



**2023-2024**  
***Parent Handbook***

7844 Rd 41 Mancos, CO 81328  
(970) 533-9838  
[www.mancosdragonflyschool.org](http://www.mancosdragonflyschool.org)  
[director@dragonflypreschool.org](mailto:director@dragonflypreschool.org)

Dear Families,

Welcome to our Mancos Valley Dragonfly School Family! Enclosed you will find a thorough explanation of our school Policies and Procedures. These are in accordance with Colorado Early Childhood licensing regulations, as well as local health and fire safety standards. These policies and procedures are to help keep our students, staff and families safe while still trying to honor the values of our Waldorf inspiration. From time to time we may alter policies and procedures, and we will notify parents accordingly.

I hope this leaves you looking forward to a wonder-filled school year together, feeling confident that your child will flourish in a school that was built for our community with great intention and reverence for the early childhood years. We are building something different here together. Thank you for joining this school community!

If you have any questions about our Policies and Procedures, please do not hesitate to contact me. On behalf of our amazing Teachers, we all sincerely look forward to working with and growing with your children!

With dedication,

*Emily Palmer*

(970) 533-9838

[director@dragonflypreschool.org](mailto:director@dragonflypreschool.org)

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# School Core Values and Beliefs

## *Mission*

The mission of Mancos Valley Dragonfly School is to foster a love of learning and a reverence for life by providing an education inspired by Waldorf principles that honors the wonder and imagination of early childhood, striving to cultivate every child's unique gifts.

## *Vision*

Through a curriculum based on the Waldorf education model, Mancos Valley Dragonfly School Teachers allow the child's natural imitation and imaginative play to be the source of learning. Purposeful work—like chores, gardening, building, cleaning, and sorting—are also a large part of our day. Teachers offer art on many levels in the classrooms; offerings of wet on wet watercolor painting, circle time, puppetry and fairy tales that are informed by the seasons outside. The toys they share are simple and natural, leaving room for the child's own imagination. Outdoor play is an important part of the day. The focus is to create a harmonious environment in which children can develop confidence in themselves and a natural respect for others and the world in which they live. The following pages offer insights into the Waldorf teaching model, upon which our Teachers base the curriculum and the holding of their class. These pages offer insight into how Dragonfly School is different from other schools in this area, and why we are building this intentional community for you—the children and their families.

## *Educating the Whole Child*

- We believe that education must address the whole human being - head, heart and hands - in a balanced way. By meeting the developmental needs of the child in all three dimensions of thinking, feeling and willing, we can best prepare them with the full range of skills and capacities needed for a meaningful life.
- The content, rhythm and methods of our curriculum are geared to the developmental timetables of childhood, recognizing that the child's emerging consciousness and learning modalities change over time in relation to thinking, feeling, and willing.
- We believe that education must also be based on an understanding of the human being and child development from a four-fold perspective of the bodily nature: the material physical body; the mechanisms of life and metabolic processes; the processes of feeling and sense-perception; and the spiritual foundation for consciousness and sense of self, or ego.

## *Focus on Child Development*

- We provide an education that is developmentally appropriate, based on an understanding of the stages of a child's physical, emotional and intellectual development.
- We believe that young children should be afforded a nurturing environment that protects and shelters childhood, allowing children to grow at their own pace. Waldorf Early Childhood education surrounds children with a "mantle of warmth," incorporating rhythm, truth, beauty and harmony in the child's environment in ways that support the child's healthy development.
- We believe that healthy life processes are founded on rhythm and repetition: waking and sleeping, in breath and out breath, activity and rest.
- Rhythm and repetition support development of the will and strengthen imagination. Waldorf

education works in harmony with these rhythms - providing for routines repeated daily, weekly and yearly that build good habits. Our educational practices alternate periods for learning, forgetting and remembering, and periods of intense focus and then of rest.

- Healthy social development is especially dependent on fostering strong personal connections. Our teachers aim to connect deeply with their students. This deep connection also supports a basic need that children have and rarely receive in our modern world, for genuine authority and appropriate boundaries.

### *Rich Curriculum that Meets the Child*

- In keeping with our focus on child development and on the whole child, we believe that it is important for our curriculum to offer a rich balance of learning, art, music, handwork and movement - a curriculum that is lively and current.
- Recognizing the developmental needs of the young child, our early childhood curriculum also focuses on the environment: providing a physical space that is beautiful and engaging yet not over-stimulating; and providing a social environment that contains adults and adult activities worthy of imitation.
- With respect to children's conduct, we wish to promote an environment of mutual respect and support through discipline that aims to awaken and educate rather than punish. Our goal is to balance between form and freedom in such a way that moral values are internalized rather than imposed. We aim to state things positively, and guide children through conflict.
- We view the role of your child's Teacher as very important, as a constant guiding presence in the students' social and moral development. Therefore, our Teachers at Dragonfly are carefully chosen individuals, and we believe in them.

### *Importance of Character*

- We believe that education is about much more than acquiring facts and skills. It is also about developing strong character and a solid ethical and moral foundation for life.
- Our education aims to develop intelligent, imaginative, self-confident and caring individuals who are capable of clear, free thinking; where as these children grow, their insightful feelings promote sound moral judgment; and who can carry their ideals into action grounded in the practical realities of adult life.
- We believe that on such a foundation, the human spirit can flourish, and individuals can become honest, self-assured stewards of the earth and caretakers of others and of society.
- Our hope is that, with the development of such inner capacities, children will be imbued with a lifelong passion for learning and life, and will be at peace with life, themselves and others.

### *Focus on Creativity and the Arts*

- Our curriculum and our teaching methods strengthen the imagination and foster creativity in our students: creativity in artistic expression and creative, free thinking infused with the passion and will to discover truth, beauty and goodness in the world.
- We strive to inspire our children with an appreciation for beauty and a desire to create beauty. Art, play and movement are all ways for making deep connections with what the Teacher offers children by way of activity, story, and learning opportunities.

### *Valuing Community and Diversity*

- One of our primary aims is to join in the continual work of creating and renewing

community. We try to foster an atmosphere in which adults, parents and teachers work collaboratively to create a community centered on and surrounding the school. Volunteering with the school and being a part of your child's education here helps to build this community. More on this in the following pages.

- We foster a community environment in which rich cultural, religious and ethnic diversity is valued.
- We cultivate an appreciation of individual gifts and differences.
- In support of our collaborative work we will strive to understand and apply the laws and principles at work in the three spheres of community life: our interdependent economic relations; the realm of mutual agreements and rights; and the sphere of individual creativity and free initiative.
- We recognize the importance of ongoing adult education in the fundamental principles of Waldorf Education so that our collaborative work in the community is informed by common understanding. We will offer Parent nights throughout the School year. Please make every effort to attend these evenings together!
- In order for our curriculum to be successful, it requires support at home. We place great emphasis on parent education into Waldorf principles and methods, and into ways parents can contribute to our educational goals by the choices they make in the home environment.
- Dragonfly was founded by parents and community members working together to build this school in 2018. We appreciate the foundation that others have laid for our community's growth and prosperity, and we in turn intend that the school be a good citizen and neighbor, acting with honor and integrity in all of its dealings.

### *Reverence for the Earth and for all Living Things*

- We honor and celebrate life and the interconnectedness of all living things.
- We aim to cultivate in our students a sense of wonder and reverence toward the natural world, experiencing the wisdom of nature as a guiding force.
- In celebrating the passage of time through seasonal festivals, we connect children with one another and with the earth, fostering an appreciation for life, the natural environment, our human cultures and the cosmos.
- Our aim is to foster in our students a deep value of environmental stewardship.

### *Media Awareness in our School*

#### How Media Affects the Young Child

The nurturing quality of the Waldorf curriculum is undermined by the influence of media on a child. There is increasing evidence and brain science regarding the effects of media on young children, in these formative years.

Our school encourages parents to eliminate or greatly reduce media from their child's life during the early childhood years. We ask that you do not allow screen time in the morning before coming to school, and minimize/eliminate media during the school week and/or on the weekends. Screens include movie screens, televisions, iphones, ipads and personal learning devices/educational programs. The Waldorf philosophy, our Faculty, and our School Board believe that these forms of entertainment and education have profound negative consequences on child development. We realize this is a huge commitment, and that it may take some time to fully implement a screen free environment for you and your child. The director, teachers, and other parents are happy to share their experience and wisdom in navigating a media free family life. These are the things we have



noticed, and that we know based on brain science research and evidence based research when children are around Media:

- Children need to process what they experience. They will talk about and play out the movie/game or take on the role of the characters, as they need to digest the experience. You may hear a child repeat certain noises, songs and scenes, over and over until it is processed fully.
- Children lose the capacity to create inner pictures (imagination) and play creatively. Screen pictures are very powerful, and much of their play can be heavily influenced by this. This limits the openness of the play, and children can get stuck as they need to process the media instead of creating from their own ideas and playing with the other children in whatever the group is doing together.
- Children learn negative behavior they see in the movie such as aggression, irreverence, exclusivity and unkindness. They also may learn behavior that is not developmentally appropriate. Children may feel excluded themselves, as it is more challenging for them to interact in an open way and play cooperatively with other children.
- Children develop a heightened sense of fear and anxiety. They may see the world as unsafe, and may do things and play in a way to retaliate. Higher levels of cortisol produced in a fight or flight state may lead to more aggressive behavior.
- Children’s ability to take in the subtleties of nature, a spoken story, or puppet play, is reduced, because their capacity for inner picturing is compromised.
- The ability to discern human expression and emotion is something the young child is just learning. This is compromised when the recorded word/media is a big part of child’s world. Their capacity for listening and truly taking in another’s voice and words and cadence deteriorates. Their own words and movements may become mechanical.
- Children can become numb to the real world around them and feel the need for constant entertainment, stimulation, and attention.
- Children’s attachment to their caregiving adults is weakened.
- The following capacities that the young child is learning now to get ready for later academic learning are compromised:

Sequencing	Attention
Motor Skills (small and large)	Balance
Impulse Control	Listening
Wonder	Speech
Imitation	Executive Functioning
Healthy Sleep	Sensory Integration

## No Screen Time at School

Given all of the above, our curriculum will *not* include screen time in any form, and children will not watch television nor videos during class time. Our sign in and out Tablets are located in the Office for CCCAP tuition assistance families, and no longer in cubby rooms. Teachers have their phones in the classroom for emergency purposes only, and phones are placed up high and out of reach of the children at all times.

## Electronics

No electronic items may be brought to or used at school or on school trips. Communication between parents/guardians and children during the school day can be made through the Office, and the office will relay messages to the Teachers. Electronic items found at school will be taken and held in the Office, where they can be retrieved only by the parents/guardians at the end of the day. This includes watches, as we have found they are a distraction and easily lost.

The office direct phone number is 970-533-9838.

## School Programming

### *Admissions*

Consideration for enrollment will happen on a “first come, first serve” basis, with the required registration form and *non refundable tuition deposit* used to truly secure a child’s spot.

Enrollment is open to children ages 2 through 7 years old (age at the time of school start date), with a maximum of 15 children in the preschool, and 15 children in the kindergarten Yurt classrooms. If there is space in the classroom, new children may enroll at any time before Spring break, which falls in the first week of April around the Easter Holiday.

Child eligibility and school readiness will be discussed between the parents, teachers, and Director. The Director and Teachers reserve the final right to determine if the program is a good fit for the child and the family.

### *Hours of Operation and School Schedule*

#### **The Early Childhood: Swallow Preschool and Meadowlark Kindergarten**

- Drop off is from 8:20-8:30am
- Morning Program Pick up is at 12:30pm
- Full Day Program pick up is at 3:30pm
- Aftercare is from 3:30pm-4:30pm (Program subject to sufficient enrollment and TBD)
- All programs are offered Monday through Thursday

### *School Calendar*

See the Handbook section on Special Events, Festivals, and Celebrations for more information.

<b>Friday, August 18:</b>	Community Workday 9am-12pm
<b>Wednesday, August 30:</b>	Required Back to School Parent Night 5-7pm
<b>Monday, September 4:</b>	NO SCHOOL for Labor Day
<b>Tuesday, September 5:</b>	First day of school!!
<b>Friday, September 29:</b>	Harvest Festival/Michaelmas 4:30-6:30pm
<b>Monday, October 9:</b>	NO SCHOOL for Indigenous Peoples Day
<b>October:</b>	Fall Parent Teacher Conferences

<b>Friday, November 10:</b>	Lantern Walk 5:30-7:30pm (Cottonwood Park?)
<b>November 20-24:</b>	NO SCHOOL for Thanksgiving Break
<b>Friday, December 15:</b>	Spiral Garden, 5 pm for PreK, 6 pm for K
<b>December 20-January 7:</b>	NO SCHOOL for Winter Break (last day of school is Wednesday, Dec 20th)
<b>Monday, January 15:</b>	NO SCHOOL for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
<b>Wednesday, February 14:</b>	Valentine's Day Love Pajama Tea Party
<b>Monday, February 19:</b>	NO SCHOOL for President's Day
<b>March:</b>	Spring Parent Teacher Conferences
<b>April 1-5:</b>	NO SCHOOL for Spring Break
<b>Saturday, May 18:</b>	May Faire 10am-12:30pm
<b>Monday, May 27:</b>	NO SCHOOL for Memorial Day
<b>Thursday, May 30:</b>	Last Day of School

### *Our Classrooms and our Teachers*

**Swallow Preschool Class** serves children ages 2 years through 4 years old (at the start of school). The Lead teacher is Ms Becca and the morning assistants are Ms Kristin and Ms Anastasia, and the afternoon nap teachers are Ms Kristin, Ms Robin, and Ms Meg.

**Meadowlark Kindergarten Class** serves children ages 5 years through 6 years old (at the start of school). Ms Claire and Mr Gabriel are the morning teachers. Ms Kay and Mr Gabriel are the afternoon teachers.

### *Rhythm of the Day*

Our focus is to create a harmonious, orderly environment in which children can develop confidence in themselves and a natural respect for others and the world in which they live. The teachers accomplish this peaceful tone through a carefully planned, rhythmical program that balances periods requiring more and then less concentration, group and then individual participation, with as much time spent outdoors as possible. The following is a typical rhythm of the day, and could be subject to change with seasons and vary within each classroom:

#### **Sample Weekly Rhythm and Snack Schedule:**

<u>Day</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Snack</u>
Mondays	Coloring/Hike Day	brown rice and vegetables
Tuesdays	Chopping Vegetables	Soup Day
Wednesdays	Watercolor Painting	Oatmeal with fruit
Thursdays	Bread Making	Bread with nut butter and veggies

### **Swallow Preschool Sample Morning Program**

8:20-8:30am	Drop Off
8:30	Morning Walk outside
8:45	Morning welcome Circle outside
9:00	Weekly Activity (painting, making bread, chopping veggies, or coloring)
9:45	Story and Circle time
10:15	Snack
11:00	Outside play
12pm	Lunch
12:30pm	Goodbye to morning children

### **Afternoon Program (for full day children)**

12:30	Transition to rest
1:00	Nap/quiet time
1:45	Outdoor play for non-nappers or seasonal crafts/Napping children still sleep!
3:10	Wake up and Snack for all
3:30	Goodbye

### **Meadowlark Kindergarten Sample morning program**

8:20-8:30am	Drop off
8:30	Welcome Circle, and morning walk outside
9:15	Bathroom time & hand washing
9:30	Morning activity (painting, drawing, beeswax modeling, baking, making soup)
10:00	Snack
10:30	Main Lesson/learning time/Story time
11:30	Outside free play
12:30	Lunch
12:30	Goodbye to morning children

### **Sample Afternoon Program**

12:30pm	Nap time/Quiet time/Story
1:00	Put away beds (sleeping children may remain sleeping in the nap area)
1:15	For non-nappers: Outdoor Play, Seasonal crafts and games outside, as well as Afternoon chores and help prepare snack
3:00	Snack Time for all
3:30pm	Goodbye

Snack offerings will accommodate dietary restrictions and allergies, as needed. Please see our “Allergy Aware” approach and policy, and please inform the Office AND your child’s teacher of any allergies your child has!!

# Tuition and Billing Policies

## *Billing schedule*

Tuition is billed monthly, in the amount of a flat fee that evens out over the course of the year. **Please note, the tuition amount will always be the same each month, regardless of holidays, as the fees have been determined to average out over the entire school year.**

Tuition payments are due on the 1st of the month prior, for the month ahead. For example, tuition is due on August 1st for the month of September. School accepts payments in the form of cash, check, or bank cards payable online in the ChildPilot Parent Portal, and payable to the Mancos Valley Dragonfly School. Payments can be given to the Office in person at the school, or mailed:

Mancos Valley Dragonfly School  
7844 Rd 41  
Mancos, CO 81328

## *2023-2024 Tuition*

The following are monthly rates. The drop-in rate is a daily rate added to a child's invoice in the event of an arranged, occasional drop-in that is in addition to a child's regular schedule.

<b>Preschool Classroom:</b>	<b>Drop In Daily Rate</b>	<b>2 days/week Monthly Rate</b>	<b>4 days/week Monthly Rate</b>
Morning Preschool program	\$50	\$360	\$650
Full Day Preschool program	\$70	\$675	\$895
Afternoon Drop In	\$30		

<b>Kindergarten Classroom:</b>	<b>Drop In Daily Rate</b>	<b>3 days/week Monthly Rate</b>	<b>4 days/week Monthly Rate</b>
Kindergarten Morning program	\$50	\$470	\$630
Full Day (total price)	\$70	\$680	\$895
Afternoon Drop In	\$30		

## *Other Fees*

Additional fees are non-refundable.

**Late payment of tuition:** With notice to the Director, families are allowed a one week grace period, in the event tuition can't be paid on the first of the month. A \$1 per day late charge will be automatically added to the month's bill after one week has passed. The Director will send a notice requesting the Tuition due, and call a meeting with parents/guardians if necessary.

**Nonpayment:** If tuition is more than one month late, despite meetings between the Director and the family, the child will be unenrolled, and forfeit their spot in the program.

**Additional fees:** Occasionally there will be additional fees which include, but are not limited to, extra academic or art supplies or field trip expenses. Parents/guardians will be notified ahead of time if there are to be additional fees incurred for any reason. Any additional fees incurred will be added to the parents' bill for the month in ChildPilot.

**Enrollment Fee:** There is an annual *non-refundable* Deposit of \$250 to hold your child's place in the class, due upon acceptance into the program. This will be converted into the festival and art supply budget for the year. *We know life happens and changes come up, but please note that this deposit is non-refundable.*

**Late Pick-up fee:** Please pick up your child promptly. It is hard on the child when parents are late, as they watch all the other parents come and go. Additionally, Teachers now have to be with your child later than expected, and it impacts their end of day cleaning duties and departure time. We give parents/guardians a 10 minute grace period from the designated pick up times of 12:30 and 3:30 pm. After that time, parents will be billed a \$1 per minute late fee. These charges will be added ongoing as necessary to the ChildPilot billing portal.

### *Schedule Changes*

Tuition billing runs on the first of the month, for the next month upcoming (September's tuition is due on August 1st). Therefore, any desired schedule changes must be requested prior to the billing cycle. For example, parents must notify the Office of any desired schedule changes desired in November, prior to that October 1st billing cycle. Schedule changes may be discussed with your child's Teacher, and any decisions made therein must be conveyed to the Office for billing and tuition updates.

In the event a family seeks to change their child's schedule, tuition charges may be changed and will apply to the month ahead. Tuition changes will be reflected on the next billing cycle.

If parents seek to add days to a child's schedule (regular care or occasional drop in days), those additional days will be added to the upcoming month's tuition bill, and parents may choose to pay the additional fees at the time of Invoicing, or they may choose pay in full with the next month's tuition.

### *Reimbursement*

Please be aware, *the only time tuition will be reimbursed is if your child is requested to leave the program by the Director.* In this case, any payment for future days (your child has not nor will not attend school) will be returned within 30 days.

Otherwise, tuition can not be refunded. Please note, if your child has been sick or traveling for any length of time (planned or unplanned absence), we can not offer you reimbursement due to the financial viability of the school. **Parents are expected to pay full tuition even when their child does not attend.** *To be clear,* if your family plans a trip for a few weeks to a month during the school year, you are still responsible for your child's monthly tuition payment in full. Despite your child's absence, we are still holding your child's spot in the program. Thank you for understanding.

**Illness Outbreak closure:** In the event of multiple confirmed cases of a reportable, communicable disease in Dragonfly, the school could be closed for sanitizing according to the Montezuma County Public Health Department requirements. At this time we will not refund tuition due to these closures.

## *Withdrawal*

Once the program has started, a family may remove a child from the program. The Director reserves the right to recommend removing the child if the program is not a good fit, or the child is not ready for school for any reason. We strongly encourage new families to try our program for at least a month to six weeks before withdrawing a child from the program, giving the child a chance to settle in and experience our curriculum and rhythm. Thus we have a 30 day trial period policy in place, and the Director will check in with new families at the close of the first 30 days.

Families wishing to withdraw must tender their withdrawal in writing to the Director, with 30 days advance notice given, and as much advance notice as possible. Due to the financial viability as a whole, **the school reserves the right to keep all *remaining tuition fees* paid for that month in which the family has withdrawn, as well as any tuition paid up until that point.**

ONLY if a child is withdrawn per the choice of the Teacher and the Director, a refund for future days not attended may be given. The Teachers and the Director, constituting the Leadership of Dragonfly, reserve the right to determine if our unique programming is not a good fit for a child, within the resources available to the School and to the classroom Teachers.

## **Tuition Assistance**

We are a non-profit school. Tuition assistance is available to all families in need through significant ongoing fundraising campaigns done by the school Board. Dragonfly seeks to offer aid to as many families as possible, within the resources we have to give. As such, families may not receive more than one kind of aid. For example, families may not receive CCCAP as well as seek a work trade for tuition reduction. Dragonfly School offers several forms of Tuition Assistance, all subsidized by the Dragonfly Tuition Assistance Fund.

If your family receives tuition assistance of any kind, we ask for your help in supporting the school/giving back--through parent volunteer time and helping at events. We look forward to working with you to support the school.

### *Dragonfly Tuition Assistance Program*

We are able to offer tuition assistance on a sliding scale, based on need, with this in-house Fund. Families are asked to submit an assistance application, separate from their enrollment application. The Dragonfly Tuition Assistance Committee assesses need based on current Federal Poverty levels, a family's most recent tax return (first 2 pages of your 1040 tax return) and a detailed questionnaire.

### *Work Trade*

This form of Tuition Assistance is a dynamic relationship that helps the school community and vision, and reduces a family's tuition bill owed. Please note this form of aid stands alone, and can not be combined with other forms of aid listed here.

Our work trade parameters are as follows:

- Keep track of hours worked on the Work Trade Tracking form located in the office. Submit a Timesheet by the 27th of each month, before tuition billing is due on the 1st.
- Dollar amount of tuition trade is a flat \$20/hr. One hour worked for the school equals \$20 off the tuition bill for the following month.

- We also can trade supplies for tuition. For example, we may buy your family’s vegetables for soup day, and trade dollar for dollar the wholesale value of the vegetables.
- Once arranged, this trade takes a certain amount of independent “see what needs to be done” work, with oversight by the Director and occasionally the Teachers.

Notify the Director if you are interested in doing a Work Trade. If approved, Director will draw up a Contract with the family clarifying the details and negotiations of the arrangement. The School takes Work Trades seriously, and treats the arrangement as an hourly job that the School would have hired out for, or the trade for quality vegetables (for example) that we would have needed to buy. Examples of Work Trade arrangements are Landscaping and grounds maintenance, building projects, gardening, and helping/substituting in the classroom.

### *State Funded Aid Programs*

#### Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)

The Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) helps families that are homeless, working, searching for work or in school find low-income child care assistance. Each county's Department of Social/Human Services and the Colorado Department of Early Childhood, Division of Early Care and Learning manage the CCCAP program.

<https://cdec.colorado.gov/colorado-child-care-assistance-program-for-families>

#### Universal Preschool Program (UPK)

The state of Colorado is implementing this new program in the 2023-24 School year. The program entitles all 4 year olds to 15 hours of free tuition per week. Your child must be 4 years old on August 31st, and not 5 or older on August 31st, 2023. It has recently become clear that schools outside of the school district (like Dragonfly) will not be able to fund 3 year olds. So this opportunity is for 4 year olds only. <https://upk.colorado.gov/>

## Daily Procedures

### *What to bring to school everyday*

*Please label all items with your child’s name!*

- Healthy lunch - protein, carb, and fruit or veggie. Please, no sweets or sugary drinks!
- Appropriate outerwear and footwear (waterproof layer, jacket, gloves or mittens, boots) depending on the season (If you would like to pick up an extra set of outerwear/boots to keep here at school that would be great!)
- Closed toed shoes and socks. Please, no flip flops or sandals
- Water bottle with your child's name on it

### *What to have in the cubby/at school (stays at school)*

- One full set of spare clothes, including socks and underwear, contained in a small bag (labeled with your child’s name)
- Soft indoor shoes or slippers that your child can move and play comfortably in. Please no slippers with flashing lights! They are a distraction at rest.
- Shade Hat and Warm weather hat



## *Preschool Families Only: If your child stays for the full day*

We provide nap mats for each child who stays for the full day. Families in the Preschool must bring nap bedding, contained in a bag such as a reusable grocery bag:

- Child sized pillow or travel pillow with pillow case
- Fitted full size crib sheet
- a small light blanket for a cover
- One small soft snuggle item that brings comfort from home (ie stuffed animal, blanket, etc). Please limit it to one!

Parents will take their child's bedding home on Thursdays to launder (Please wash their lovey as well if possible). Bring back the nap bedding in its bag on Monday, or when the child returns to school the next week.

## *Clothing and Personal Belongings*

Please be conscious of the weather and remember that we are outside and active EVERY DAY, rain or shine. When children are properly dressed, the weather does not get in the way of play. In addition, we ask:

- That your child's clothing be absent from cartoons or commercialized characters. These do inform play and cause distraction for the children. A dinosaur shirt often inspires the children to play loud dinosaurs all morning, and children do not have the opportunity to fall into free imaginative play. Please do not send clothing or shoes with flashing lights, as they become a distraction.
- Children may not bring toys, trinkets or money from home. It is too easy to have things lost, broken or quarreled over. If these items are brought to school, they will be put in the Office for parents to retrieve.
- Absolutely no electronics are to be brought to the school.
- Please check the lost and found basket in the cubby room for any missing belongings.

## *Drop-off*

Please follow the morning drop-off procedure:

- Please park in the parking lot, and walk your child to their classroom entrance. Under NO circumstances should a child be sent into the school alone. Parents/Guardians must ensure that the Teacher is aware of your child's arrival.
- Depending on the season, drop off and pick up will be outside. Your child's teacher will let you know if the rhythm changes.
- Assist your child in placing his/her belongings neatly on the benches outside, or in the cubby if drop off has changed to be inside, with their lunchbox and water bottle on the top shelf.
- Sign your child in on the paper Attendance tracking clipboard. Teachers will inform you as to its location, officially placing responsibility for your child with the Teachers.
- **A clear, sweet, swift goodbye helps your child settle into the day.** We ask that parents do not linger or chat too long within the play yard, especially if their child is having a difficult time saying goodbye. Parents are welcome to linger outside the gate, out of sight. :)
- If parents have a question or concern, or want to check in with the child's Teacher(s), drop off is a challenging time as the Teachers are trying to hold the children and bring them together for the day. Please briefly let a Teacher know that you would like to speak with them, and they will follow up with Parents when they are able. You may visit the Office

after drop off to let the office staff know that you'd like their child's teacher to follow up. This will ensure the Teachers will get back to you.

- You may check the Parent Communication board for any new information, located in the Office.
- CCCAP families *must* visit the office as soon as children are dropped off, to sign their child into the CCCAP attendance tracking system. Tablets are available in the office for sign in and out.

### *Absence or late arrival*

Please leave a message in the ChildPilot Parent Portal or call the school Office at 970-533-9838 if your child will be late or absent as soon as you know your child will be absent/late. You may also text your child's teacher directly.

### *Pick-up*

Please follow the pick-up procedure:

- Please arrive at 12:30pm to pick-up your child from the morning program, or 3:30 pm for the afternoon program.
- Children may be picked up from the playground or just outside the classroom door. Please wait outside until the teacher has dismissed the class.
- If pick up is outside, child's belongings will be neatly piled outside to be gathered. If pick up is inside, parents will gather items to be taken home from their child's cubby
- Sign out on the same paper Attendance tracking clipboard
- CCCAP families *must* visit the office as soon as children are picked up, to sign their child out of the CCCAP attendance tracking system. Tablets are available in the office for sign in and out.
- If you must pick-up your child during the day prior to the 12:30 or 3:30 dismissals, please notify the Teacher or Director ahead of time either verbally, in ChildPilot, by text, or by phone call to the school Office.

### *Authorized Pick-up*

Your child will only be released to the parents/guardians and persons listed in ChildPilot. If you need to have someone pick your child up who is not in ChildPilot, you will need to enter their information into your ChildPilot Parent Portal under Authorized Pick-Ups, before your child can be released. It is helpful to have their pictures in ChildPilot so the teachers know who is picking up. Unrecognized persons will be required to show proper photo identification, and Teachers reserve the right not to release the child to unknown persons (see below). In the event of custodial disputes the School must have legal documentation regarding child custody arrangements. An authorized person should be 18 years or older. In an emergency, the child may also be released to an adult for whom the child's parents have given verbal authorization.

### *Unauthorized Pick-up Attempt*

We will only release a child to the adult(s) for whom authorization has been given. In the event that an individual attempts to pick up your child that is unknown to the Teachers, or someone who is not in the child's Pick-Up Authorizations, Teachers will hold on to the child. The Teachers will first contact the parents/guardians to verify the unknown individual. If the parents/guardians can not be reached, the Teacher will try to reach the child's additional contacts for authorized pick-up.

Once the parents/guardians or authorized persons can verify that they know the individual attempting to pick up, and verbally agree to release their child to that individual, the Teacher will release the child.

### *Late Pick-up*

Please make sure your child is picked up promptly during the appropriate pick-up window. Children still remaining after dismissal will be brought inside, and the Teachers will call the parents/guardians. Starting 10 minutes after the end of the pick-up window, Parents/Guardians will be charged \$1/minute that the child remains at school not picked up. School grounds close at 4:30pm. If a child is not picked up by then, and we still have not heard from the parents/caregivers, the child will be brought to the Office, and the Office assistant will contact the emergency contacts on the enrollment form. If no one responds, nor can be located by 5pm, the Office will contact the School Director regarding how to proceed. In extreme cases, the Office will contact the Montezuma County Department of Social Services, and local authorities if necessary, to come pick up the child.

### *Right of Refusal*

We will not release a child to anyone under the influence of drugs, alcohol or authorized restraining orders. If this situation occurs we will quietly pull the adult aside and have a conversation, without the presence of the child. We will then call the next person on the child's Authorized Pick-Up list. If we can't get a hold of anyone, we will use the steps above under "Late Pick-up".

We require Parents/Guardians to inform the School Director as well as the child's teachers, if there are custody disputes or restraining orders issued within a child's family. We need to be aware of any dynamics in order to keep the child safe, as well as the rest of the school children, faculty, and families safe.

### *Snack and Lunch*

Each morning the children share a substantial, family-style organic snack provided by the school, and included in your child's tuition. The children help to prepare the food, set the table, and wash up afterwards. Morning snack follows a rhythm each week. Generally Monday is Rice day, Tuesday is Soup day, Wednesday is Oatmeal day, and Thursday is Bread day. All our food is organic or locally sourced when possible. We invite our families that are farmers and ranchers to help provide vegetables and foods for the children's snack!

Parents/Guardians provide lunch for their child each day, as all children will eat together at the end of the morning program. We ask that lunches be wholesome and a good size. All that play makes children hungry! Please no sweets, juice, or sugary drinks.

An organic afternoon snack will be provided for children who stay for the full day. Examples include veggies with nut butters, apple slices and nuts, cheese and crackers, etc.

Again it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to inform the Office and the Child's teachers of all allergies.

## Behavior Guidance and Discipline

Respect and safety for a child, adults, fellow classmates, and School property is an important value we uphold at Mancos Valley Dragonfly School. If these areas of respect and safety are disregarded, then the need for discipline arises. Normally, Teachers will handle the day-to-day reminders that children need through redirection, purposeful work, and age-appropriate building of social skills. If a child is having difficulty, it is often helpful for him/her to work with the Teachers in a meaningful task until equilibrium is recovered. If a more persistent problem occurs, a special parent–teacher conference will be scheduled and appropriate action will follow. Dragonfly maintains a positive approach in problem solving, including the following measures:

- a. **Set Clear Expectations:** The Teachers will model, develop and share with the children positive expectations that are age and developmentally appropriate, ensuring the safety of all children, adults and materials in the program.
- b. **Redirection:** If the teachers see a potential problem they will provide a reminder of the expected behavior, and may try engaging one or more of the children in another activity.
- c. **Purposeful Work:** When difficulties arise children will be given a task to assist the teacher and be helpful in the classroom. This gives children direction and grounding, and may resolve an outburst.
- d. **Problem Solving:** The teachers will apply problem-solving strategies, which encourage children to resolve conflicts with others through calm, clear communication as they are developmentally able.
- e. **Taking space/a calming corner:** If the actions of a child put themselves or others at risk of injury the child must leave the play area. A child may also choose to visit our “calming corner” when needed. This space is designed to support a child in finding equilibrium, with a teacher’s support.
- f. **Teacher/Parent Meetings:** When there are continued difficulties within the classroom, Teachers will meet with the child’s family (without the child present) to develop goals and strategies to deal with the situation. When necessary, with written (parental/guardian) permission, the teachers may access community resources for consultation or referral.
- g. **Facilitator/Teacher/Parent Meetings:** If Teachers feel that a child is disruptive to the point that the safety, learning, and enjoyment of other children is being affected on a recurring basis, after the actions of step (f) above, the Teachers will arrange an additional meeting (without the child present) with the parents/guardians, the School Director, and appropriate community resource members, including a board member if necessary.

After all efforts have been exhausted as outlined above, the Director may recommend the child be dismissed from school. In exceptional circumstances, the Director reserves the right to dismiss a child from the program without adhering to the Behavior Guidance and Discipline Policy listed above if the child is a serious threat to themselves, to the teachers, or to the safety of the other children.

Please see the Neurodiversity and Disability in the Classroom Policy below for how we may work with children that require more care and services than our Faculty and our School can give.

# Parent Responsibilities

## *Contact Information*

For your child's safety and security, please be sure the Office has all accurate contact information. The school requires current addresses and phone numbers for all parents/guardians, as well as two other emergency contacts in case parents/guardians cannot be reached. If your contact information changes, please advise the school immediately. Registration forms will be updated annually.

## *Toilet Training*

Children enrolled in the Kindergarten (5-6 years old) must be potty trained.

We do not require children to be potty trained in the Preschool classroom (2-4 years old). We realize some children may have special needs in this area so please speak with your class teacher prior to the start of school, so that they can best assist your child. Dressing children in clothing that they can easily remove will ensure success for the process of going to the bathroom. State regulations require soiled clothing to be stored in a sealed and labeled bag separate from classrooms/students. If your child has had an accident at school, Teachers will inform parents/guardians at pick-up, and you will find a note at your child's cubby. Your child's soiled clothing will be placed in a labeled, sealed plastic bag with their belongings to be brought home that day.

If your child is having excessive accidents while at school, we will arrange a meeting with parents and necessary staff to discuss your child's needs and an appropriate solution.

## *Parent Teacher Conferences*

Parent Teacher Conferences will be held twice per school year (Fall and Spring), and as needed on an individual basis. We ask that both parents/caregivers attend if possible. This is an opportunity to openly discuss any questions you have about your child's experience at school as well as his/her growth and development.

## *Volunteer Hours*

Community involvement and volunteer work is at the founding core of Dragonfly. In 2018, the School was founded and built by parent and community volunteers giving funds, time, and talents towards the success of this new school. A huge reason why Dragonfly survives and thrives is because of our parent volunteer community. We need your talents and energy at the school! Throughout the coming school year, there will be opportunities for you to give volunteer hours and involve yourselves in your child's education and experience at school. We ask that families contribute a minimum of 10 volunteer hours during the school year.

Volunteer opportunities can be found on the Parent Communication Board in the Office entrance area and in monthly newsletters. Volunteer hours will be recorded in the Volunteer Notebook in the Office.

Opportunities to Volunteer include:

- Volunteer work days mostly focused on outdoor groundskeeping work. A large part of Dragonfly's foundation and curriculum is centered around outdoor play. We strive to create and maintain an outdoor space conducive to the wonder and magic of the children's early years of life, and it is so gratifying to work with the natural landscape to bring the play area to life for our kids.
- There are also opportunities to volunteer in the classroom as a substitute teacher, or bring a special project to the classrooms as a guest visitor. Volunteers who work regularly and consistently with children will require fingerprinting and background checks as well as training from Dragonfly staff.
- Families are also asked to help with our school celebrations and fundraising events. Examples of such support include planning, set up/clean up, and providing refreshments or other materials. Time outside of attending the events as a Parent/guardian will count toward volunteer hours. This is also a fun time for parents and families to connect outside of school operating hours.

### *Parent Evenings*

Your child's class teacher will host several Parent Evenings throughout the school year. We ask that at least one family member attend. At the start of school, **there is one required Parent Evening** regarding our school's policies and procedures, as well as information on the Waldorf teaching philosophy and how it nurtures the young child. The Parent Evenings serve an essential role in building relationships with teachers and families. They are also an opportunity to learn more about the teaching philosophy of our school and how it can be incorporated into family life. Parent Evenings usually include a short "topic of interest" from teachers, followed by conversation and/or hands-on activities such as candle making, crafting, and learning songs from the school.

### *Newsletters and Communication*

The Administration will send a School-Wide newsletter in the first week of every month. The newsletter will have information about how you can help fulfill your family volunteer hours, as well as information about what's happening that month at school, Parent Evenings, festivals, etc. We will also include readings and insightful educational materials on child development and Waldorf education.

Additionally, classroom teachers will send newsletters weekly or bi-weekly with information and reminders specific to that class.

Reading these newsletters is an important way to stay informed about school events and expectations. Please do your best to follow these communications!

## **Special Events, Festivals and Celebrations**

Dragonfly School holds several special events, festivals, and fundraisers throughout the year. Please refer to the school calendar on our website, monthly newsletters, and classroom bulletin boards for details. The calendar is also included here in your handbook on page 9 above. The following are some of the special events we offer:

### *Family Festivals*

One of the strongest rhythms we hold in the Waldorf Pedagogy is the seasonal festival life. Remember as a child how your birthday, Hanukkah/Christmas, and other pillars of the year

grounded you into time, you had a vision of celebrating to prepare for and get excited about? Our seasonal festival life offers the same pillars to the children and community, and is the scaffolding of our curriculum, especially in Early Childhood.

We host Festivals throughout the school year, inviting all students and families to attend the seasonal celebrations of the Fall Harvest Festival, Winter's Lantern Walk, Solstice Spiral Garden, and the culminating Spring May Faire Festival. These events are always open to extended family and family friends. Please make every effort to attend, as the children look forward to sharing these events with their families. Teachers have been building towards the festivals with songs, stories, crafts in the classrooms.

### *Birthday Celebrations*

Birthdays are celebrated with intention. We will hold a special ceremony for each child's birthday. We will celebrate late summer birthdays at the beginning of the school year and early summer birthdays at the end of the school year. Your class teacher will share more specific information about Birthday Celebrations once school begins. We look forward to sharing these celebrations with you!

### *Field Trips*

At this time, we do not regularly go on field trips. In the event that we do plan a field trip in these early childhood years, we will leave school for only a few hours at a time, with many parents along for the trip. More likely, we may walk up to Deer Hill Expeditions, the expedition program facility and beautiful grounds just up the hill from Dragonfly.

### **Field Trip Permission**

Parents and guardians have the opportunity prior to each trip to provide their permission (or choose not to) for their child to accompany his or her class on field trips during the school year. Parents and guardians will be notified in writing at least two weeks prior to an upcoming field trip or scheduled activity, and provide the details of the trip. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to provide adequate clothing, footwear, and snacks for the trip. Please provide any necessary medication on the day of field trips. Your child will bring home a permission form, and you will be required to sign it and return the form to the Teacher by a given date. There may be additional waivers or forms that need to be completed for certain trips. Dragonfly will provide the Teacher's phone number where they can be reached during a field trip.

### **Field Trip Costs**

As outlined in the Tuition section, parents/guardians will be notified ahead of time if there are to be Additional Fees incurred on a field trip. Parents/guardians are given the choice whether their child will participate or not in the scheduled trip. Remember, if you do not want your child to attend you will need to make alternate arrangements for their child care that day.

### **Missed Field Trip**

If your child arrives late to school on the day of a planned field trip or excursion, and you find their class is already away from school, you are responsible for their care. No staff will be left behind at the school to care for late children.

# School Policies

## *DEIJ- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice*

Mancos Valley Dragonfly School believes that children of all ability levels and backgrounds are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging at school and in the community, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, or sexual orientation. We will make every reasonable accommodation, **within the abilities and proper training of our staff**, to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program.

## *Neurodiversity and Disability in the Classroom*

Dragonfly School will make every reasonable effort and accommodation for all children in our care, as stated above in our policy of Inclusion. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students, as long as a safe and supportive environment can be provided for all students and staff.

Dragonfly Leadership reserves the right to determine whether the classroom environment is conducive to a child's safety and success, and whether our program can best serve that child's needs. As mentioned above in the Billing Policies section, we have a 30 day trial period for all families to try out our program. If behavioral incidents and patterns become disruptive to the group, Teachers will document and communicate through our Incident Reporting forms in a timely manner. Parents will be made aware of behaviors in school, and what Teachers are doing to support the child, as per our [Behavior Guidance and Discipline Policy](#) above.

Our School resources may limit our ability to care for certain children in the following ways:

- Dragonfly School is a 501(c)3 non-profit school. We receive tuition revenue (which comes in to be less than half our operating costs), as well as supplemental Foundation grants and private donations to support our operations. We simply do not have the funding ability to offer one-on-one aides for children that need a higher level of support at all times.
- Our Teachers are trained in First Aid and in an introductory Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Program course. They are trained teachers with years of experience working with children. However, most of our Teachers do not have thorough, specific training on developmental challenges and delays that may be needed with some children.
- Dragonfly School is a licensed child care facility outside of the Mancos RE-6 School District. There were State fiscal and legislative changes in the Spring of 2023 that cut all private schools outside of the School District out of state or federal funding for Child Find Special Education services like San Juan BOCES or any other entity. If your child needs special education services, they may need to attend a different school.

Therefore, if it becomes clear in your child's beginning time at Dragonfly School that our Teachers can not meet your child's needs, Dragonfly School may dismiss your child. We will only do so after ongoing efforts in the classroom have been exhausted, and communication with parents/guardians has been thorough, as per our policy on [Behavior Guidance and Discipline](#) above. We recommend the Mancos Early Learning Center for all children needing an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or more support with developmental disabilities and delays. Dragonfly is not authorized to create and maintain IEPs at this time, due to the funding changes last year.



## *Confidentiality*

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child or your family situation will *not* be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential and kept in a secure filing cabinet within the office.

## *Registration Procedures*

The following admission procedures must be completed prior to your child's attendance at the Mancos Valley Dragonfly School.

Parents are asked to create an account in our ChildPilot Parent Portal, where both parents and authorized staff have access to registration information. ChildPilot is also our parent communication software. All enrollment forms can be found in ChildPilot, and will include the following pieces:

- Read/sign this Parent Handbook, indicating that you have read and agree to the Policies and Procedures herein
- Enrollment Record
- General Health Information
- Health Plan \*(if applicable)
- Medication Administration Permission Form \*\*(if applicable)
- Immunization Record or Certificate of Exemption either Medical or non-medical
- Emergency Information and Authorization for Treatment and Transportation
- Child Pick-up Authorizations
- Field Trip Authorizations

\*If applicable, a health care plan authorized by the child's health care provider and parents/guardians defining the interventions needed to care for a child who has an identified health or developmental condition or concern including, but not limited to: seizures, asthma, diabetes, severe allergies, heart or respiratory conditions, and physical disabilities. Our staff working with a child with a health care plan will be informed, trained and delegated responsibility for carrying out the health care plan; supervision of the plan and interventions will be documented.

\*\*If your child needs medication on a permanent or temporary basis that will need to be dispensed by school personnel during the school day, Dragonfly will need a Medication Administration Permission form signed by your child's physician.

## *Wait List Policy*

We maintain and adhere to an ordered waiting list according to when initial enrollment applications are received. When contacted by phone or email (preference indicated by parents) to determine your child's availability to fill a vacancy in a class, you will be given one week to provide a response. If the Director has not heard from you within one week, the Director will contact the next family on the waiting list. If you would like to update your contact information on the waiting list or be removed from our wait list at any time, please email [info@dragonflypreschool.org](mailto:info@dragonflypreschool.org).

There is a *non-refundable* \$250 deposit to hold your child's place.

## *Visitor Policy*

We welcome community members, parents, inquiring families, and donors to come visit during the school day to see the magic in the classrooms. Visitors must arrange their visit during the school day with the Office. Visitors can be disruptive to class activities, so planning your visit and the timing is recommended. A record is maintained daily that includes the visitor's name, the purpose of the visit, and the duration of the visit.

## *Attendance*

### Planned Absences

Your child's presence in class is important to learning and the continuity of their school experience. Of course, situations arise when a child must miss class (illness, emergencies, travel). We ask that parents make their child's attendance and timely arrival to school a priority and plan outside activities around class times. For example, please schedule doctor and dentist appointments or special trips on the weekends and within holiday breaks. Class time simply goes more smoothly and works better for the whole class when everyone is present.

### Tardiness

When a child arrives late, he or she is being asked to jump onto a moving train. Lateness puts the child at a disadvantage and interrupts the class and the Teachers. Please make every effort to have your child arrive at school on time, by 8:30am.

## *Supervision of Children*

It is important that children be signed in when brought to school, and signed out when picked up so that we have an official daily record of everyone in attendance. This legally signs your child into our care. Classrooms each have a paper/pencil Attendance Log, notating the date and time of drop off and pick up.

During the school day, children and teachers stay together. We have regularly scheduled times when all visit the bathrooms together, and bathroom doors are kept cracked, especially in the Preschool. This ensures that children are within sight and hearing at all times. The children are instructed to always ask a teacher before they leave the room to use the bathroom at other times, and the teacher from whom permission was sought is responsible to be aware of the child's departure and return. When outside, the children have boundaries within which they must stay. The Teachers must be able to keep the children within sight at all times and to maintain a consciousness of each child's whereabouts. Anytime the group transitions to a new space, a head count will be taken and confirmed to ensure that all are present.

## *Property Damage*

Parents/Guardians must pay for any damages or loss caused by their child to Dragonfly property. Dragonfly School is not responsible for damages to, loss, or theft of personal property left on school grounds, including but not limited to children's belongings. If something goes missing Teachers will alert other parents and an attempt will be made to find the missing items, but with no guarantee.

## *Environmental Pledge*

The Mancos Valley Dragonfly School pledges to be conscious regarding our impact on the environment. We intend to address our impact in the following ways:

**Reduce:** Enrollment forms, Newsletters, and billing will all be electronic wherever possible, in order to cut down on the use of paper.

**Food:** Food served at Dragonfly will be natural and organic wherever possible, and local whenever possible. We are what we eat, and we want the children in our care to be healthy. By choosing to be organic, we are voting with our choice to have that much less pesticide and herbicide sprayed into the world. This is one reason Dragonfly's tuition is higher-the quality of the food and the programming here is unparalleled.

**Building:** Paints, finishes, and materials in the school building and outside are chosen to be non-toxic, sourced from our business partner Handcrafted House in Durango, which specializes in non-toxic finishes including paint, wood and concrete stains, sealers, chalk paint, plasters, etc.

**Cleaning Supplies** will be natural and non-toxic wherever possible.

## **Health and Illness Policies**

### *Illness Policy*

The health of the whole school community is our primary concern. *Please safeguard your child and others by keeping him/her at home if signs of illness are present.* In general, our rule of thumb is if a child is experiencing one or more illness symptoms, and is not well enough to go outside and play or take part in normal school activities, then they should be resting at home. The school has the right to refuse a child's admittance to class when in doubt about the child's health. The school also has the authority to request a written statement from the child's doctor indicating a clean bill of health before the child returns to school.

If a child becomes sick while at school, parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up their child. The child will be isolated (if necessary) from the other children in the school office, or in each classroom's "cozy corner" until parents arrive.

Please contact the school if your child becomes ill and describe the illness. If a specific diagnosis is made, e.g., strep throat, conjunctivitis, chicken pox, etc, please let the school know so other families can be alerted. If your child contracts a known communicable disease, we recommend parents contact their family doctor or public health nurse in order to obtain recommendations and protocols regarding their child's return to school.

Clearly there are instances when it is necessary for a child to remain at home. The following are good guidelines:

- If your child has a fever in the evening, he/she should not be brought to school in the morning, even if his/her temperature is normal. Fever is defined as 100.6° F or higher. A child's temperature should be normal without medication for 24-hours before the child is brought back to School.
- If your child vomits he/she must stay home for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Diarrhea, as defined by the CDC, consists of *more than one* abnormally loose stool. A child should not return to the center until his/her bowel movements have returned to a normal consistency, with 2 regular bowel movements.

- Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye): a child with pinkeye must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to School. A child must be on medications for that length of time, and there must be evidence that the condition is improving.
- Rash: body rash, not associated with diapering, heat or allergic reactions, especially with fever or itching.
- Sore throat coupled with a fever or swollen neck glands.
- Lice, Scabies: Children must not return to school until they are free of lice and nits (eggs). Children with scabies can be admitted after treatment.
- If your child is unusually tired, pale, shows a lack of appetite, is difficult to wake, confused, or irritable. This is sufficient reason to exclude a child from school.

Classroom teachers will use their best judgment, as well as the following guidelines, to determine when to send children home.

- Has or has had a fever of 100 degrees or more within the past 24 hours.
- Has discharge from the eyes or ears, coughing up a lot of mucus.
- Has yellow or green mucus.
- Is not well enough to go outside and play or take part in normal school activities.
- Meets any of the conditions for exclusion indicated in the “How Sick is Too Sick” guidelines put out by the Colorado Department of Health and Environment.

Some insight from our School Board Medical Advisor, that speaks to the reasoning behind our above policies and actions:

Each year during winter months for some known and some unknown reasons we move into cold and flu seasons. Everything changes with each seasonal change of the earth. Mother earth has her own rhythms and pulses in which each living thing must change and adapt. We look at the cold and flu season as no different. The body changes and adapts for each cycle in which there are often signs; noses drip, mucosal linings shed, skin becomes dry. If the body is out of balance we may experience headaches, fevers, or joint pain during these cycles of adaptation. It is easy to say that we have “become infected” or our bodies “have been invaded” by some invisible thing. All childhood processes tend to be only temporary, not a lifelong disease process. Childhood is the time for growth and adaptation. It is the time for exploration of the surrounding environment. We choose not to label this or that experience as right or wrong, good or bad, healthy or sick. But instead choose to see it as a right of passage in life. This applies not only to health but is extended to all aspects of life.

In order to keep the balance of our school we must all contribute. **If you recognize that your child is not feeling well, please allow them to stay home to rest.** If everyone; children, teachers, and staff feel well then it is our understanding that they are well and that mental, emotional, and physical balance and health prevails within the group.

In order to combat full school closures, we will be implementing the following guidelines for those who may be feeling a little out of balance and unwell.

- If your child is feeling sick or unwell please keep them home from school
- If you as a parent are unwell and your child is fine please feel free to let them continue their weekly routine at school
- If our teachers or staff are unwell, they will not be present at school until they feel comfortable and well again. If this situation does arise we may ask parents to volunteer to

help with the program so that we may continue to operate our daily functions and provide school for the children

- If all of us, families, teachers, and staff can cooperate during this season we can provide the best possible outcome for our children!

### *Illness Reporting Policy*

In the event that a family reports their child to be at home ill with a serious diagnosis, all other families will receive a notice from the School administration through ChildPilot alerting them as to the nature of the illness with as much information as possible, while maintaining the confidentiality/anonymity of ill children. We will alert families within the class, as well as the greater school community if necessary, if there is a known diagnosis of a communicable and reportable disease. Families may then make an informed choice to withdraw their child for a few days, or stay in school.

We ask that all families inform the school when their child becomes unwell for three significant reasons:

- First, the Teachers need to know if your child will not be attending that day. They can then plan accordingly with food quantities, table settings, and staffing for the day. Please contact the Office through ChildPilot, phone call, text, or email as soon as you know your child will not be attending that day, and office staff will relay the message to the Teachers. You may also contact your child's Teacher directly.
- Second, the School keeps track of illnesses in the school and degree of spread. It is helpful to know how many children are unwell.
- Third, we can then inform other families if there is a communicable illness within the school community that they should be made aware of, for example something that may affect vulnerable younger siblings at home.

Tuition can not be refunded for children who are at home unwell (for any length of time), or for children choosing to withdraw temporarily from the class due to an illness report.

### *School Illness Prevention Policies*

These are our current policies and procedures to help keep our students, staff and families safe. These policies are subject to change, and we will notify parents as these adjustments are made.

#### *Cleaning Policy and Prevention*

- Dragonfly is a lucky recipient of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Clean Air For Schools grant program. We now have at least 3 state of the art HEPA air filter units in each classroom that run 24/7 in an attempt to improve air quality and reduce respiratory illness transmission in the classrooms.
- Hand washing is the most effective way of preventing transmission of infection, and Teachers encourage thorough hand washing frequently.
- The classrooms will be fully disinfected and cleaned at the end of each day, and deep cleaned on the weekends. Any fabric materials used by the children daily will be kept separate and individually labeled for each child (napkins, aprons, cloth towels, etc). Materials will then be laundered daily.
- We will enforce the "How Sick is Too Sick" guidelines from the state of Colorado, asking unwell children and/or Teachers to stay home.

- Children with symptoms will be sent to the office and sent home as soon as possible, *as would be the case with any other major illness*. There is a cot and cozy pillows in the Office where the child will be kept and monitored in quarantine until a parent or guardian arrives.
- In the event of a significant number of confirmed cases of a major communicable disease at Dragonfly, the school may be closed for sanitizing according to the Montezuma County Public Health Department requirements, for the health and wellbeing of all. Parents will receive as much advance notice as possible in the event of a closure. Please note, no tuition will be refunded for closures.

#### Child's Day in regards to Standard Illness Precautions

1. Hand washing is the most effective way of preventing transmission of infection, and Teachers encourage thorough hand washing frequently.
2. Children will not be required to wear masks at any point in their day
3. Children will not be expected to "social distance" and teachers will interact in a natural, nurturing, close contact way. Staff will have extra aprons and clothing in the event that they need to change if a child's bodily fluids were to come into contact.
4. Communal snack preparations will be monitored carefully, and Teachers may wear disposable gloves during food preparation. Teachers do their best to allow children to be involved in the fun of food preparation as much as they can safely allow.
5. Mixing of the classrooms will be kept to a minimum during flu and illness seasons, or times of an infection within a classroom, such as a head cold going around.

#### *Nursing Services*

A Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC) is assigned to the school per Colorado licensing rules and regulations. This Consultant visits our school at least once a month to help us stay in compliance with regulations regarding the health and safety of the children. If your child has a chronic condition such as asthma, serious allergies, or other health condition, or if you need the school to dispense any medication to your child, our CCHC works with the Teachers to institute a health care plan in conjunction with your physician so the school knows how to best care for your child.

#### *Sunscreen Policy*

If desired for your child, we recommend that parents apply sunscreen before school. You may leave a labeled bottle of your preferred sunscreen on the shelf above your child's cubby, and teachers will re-apply according to the directions on the label. If the parents grant permission on the registration form, and the Teachers feels a child is in need of sunscreen but does not have any supplied by the parents, Teachers will apply a natural/organic, zinc based sunscreen lotion to face and exposed arms and hands. We encourage sunhats and light, long sleeves during outdoor play.

#### *Allergy Aware*

Please inform the Office AND your child's teacher of any allergies your child has! Dragonfly School is allergy aware, but we are not a certified peanut or nut free school, nor certified gluten-free for Celiacs as we can never guarantee that a child will not encounter a peanut, peanut products, or wheat products during the school day.

If there is a child enrolled at any given time with a severe allergy, we do ask that all school community members remain “allergy aware.” Enrolled families in that child’s class will be notified of the allergy, and encouraged to be “allergy aware” when parents are packing school lunches. Depending on the severity of a child’s allergy, we may require no allergen or allergen products be brought in lunches and snacks on the days that child attends. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to detail their child’s allergies in their Enrollment Forms. The administration will follow up with our Child Care Health Consultant to ensure we can address any needs related to allergies at school.

Snack offerings will accommodate dietary restrictions and allergies, as needed. If a child requires particular snack items different from our standard offerings, we ask that Parents/guardians connect with the child’s teacher. We may ask that parents provide that child’s snack. For example, if a child must have almond butter instead of peanut butter for snack, and the standard snack is apples with peanut butter, we may ask the family to provide the almond butter for that child. Parents may ask for the classroom “menu” of all foods served throughout the week.

## Immunization and Medication Policies

### *Immunization Policy*

The Mancos Valley Dragonfly School accepts fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated, and unvaccinated children into the program. Parents/guardians must be advised that immunized children may be in school with children that are not fully immunized. A completed Health & Immunization Form/Waiver must be on file at the school before the child can attend. State regulations require that physical exams and immunizations be current and renewed yearly, or that the School have a Vaccine Exemption form on file (which must be updated yearly as it expires on June 30th of each year).

### State Requirements

Colorado law requires all students attending licensed child care centers to be vaccinated against certain diseases unless they have a medical or non-medical exemption on file. To protect unvaccinated children, students with an exemption from one or more required vaccines may be kept out of the preschool during a disease outbreak. Vaccines required to enroll at School (*unless* we have one of the exemption forms on file) include:

- Hepatitis B
- Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap)
- Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)
- Inactivated poliovirus (IPV)
- Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV13) or polysaccharide (PPSV23)
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- Varicella (chicken pox)

### Exemptions

**Medical Exemption:** Children with a complete medical exemption form (signed by a medical doctor, doctor of osteopathic medicine, advanced practice nurse or delegated physician’s assistant) need to file this form only once unless the student’s information or school changes.

Parents/Guardians can file a medical exemption form with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, or file the form with the MVDP (included in the child’s Enrollment forms). If parents/guardians file with CDPHE, or already have an exemption on file from another school or child care, the MVDP will need a paper copy of the medical exemption form.

**Non-medical (personal belief or religious) Exemptions:** Parents/Guardians of students in preschool or child care must file a non-medical exemption form prior to their child enrolling in any form of preschool or child care. There are several ways to file a non-medical exemption. Parents/Guardians can file the form with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment online, or can file with School (form included with child's Enrollment Forms). Again, if parents/guardians file online, the school will need a paper copy of the exemption form. Additionally, parents/guardians can file a statement of exemption with School. This statement should include: the student's full name, age and date of birth, date the exemption was filed, the immunizations declined, and which type of non-medical exemption is being taken (personal belief or religious).

### COVID-19 Vaccine

The Board and the Administration of Dragonfly does not require our teachers to be vaccinated. To be vaccinated against COVID-19 or any other disease is our Teacher's personal choice. The Teachers have chosen not to disclose their vaccination status, as is their right under the privacy laws of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

### *Medication Policy*

Per state law, only prescription medications can be given to a child while a child is at school. If your child has a prescription medication, please record this on the registration form. The school will then require a signed request form from the parent, and detailed instructions from the child's physician for any medication that must be administered during school hours. Prescription medications must be provided in the original container. The parent is required to provide their request before the child starts school, or at the start of the prescription if started during the school year. The school is not responsible for any complications in this regard. Forms are available from the teachers and must be submitted each year. Any other medical conditions need to be dealt with by the teachers on a one-to-one basis.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the prescription medication is given to the teacher before each class. The Teacher will ensure it is not accessible to the children, but quickly accessible to the Teachers in an emergency. The parent is responsible for picking up the medication at the end of class and will always ensure the medication has not expired. Under no circumstances will the teacher give out any other medication while a child is at Dragonfly.

### *Medical Problems and Situational Concerns*

If your child has health issues, parents/guardians are responsible to inform the Teachers. In some cases, it may be necessary to provide the school with a signed waiver of responsibility, absolving the school, its staff and the parent helpers from legal responsibility.

Please keep us informed about disturbances and difficulties in your child's life. As children grow, they may experience transformation in their routines, suffer occasional illness, or struggle with concerns related to home, family, or friends. Please communicate any changes that affect your child, in a confidential and appropriate time (not in the busy time of drop off or pick-up). For example, if your family is moving or in the midst of divorce, Teachers want to know. Frequently, we'll see changed behavior in a child at school, and knowing what a child is experiencing at home can greatly impact how Teachers meet the needs of the child. We can not stress this enough. **The greater our communication, the better we can support your child.**



# Incidents at School

## *Incidents/Accidents Involving Children During Class Time*

It is our school policy that all Teachers caring for children in a consistent way (as in scheduled classroom Teachers and assistants) are required to hold current CPR and First Aid certifications.

Teachers will document any incident causing injury or emotional stress to a child while in their care, as well as documentation for other children involved in the incident. Teachers will document any care/first aid given or solutions presented at school. An incident report form allows for accurate descriptions of an incident that occurred during class time. The form will be given to the parent(s) to read at the end of the school day. Both teachers and parent(s) are required to sign it. The original will be kept with the child's file. Parents can request a copy if they choose. The Director will review incidents/accidents that occur and make recommendations to ensure the safety of the children. The following is our Faculty procedure for Incident Reporting:

### Procedures:

1. Assess the injury: apply Ice and/or apply Band Aid if bleeding - follow standard precautions (gloves etc.)
2. Contact Parents right away for Head Injuries big or small, bite marks, or other serious injuries.
3. *Staff witnessing the event* fills out the Incident/Injury Report.
4. Communicate Incident to Lead Teacher and Director Immediately
5. Have parents sign the Report at pick up *on the same day*.
6. Once signed by staff and parents, put the Report in the Office paperwork inbox for the Director to review/sign.
7. The original copy will be kept in the child's file, and parents can request a copy of the form if they choose.

If a minor injury occurs, we will take necessary action. If a major accident occurs, those listed in the child's emergency information, including your healthcare provider, will be contacted in order of your preference. Should we be unable to contact any of them and immediate medical help is required, we will call an ambulance and your child will be taken to Southwest Memorial Hospital in Cortez or the hospital specified on your emergency file card.

## *Open Door Policy: Communication around Incidents*

If parents are concerned about an incident or their child's wellbeing at school, we strongly encourage you to speak with your child's Teacher! We do not know that you are concerned if we do not hear from you. Teachers want to hear from parents in order to support all children in the class.

Many things can be resolved by going first to your child's Teachers. If for any reason parents/guardians feel they can not speak with their child's Teacher, parents may contact the Director (Emily) privately at [director@dragonflypreschool.org](mailto:director@dragonflypreschool.org).

# Emergency Policies and Procedures

## *Medical Emergency Policy*

Please ensure that the child's Enrollment Form is complete and accurate indicating the doctor's name, health care number, emergency contact, and allergies for the use in the event of an emergency. If an accident or medical emergency occurs at the School that requires the child to be taken to the hospital, an ambulance will be called. Dragonfly School holds the responsibility of

sending one teacher or Office staff to accompany the child, while the rest of staff remains with the other children.

### *Emergency Communications*

In case of emergency situations at school, such as evacuations, lockdowns, lockouts or severe weather during the school day, Dragonfly will send out information first via ChildPilot text to the primary phone numbers provided on the Enrollment Forms. The school will additionally send out information via email and update the outgoing voice message when appropriate. Please keep us updated regarding any changes to your contact information!

### *Fire Safety*

Dragonfly faculty and staff practice drills on a regular basis in order to ensure smooth procedures in the event of real emergencies. In the event of a fire in the Dragonfly facility, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Smoke detectors will sound and all staff/students will be alerted verbally
2. Children are lined up quickly and quietly in front of a teacher
3. One or two teachers lead the children out of the room, following the emergency exit plans posted in all doorways. One faculty member will bring up the rear, having taken a moment to gather the emergency backpack, necessary medications, and Emergency Binder with contact information
4. Whole school evacuates to the Southwestern corner of the parking lot
5. Teachers take attendance
6. Proceed with relocation procedures if necessary

### *Relocation Procedures*

1. Teachers and staff escort the children to the far Southwestern corner of the parking lot away from the school
2. Parents will be notified to pick up their children. If they cannot be reached, the Emergency Contacts will be phoned to pick up children.
3. If necessary, and depending on the nature of the emergency, Teachers will relocate children to the Deer Hill Expeditions facility up the road, located less than 0.25 mile East of the School on the main drive, and parents will be notified.
4. Teachers will remain with the children until all children have been picked up by authorized adults.

### *Extreme Weather Policy*

If weather conditions are considered dangerous while children are at school, or if children are obviously uncomfortable (in excessive heat or cold) all outdoor activities will be moved inside and reconsidered if conditions improve.

Certain extraordinary conditions may cause the school to close when it would otherwise be in session. Such conditions may include snow, poor air quality, illness outbreaks, or other extraordinary situations. If we feel we are unable to safely offer our school program, we will be closed. Please listen to radio or television broadcasts to find out about closures and travel conditions in your area that may affect your travel to and from school. If we remain open on

inclement weather days, we encourage families to use their own judgment as to whether or not they bring their children to school.

As a rule, whenever the Mancos School District closes due to inclement weather, Dragonfly School will also be closed. If the district declares a district-wide early dismissal, Dragonfly School will also close early. Dragonfly may additionally choose to close when the school districts remain open, for the above reasoning around safety. During an early closing, it is the responsibility of Teachers and staff to be responsible for children until they are picked up by adults.

In such cases, notice will go out before 7am, and all families and faculty will be alerted via mass ChildPilot text, followed by an informational email from ChildPilot with more details.

### *Lost or Missing Child*

In the very unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from the group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 15 minutes, and all efforts/means of searching have been thoroughly tried, the family and then the police will be notified if necessary.

## **Protocol for Handling Issues or Concerns**

We want your school experience to be a successful one for both your child and your family. If you have concerns or issues regarding your child, the teachers, or the program, please bring them up for discussion by following this protocol:

1. Bring concerns to a Teacher's attention by special appointment or at a mutually agreed upon time for a phone discussion. *Please refrain from discussing concerns with the teacher while class is in progress or while children are in the room.* This way the teachers can devote all their attention to the discussion of the problem or concern with parents outside of class time. In the discussion, work together with the teachers to develop goals, strategies and possible solutions:
  - a. Express issues or concerns respectfully while keeping confidentiality in mind.
  - b. The teachers may be able to provide another view to a situation. Remember the Teacher is a professional in child development and present in the classroom environment each day.
  - c. Remember to look towards these policies and guidelines of the program. Perhaps they can be of assistance or bring clarity to a situation.
2. If the concern can not be resolved between parent and teacher, please contact the Director for assistance. A meeting with the Director may be necessary to help generate strategies and solutions.
  - a. The parent(s) should inform the other party before involving the Director.
  - b. The Director will look to both parties involved for information and act to help mediate the problem solving process.
3. The Director has full authority to make a final decision to resolve the concern, following the policies and procedures herein, and on behalf of the safety of the school.
4. If the issue is regarding the child's safety or the safety of others in the classroom, the Director will need to make a decision regarding the continued presence of the child in the program. If the above "Behavior Guidance & Discipline Policy" has been addressed and the teachers have handled a situation and have exhausted their best efforts, then the school reserves the right to dismiss the child from the program.

The Director reserves the right to dismiss a child from the program without adhering to the Behavior Guidance and Discipline Policy if the child is a serious threat to themselves, to the teachers, or to the safety of the other children.

This protocol is in place to help maintain a positive and respectful environment in our program even during times of conflict. We also want to ensure the confidentiality of the children and their families is maintained at all times.

### *Filing a Report*

Complaints concerning suspected licensing violations shall be handled as follows:

- 1) The concern will be discussed with the classroom Teacher and the Director
- 2) If the concern is not thereby resolved, the complainant and the Director may present the issue to the Board of Directors for its resolution.
- 3) Additionally, the Colorado Department of Human Services may be contacted at:

Division of Child Care  
The Colorado Department of Human Services  
1575 Sherman Street  
Denver, CO 80203-1714  
Telephone 303-866-5958

### *Child Abuse Reporting*

Colorado law requires that any staff member of Dragonfly School who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which could reasonably result in abuse or neglect, shall immediately report the same to the Colorado Department of Social Services or to local law enforcement. The Colorado Child Abuse Neglect Hotline may be reached at 1-844-264-5437. Parents also reserve the right to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

### **School Governance**

Dragonfly School is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization. A copy of the School's Bylaws is available upon request. We try to keep this Handbook up to date and inform parents as changes occur. Additionally, any policy changes will be noted in Board meeting Minutes as well as posted in the Office. Dragonfly is subjected to and hereby declares to follow all licensing rules and regulations as put forth by the Colorado Department of Early Childhood and the Colorado Department of Health and Human Services, as well as other governing agencies required by law.

Please refer to our website (<http://mancosdragonflyschool.org>) for more information about Board Governance and Board members.

## RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Dragonfly School Parent Handbook. I understand that the Handbook is not a binding contract, though it contains important information on the policies and procedures of the school that I must follow. I agree to read and familiarize myself with the materials in this Handbook and understand that I must abide by its contents. I understand that not following the policies outlined herein is grounds for my child's suspension from school.

In particular, I acknowledge that I have read the sections on Tuition and Billing Policies. I agree to pay my tuition on time, and I understand that I am responsible for following the Policies around schedule changes, reimbursement, and withdrawal should my family decide to leave the school.

I further understand that Dragonfly School may change, rescind, or add to any policies and practices described in the Handbook from time to time in its sole and absolute discretion. Families will be notified of any policy changes within one week of the effective change.

I have read this receipt and acknowledgment, and after having the opportunity to ask questions about its contents, I voluntarily agree to comply with the school policies described within it. I understand that if I have any questions about the Handbook or about Dragonfly School policies or procedures in the future, I should contact the School Director for assistance, and am encouraged to do so.

*\*\*Both parents/guardians must read, understand, and abide by this Handbook\*\**

First Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Second Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

*Please return one signed Receipt and Acknowledgment form to the School Office. You are encouraged to keep another copy for your personal record. A second page has been included here.*

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Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Second Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

*Please return one signed Receipt and Acknowledgment form to the School Office. You are encouraged to keep another copy for your personal record. A second page has been included here.*