we will use a translator or services provided by Als Global (1-800-951-5020). Si usted necesita estos documentos en español, me avisan y lo tengo traducido por usted.

### ***Clothing***

A full day at Blue Lake can include activities such as running, climbing, painting, dancing, eating, and playing, both indoors and outside, so your child should wear comfortable, washable clothes, as well as rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes while at school. Even during the winter, we try to get outside as much as possible. On snowy days we ask that you provide appropriate snow clothes for your child. We also ask that you bring a change of clothes, just in case. To avoid losing a favorite sweater or jacket, we ask that you label all clothing that might be taken off or changed during the day.

### ***Religion***

We provide care for children from families with various backgrounds and beliefs. For this reason, we do not teach religious doctrine, but we have designed our learning programs to teach love, caring, and respect for others no matter what their religious affiliation.

### ***Parent Volunteer Hours***

In order to provide a quality program, we need the help of the entire school community. We require each family contribute a **minimum** of 16 hours volunteer time per school year. Eight hours must be completed by the end of February and the additional eight by the end of August. These hours are logged by you in a box at the sign-in desk. With this assistance, we have rebuilt playgrounds, painted, built a kitchen and run successful fundraisers, and made numerous improvements to the preschool that would have otherwise been impossible. We keep an ongoing list of volunteer opportunities, or we invite you to be creative and suggest some of your own ideas. Perhaps you can arrange

a field trip to your office (doctors, dentists, construction sites, fire station, etc.) or come and teach a class about a hobby of yours. When volunteering in a classroom, you will never be expected to be the primary teacher and will always have the direct supervision of the classroom teachers and be excluded from our classroom ratios. Please contact the director with your ideas and/or if you aren't sure what opportunities exist. If you are unable to fulfill your volunteer hours, you will be charged a fee of \$30/hr for each hour that is not completed. Any unfinished hours will be billed on your March and August invoices.

### ***Board Governed 501c3***

Blue Lake Preschool is a non-profit organization, the daily operations are handled by an Executive Director and overseen by a Board of Directors. The board consists of family members as well as representatives from the community. The board reviews policies each year and makes improvements and changes to our program based upon feedback from the administration, staff, and parents. Our Quality Improvement Plan is posted in the entryway, updated annually, and can be viewed at any time.

### ***Your Donations are Tax-Exempt!***

Blue Lake Preschool is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 educational organization. This means contributions made by you, your extended family, and your workplace qualifies for a standard non-profit tax deduction. In addition, the State of Colorado provides additional deductions for donations to non-profit preschools, so your dollar-for-deduction donation ratio is significantly higher than many non-profits! Please consider donating to our school and/or asking your employer to match any donations you make; your child will benefit directly.

## **Health and Hygiene**

### ***Meals and Snacks***

Blue Lake Preschool provides breakfast between 7:30 and 8:30 in the morning. We also provide two nutritious snacks, morning and afternoon, as well as lunch each day. We email out both the snack and lunch menus each month. Please notify us of any food allergies your child may have. We will gladly work with you to try to accommodate your child's needs. If your child is an infant or waddler who is not yet ready for table food, we ask that you supply all appropriate food until your child is ready for what we provide.

### ***Sick Children***

The health of our students is of great importance to us. To help reduce the spread of illness to other children, sick children may not be brought to school. When you do keep your child at home, please notify us as soon as possible in the morning. If your child becomes ill while at school, we will call you and ask you to pick him/her up within the hour. In the event of a serious accident or illness, an ambulance may be called. To ensure your child's safety, we keep a file of names, addresses, and phone numbers of only those people you have authorized to pick up your child. In addition, we will also ask you to supply names and numbers of your family doctor and preferred hospital.

### ***Contagious Diseases***

Please let us know if your child has been exposed to any communicable diseases (Covid-19, strep throat, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, RSV, croup etc.) Exposure to communicable diseases must be posted to inform other parents and outbreaks must be reported to the Center for Disease Control. If a child is absent because of a contagious disease, he or she may not return to school without approval from a physician indicating that they are no longer contagious and are able to participate in our daily activities.

### ***Immunizations***

The Center for Disease Control has released guidelines for vaccinating young children. We support the American Academy of Pediatrics in recommending you follow their guidelines regarding child immunizations and if your family chooses to abstain from all or any immunization, we require a state immunization exemption record. We will ask for an immunization record upon enrollment and immunization record updates at each AAP/CDPHE recommended age. In the circumstance of an infectious disease outbreak, and a child is not immunized for the disease, the family will

follow the guidelines set out by CDPHE in the procedure [\*Infectious Diseases in Child Care and School Settings\*](#). The school's Nurse Consultant will assist and advise the family and school with this procedure.

### ***How Sick is Too Sick?*** When Children and Staff Should Stay Home from School or Child Care

There are three main reasons to keep sick children and adults at home:

1. The child or staff member does not feel well enough to take part in usual activities. For example, a child is overly tired, fussy or will not stop crying.
2. A child needs more care than teachers and staff can give while still caring for the other children.
3. The symptom or illness is on this list and indicates that staying home is required.
  - ***Diarrhea*** - Frequent, loose, or watery stools (poop) compared to normal ones that are not caused by food or medicine.  
**Yes** - if there are other symptoms along with the diarrhea (such as vomiting, fever, abdominal pain, jaundice, etc.), the diarrhea cannot be contained in the toilet, there is blood or mucous in the stool, the child is in diapers, or the staff member handles food or bottles. Children and staff may return 24 hours after their last episode of diarrhea unless the diarrhea is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer.
  - ***Fever*** - Fever with behavior change or other illness. Babies who are 4 months or younger need to see a doctor right away for a fever of 100°F or higher. A child should not be excluded if they have a fever with no other symptoms unless they are 4 months old or younger.  
**Yes** - for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone. The fever needs to be gone, without using medicine that reduces the fever (acetaminophen or ibuprofen).
  - ***Coughing***  
**Yes** - if the coughing is severe, uncontrolled, or the child has wheezing, rapid or trouble breathing. Medical attention is needed for wheezing, rapid or trouble breathing. Note: Children with asthma may go to school with a written health care plan and the school is allowed to give them medicine and treatment.
  - ***Mild Respiratory or Cold Symptoms*** - Stuffy nose with clear drainage, sneezing, and mild cough.  
**No** – children and staff may go to school if they are able to take part in usual activities. Children and staff should stay home if the symptoms are severe. This includes fever and if a child is not acting normally and/or has trouble breathing.
  - ***Vomiting/Throwing Up*** - Throwing up two or more times in the past 24 hours, there are other symptoms in addition to the vomiting (such as fever, diarrhea, etc.).  
**Yes** – until 24 hours after throwing up stops or a doctor says it is not contagious. If a child has a recent head injury, watch for other signs of illness and for dehydration. Adults who handle food and bottles must be excluded.
  - ***Chicken Pox***  
**Yes** - until the blisters have dried and crusted (usually 6 days).
  - ***Conjunctivitis (pink eye)*** - Pink color of eye and thick yellow/green discharge  
**No** – children and adults do not need to stay home unless they have a fever or are not able to participate in usual activities. Call your doctor for advice and possible treatment.
  - ***Croup (see Coughing)*** - Call your doctor for advice. Note: Children and staff may be able to go to school unless they are not well enough to take part in usual activities.
  - ***Fifth's Disease***  
**No** – the illness is no longer contagious once the rash appears.
  - ***Hand Foot and Mouth Disease*** (Coxsackie virus)  
**No** - unless the child or adult has mouth sores, is drooling and is not able to take part in usual activities.
  - ***Head Lice or Scabies***  
**Yes** - children may stay at school or childcare until the end of the day but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment.
  - ***Hepatitis A***  
**Yes** – children and staff may return to school or childcare when cleared by the health department. Children and staff should not go to another facility during the period of exclusion.
  - ***Herpes***



**No** - unless there are open sores that cannot be covered or there is nonstop drooling.

- **Impetigo**  
**Yes** – children and adults need to stay home until antibiotic treatment has started.
- **Ringworm**  
**Yes** - children may stay at school or childcare until the end of the day but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment. Keep the area covered for the first 3 days if participating in sports with person to person contact.
- **Roseola**  
**No** - unless there is a fever or behavior changes.
- **RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)**  
**No** – children and staff can go to school unless they are not well enough to take part in usual activities and/or they have trouble breathing. Call your doctor for advice.
- **Strep Throat**  
**Yes** - for 12 hours after starting antibiotics unless the doctor says that it is okay to return to school sooner. Children and staff also need to be able to take part in usual activities.
- **Vaccine Preventable Diseases:** Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Pertussis (Whooping Cough)  
**Yes** – Children and staff can return to school once the doctor says they are no longer contagious.
- **Yeast Infections:** Thrush or Candida diaper rash  
**No** - follow good hand washing and hygiene practices.
- **Other Symptoms or illnesses not listed**  
Contact the childcare center director or school health staff to see if the child or staff member needs to stay home.

*This was developed in collaboration with the Children's Hospital of Colorado School Health Program. The information presented is intended for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of your personal doctor's advice and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information should not be used in place of a visit, call or consultation or advice of your doctor or other health care provider.*

### **Medical and Dental Information**

As part of the enrollment process, we gather information regarding your child's health. The State of Colorado requires that we have your child's primary physician, dentist, and hospital preference listed on your enrollment information as well as your child's medical insurance information. If there is an accident that requires medical attention, we recommend you call your health insurance company for reimbursement of the related costs. We also provide supplemental accident insurance to reimburse you for any out-of-pocket expenses that are not covered by your medical or dental insurance. If you need assistance with obtaining medical insurance, please refer to the list of resources at the back of this handbook.

### **Administering Medication**

Your child may return to school as soon as your doctor determines that they are no longer contagious and are able to participate in our daily activities. Please ask for a Medication Administration in School or Child Care form if you would like us to administer medication to your child. **All medication, whether prescription or over the counter, must be in the original container, labeled with your child's full name, and have a signed medication authorization from both your child's physician and the parent.** All medication administered by our staff must be in its original container. Go over the instructions for administration of the medication with the director or office staff present as only staff with medication delegation can administer medicine. The Medication Administration Log will be completed when your child's medication is administered. Medication must be kept in a locked container, which is provided by the school, with the exception of emergency medication which will be kept in an unlocked container, out of reach of children, in each classroom.

### **Schoolage Self Carry Medication**

Your school-age child may carry appropriate medication as deemed necessary (ex: asthma inhaler, EpiPen, etc.) with the proper prescription, signed medical authorization, and following the above guidelines of communication with director/staff for administering of the medication.

### ***Children with Disabilities***

We have had some rewarding experiences integrating special needs children in our program. It is our policy to accept children in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), its regulations, and any other applicable local, state, and federal laws pertaining to the provision of services to those with disabilities. We review each child's situation on a case-by-case basis. This review will inform the school's teaching practices and evacuation and emergency procedures. Please discuss your child's needs with the director prior to enrollment.

### ***Protecting Against Second & Third Hand Smoke***

We want to protect the health of all our students. We keep our children safe from second-hand smoke by having all our schools smoke-free facilities and by asking parents, teachers, or any visitors that smoke, to only do so more than 25 feet from any area where children could be present. In order to protect against third-hand smoke, we ask parents to leave all items that have been exposed to smoke at home. Any children's personal belongings, including blankets, lovies, clothes, or backpacks, that carry the smell or have been exposed to smoke will be excluded from the facility. They will be respectfully bagged and stored in an outside location for the remainder of the day. Our infant staff will wear clean staff shirt or smock that has been laundered at the school while working.

### ***Community Partnerships***

We want your child to grow and succeed just as much as you do! In an effort to help ensure your child gets a great start we work with outside organizations in our community to ensure they can help support in areas we might not be able to. If there is an area that you feel like your child needs extra support, we encourage you to work with an outside agency to receive these services. We have lists of programs that we have worked with in the past and are happy to share these resources with you. There may also be times that we might recommend that your child be referred to an outside organization for support services (ex. mental health consultant, physical therapist, or speech language pathologist). If this is the case, we will work with you every step of the way. The process will most likely look something like this:

- Your child's teacher will inform the director of the concern
- A meeting will be set up with the family, teacher, and teacher to discuss the area of concern and what programs are available for support
- The program will either contact the service agency or the information will be passed onto the parents and a screening will be arranged. This can often be done while the child is at school.
- The outcomes are shared with the family and the program, and a plan will be set into place on how we can all work together to support your child.

### ***Vision, Dental, and Hearing Screenings***

Blue Lake Preschool works with local community agencies to offer vision, dental, and hearing screenings on an annual basis for the kids in our program. Results from each screening will be given to each family and a copy will be kept in your child's file. If your child does not attend on a day when the screening is scheduled, they are welcome to come in to participate in the screening. If you miss the day the screening is offered, you can contact one of the resources listed at the end of our handbook to set up your screening. Please bring a copy in for your child's records. We will request a copy of the screening each year along with an updated general health appraisal and immunization record.

### ***Hand Washing***

We want to help teach your child valuable personal skills. We require hand washing upon arrival at school, before eating, after bathroom visits, and at other appropriate times during the day. It is best for your child if this is practiced at home too!

### ***Safe Sleep for Infants***

An infant's nap is a crucial part of their day. We understand the importance of sleep, especially for an infant, but must ensure we follow all rules associated with infant sleep procedures. If at any time you have questions regarding these policies, please see the director for clarification.

- An approved crib will be available for each infant. No soft bedding, including blankets, are allowed in the crib or at school.
- An infant must be placed on their back for sleeping.
- Alternative sleep positions or swaddling of an infant is only allowed with a health care plan completed and signed by the child's parent and physician.
- Each child who uses a pacifier must have it offered to them when being put down to sleep unless the parent directs otherwise. If an infant refuses the pacifier, they will not be forced to take it.
- Infants who fall asleep in a car seat, bouncy seat, swing, or any other piece of equipment not approved for sleep, must immediately be moved to their approved sleep area and be placed on their back.
- When a child is safely sleeping in a crib, infant room staff will supervise and physically check on the child sleeping every 10 minutes to maintain a safe sleep environment.

## **Safety**

### ***Signing In and Out***

When bringing your child in each morning, state law requires that we have you sign your child in. Also, you must personally take your child to their teacher in their classroom. We will release your child only to parents or guardians with legal custody or persons over the age of 18 who are designated on your enrollment information. When you come to pick up your child in the afternoon, we again ask you to sign out. Adults other than parents will be required to show ID. At the end of the day, 5:30 pm, all children will have been picked up and recorded on the Face-to-Name attendance sheet. A classroom and playground sweep happen at 5:30 pm, classroom attendance sheets are checked, Brightwheel attendance is checked, and all crib mattresses are stood up; all of these procedures ensure that all children have been picked up. If during this process, a child is remaining and has not gotten picked up, two staff members will stay with your child until you arrive. If you arrive after closing time, we do charge a late pick-up fee. If you are more than one hour late and we are unable to reach an emergency contact the police and child protective services will be called. Daily reminders are posted on a white board in the entrance along with notices of upcoming events and weekly information. This information will also be communicated in the weekly newsletter sent from the office. Please read the posted information as it pertains to the daily functions at school.

### ***Safe Release of Children***

Once enrolled at Blue Lake Preschool, you will be given a personal code to enter the preschool. We ask that you do not give this code to any other person that may be picking up your child. Once that person rings the doorbell we will check their ID, have them sign your child out, and assist them in getting your child's belongings gathered. No child will be permitted to leave the preschool without an authorized adult. To ensure that Blue Lake Preschool is compliant with any court orders pertaining to the custody of your child, we require a certified copy of a custody order. We keep this information confidential and solely for the safety of your child. If a new custody order is issued or if a restraining order has been issued against either parent, we will also need that information on file. It is our policy to remain neutral in all custody matters and we may not serve as a visitation site.

### ***Procedure for Identifying Location of Children***

An accurate attendance sheet is kept throughout the day. A count of the children in each class is made using a face-to-name attendance record at regular intervals and upon transitions, i.e., morning sign-in, snack, exiting and entering the classroom for outdoor play, etc. If a child is lost or missing the staff responsible will immediately inform the director. If the child is not located within a few minutes, the police will be called, and the parents will be notified.

### ***Transporting Children***

BLPS utilizes 14 passenger multi-purpose school activity buses to transport children while on field trips and to pick-

up schoolage children from school. While on the buses children are expected to stay in their seats, facing forward, with their seat belts fastened. For safety reasons there is no eating while on the bus. Children's backpacks or belongings are to stay under the seat in front of them to keep the aisle clear. All buses are equipped with first aid and emergency kits and all drivers have first aid and CPR training. The buses get checked weekly for maintenance. In the case of an emergency the driver will call for assistance, either to 911 or to the preschool, depending on the situation. All drivers carry cell phones for this reason.

### ***In Case of an Accident/Injury***

We take every precaution to make sure your child is safe. Our ratios are below state regulations and we do frequent inspections and maintenance of the building, the playground, and our equipment. But because kids will be kids, accidents and injuries may happen. When they do, and we feel medical attention is necessary, we may call emergency personnel and then call you or your designated contact. We recommend you call your health insurance company for reimbursement of the related medical costs. Just in case, we also provide supplemental accident insurance to reimburse you for any out-of-pocket expenses that are not covered by your medical or dental insurance.

### ***Community Disaster Policy***

Our schools prepare and practice for the protection of the children and staff in the event of a natural or human caused emergency or disaster. Along with fire drills and inclement weather drills, we mimic the emergency safety protocol of the Roaring Fork School District to make the children familiar with the procedures used throughout the district. These protocols are developed from the I Love You Guys Foundation, more information can be found on their website. Using this developed protocol allows our school, families, and safety organizations to be on the same page about the language being used in an emergency situation and regular drills and practices allow your child to react in a safe and orderly manner. Each protocol is designed for students of all abilities to maintain safety and allow access to each location and evacuation routes i.e. accessible sized doorways, paved paths, etc. (are there specific evacuation guidelines for children with disabilities? Need research)

The five drills that our schools practice are:

#### ***Fire Drill***

This drill is practiced once a month. Each classroom has multiple evacuation routes based on which exit is safest to use. The teachers bring their classroom lists for attendance, the classroom iPad for contact numbers, and any classroom emergency medications to the safe location. Students learn to form a line and walk orderly out of the building with a teacher leading and one teacher performing a sweep of the classroom. Infants are gathered into specific evacuation capable cribs and wheeled out by staff members. Attendance is taken at all times during this process and in order for the drill to be completed the school has been cleared by the director and head-counts have been reported by each classroom teacher to the director at the safe location. Only once the alarm has been silenced can the classes reenter the school and continue their day. In any actual emergency event, the teachers/director will have the Emergency Contact Card and Brightwheel contact info for all the children so parents can be instructed on where to pick-up their child and to have a list of all the other approved contacts, if needed. In cases when we close due to severe weather, it will be announced on a message on Brightwheel as well as local radio and TV stations.

#### ***Inclement Weather***

This drill is practiced monthly between the months of March and October. This drill is a general process for severe weather events that occur before an evacuation of the school can be completed and is derived from traditional tornado safety procedures. Each class gathers in the most interior portion of their classroom while the teachers close, lock and cover all windows and doors. Older students practice the safety position of kneeling and covering their head and neck with their arms.

#### ***Secure***

This drill is practiced once every three months. This protocol is directly from the I Love You Guys Foundation. In this protocol the students practice returning or staying in the classroom and continuing their daily lessons while the teachers increase their situational awareness and secure the classroom by locking and covering the doors and




windows. Parents should not arrive at the school during this time and pickup will be limited based on the cause of the Secure Protocol being called.

### *Lockdown*

This drill is practiced once every three months. This protocol is directly from the I Love You Guys Foundation. In this protocol the students practice moving to the location that is out of sight of doors and windows and remaining silent. The staff practice securing the room by locking and covering doors and windows, turning out lights, accounting for all students and collecting any staff or students from hallways or playgrounds, and remaining silent with the students.

### *Evacuate*

This drill is practiced once every three months. This protocol is directly from the I Love You Guys Foundation. In this protocol students and teachers exit the building and seek shelter as a group in another location. As a program, we choose not to share these locations for the safety of the children and staff. Teachers will bring their attendance list, iPad, and personal phone, if possible, in order to be in contact with administrators and parents. Accounting for all students along this evacuation route and seeking safety is the top priority in this protocol.

<p><b>SECURE</b> "Get Inside. Lock outside doors"</p> <p>Students are trained to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Return to inside of building</li><li>Do business as usual</li></ul> <p>Adults and staff are trained to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bring everyone indoors</li><li>Lock the outside doors</li><li>Increase situational awareness</li><li>Account for students and adults</li><li>Do business as usual</li></ul> 	<p><b>LOCKDOWN</b> "Locks, Lights, Out of Sight"</p> <p>Students are trained to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Move away from sight</li><li>Maintain silence</li><li>Do not open the door</li></ul> <p>Adults and staff are trained to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recover students from hallway if possible</li><li>Lock the classroom door</li><li>Turn out the lights</li><li>Move away from sight</li><li>Maintain silence</li><li>Do not open the door</li><li>Prepare to evade or defend</li></ul> 	<p><b>EVACUATE</b> "To a Location"</p> <p>Students are trained to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Leave stuff behind if required to</li><li>If possible, bring their phone</li><li>Follow instructions</li></ul> <p>Adults and staff are trained to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bring roll sheet and Go Bag (unless instructed not to bring anything with them, dependent on reason for evacuation.)</li><li>Lead students to Evacuation location</li><li>Account for students and adults</li></ul> 
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## **Fee Policies**

Choosing a childcare center is an important decision. If you are interested in our program we ask that you set up a time to come in and meet our teachers, see our classrooms in action, and get more information regarding our philosophy, goals, program, and fee structure. If you feel like Blue Lake Preschool is a good fit for your family, we will begin the enrollment process. In our effort to continue to provide the kind of care and education you want for your child, we are constantly improving our facilities and resources. For this reason, tuition fees are reviewed annually and are usually increased in the fall. Our fees and applicable rules are as follows:

### ***Registration Fee***

A \$100.00 registration fee is collected prior to enrollment. If you choose not to attend Blue Lake Preschool we cannot refund the fee, as this money has been used to hold a space in a classroom.

### ***Tuition Fees***

Tuition is due in advance, by the month. Monthly statements are emailed or mailed at the end of the previous month and tuition is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. If you would like to pay bi-monthly arrangements must be made in advance with the director. Bi-monthly tuition is paid by the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. If payment is not made by the close of business day on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month a late payment fee of \$25.00 will be added to your account. If payment is not received by the last day of the month your child will not be able to return to school until your account is paid in full.

### ***Education Fee***

A \$100 annual education fee is required upon enrollment and each September thereafter (infants excluded). This fee helps us cover costs for art supplies, learning materials, paper products, and snacks. This fee will be prorated as

follows if you enroll during the school year:

*September to November - \$100*

*December to February - \$75*

*March to May - \$50*

*June to August - \$25*

### ***Vacations, Sick Days & Absences***

If your child is out for any reason your normal tuition will still be charged. We do ask that you notify us by 8:00am if your child will not be at school for the day.

### ***After School Bus Transport***

Blue Lake Preschool is happy to offer transportation from many of the schools in our area to BLPS for our after-school program. We do this as a convenience for our families. However, it creates a major safety issue if we are expecting to pick up your child and we cannot find them. Due to searching for this child, we also end up being late to pick up the children who are scheduled for pickup after your child's stop. For this reason, please inform us by 12:00 pm that your child will not be on the bus for their scheduled day if something has come up that will keep them from being present at their scheduled pickup. If we are not notified, there will be a \$10 fee charged per occurrence.

### ***Summer Schedule***

Blue Lake takes advantage of the amazing area in which we live in planning our summer schedule. There is an additional summer activity fee to cover the additional cost of activities we provide at the school as well as the activity fees for the teachers, the additional gas for the buses or RFTA bus passes. We do our best to keep the cost of extra activities down while still offering a fun and exciting summer for the kids with a variety of activities. Kids that attend 5 days per week can expect to have an additional charge of about \$75 per month in field trip and activity fees. Of course, if your child attends less days these fees will be cheaper. If this additional cost will be difficult for you, please speak with our director about how to apply for tuition assistance as we do not want any child left out due to financial reasons. All additional fees will be added to your invoice, please do not send cash with your child.

Your child is expected to participate in the scheduled activity for that day. We do not have enough teachers to have somebody stay behind with a child who may not want to participate in a certain activity. There are several things like biking, swimming, and rock climbing where we are able to split into groups based upon desire or ability. Our hope is that each child will be eager and excited to try new things!

### ***Scholarships and Financial Aid***

Financial aid is available for residents through your local county as well as through the Town of Basalt for qualified applicants. Blue Lake Preschool, with assistance from local foundations, also offers scholarship program. Please contact the director for information.

### ***Holiday Schedule***

The following holidays are the days we are officially closed. If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it will be observed on Friday or Monday. However you spend these days, we wish your family the best and safest of times: New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the Friday after, Christmas Eve through New Year's Day (families are not charged for this week), 3 In- Service Days to be announced.

### ***Late Pick-up Charge***

Our hours are Monday through Friday, from 7:30am to 5:30pm. Please make arrangements for your child to be picked up if you are unable to get to school in time. Any parent arriving after 5:30pm will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 for every minute after 5:30pm. We request you pay the teacher who cared for your child directly at the time of pick-up.

## **Program Policies**

### ***Snow Days and Unexpected Closures***

If the decision is made to cancel school due to weather local television stations will be asked to announce Blue Lake's closure. Notification of these conditions will be reported by 6:00am the morning of the closure. Channel 9 news station will display our information on the bottom of their screen during the morning news. We follow decisions made by the Roaring Fork School District for snow day closures. You can find immediate information on their closures by calling their Snow Line, 384-6075, at any time to hear a message in both English and Spanish. Due to the unexpected nature of these days and the need to pay our teachers – there will be no credit given for snow days.

There are times as well that the board of directors may, for the safety of the children and staff, choose to close the school due to various reasons that are safety related. We will do our best to provide adequate notice and avoid these situations, but due to the unexpected nature of various threats to the safety of the school – there will be no credit given for these days.

### ***Maintaining a Positive Environment for all Children***

We provide care and education in a group setting and so we must be concerned for the welfare and safety of all our children and staff. When a particular child's or parent's behavior threatens the safety of or becomes abusive towards other children, we may disenroll the child immediately. Our priority is to provide a positive, cohesive group environment for all children.

### ***Reporting Suspected Abuse***

All of Blue Lake's staff are trained and mandated to report abuse and neglect of children within our care. If a parent is concerned, we strongly encourage them to speak to a teacher, director, or executive director if they feel comfortable doing so. If the parent wishes to directly make a report, these can be filed with Eagle County Health and Human Services, (844)264-5437.

### ***Reporting Personal Issues***

Most problems are resolved by consensus through discussions with the director and any concerned parties. If you have a concern about your child and/or anything related to the operations of the school, please talk immediately with the director. If this does not provide satisfactory results, then we encourage you to contact an individual board member, and he/she will set up a meeting with you and the director. Finally, if you still are not able to resolve your concern, write a description of the grievance and request to present it to the board. The board will make every effort to resolve the issue and reserves the right to arrange a meeting with a mediator chosen by the board. In this event, both parties will agree to abide by the decision of the mediator.

### ***Filing a Formal Complaint (or Compliment!)***

Blue Lake Preschool is licensed by the State of Colorado. In order to maintain our license, we are inspected by the health, fire, and licensing agencies. The certificates of inspection are on file. You can ask the director if you wish to view these files. If for any reason you feel you need to make a formal complaint, or compliment, about this childcare facility, you may do so by contacting the Colorado Department of Early Childhood: Child Care Licensing and Administration Division at (303) 866-5948.

### ***Withdrawing Your Child from Our Center***

We understand that various situations may arise where you need to dis-enroll your child from our program. We are a non-profit organization and rely on tuition to pay our teachers, so we do ask for a two-week notice. This time will allow us to fill that space and also gives the teachers ample time to gather your child's belongings, finish their portfolio, and say goodbye to their friends. We do ask for a written letter or email which includes your child's last day with us.

***Choosing a childcare center is an important decision. Thank you for taking the time***

*to visit Blue Lake Preschool and becoming familiar with our philosophy, goals, and policies.  
If you have any further questions about our program, please contact the director.*



## Child and Family Health Resources

<b>All Kids Dental Pediatrics and Orthodontics</b>	928-9500
<i>Provides dental screenings</i>	
<b>Aspen to Parachute Dental Health Coalition</b>	309-2064
<i>Provides dental screenings</i>	
<b>Bright Beginnings</b>	945-1234 ext. 25
<i>1x visits for ALL parents of children birth to 36 months.</i>	
<b>Columbine Home Health</b>	945-8050
<b>Community Health Services (Pitkin County)</b>	920-5420
<i>Provides vision/hearing/dental screenings</i>	
<b>Family Resource Center</b>	384-6000
<b>Family Visitor Programs</b>	945-1234 Ext. 20
<i>Free Visits for all new parents from Aspen to Parachute</i> <a href="http://www.familyvisitor.org">www.familyvisitor.org</a>	
<b>Garfield County Public Health</b>	
• Glenwood Springs	945-6614
• Rifle	625-5200
<b>Healthy Families America</b>	945-1234 ext. 20
<i>Intensive visits for parents of newborns until baby is 3</i>	
<b>Hearing Aid Office, Inc.</b>	945-9720
<i>Provides hearing screenings</i>	
<b>HEARTBEAT of Glenwood Springs</b>	945-1398
<i>Support for Survivors of Suicide: 2nd Tuesday of month</i>	
<b>InnovAge</b>	947-5201
<b>Lions Club Glenwood Springs</b>	618-7791
<i>Provides hearing and vision screenings</i>	
<b>Mountain Family Health Center (Glenwood)</b>	945-2840
<b>Mountain Valley Developmental Services</b>	945-2306
<i>Resources for people with developmental disabilities</i>	
<b>Nurse Family Partnership</b>	945-1234 ext. 27
<i>Services for 1st time pregnant moms until their baby is 2</i>	
<b>Partners for a Healthy Baby</b>	945-1234 ext. 20
<i>Parent education during pregnancy and after the baby's birth</i>	
<b>Pathfinders for Cancer (Valley Angels)</b>	925-1226
<b>Planned Parenthood (Glenwood Springs)</b>	945-8631
<i>Affordable reproductive health care</i>	
<a href="http://www.pprm.org">www.pprm.org</a>	
<b>Pregnancy Resource Center</b>	945-5562
<b>SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners)</b>	384-7300
<b>Sopris Therapy Services</b>	704-1037
<b>Valley Vision</b>	945-6011
<i>Provides vision screenings</i>	
<b>WindWalkers EAL &amp; Therapy Center</b>	963-2909
<i>Equine Assisted Learning and Therapy Services</i>	

*If you need information about medical insurance, please contact: Martin Insurance Group at (970) 963-6161*