



Carlson Early Childhood Family Handbook 2022-2023

Think, Learn, Grow

Welcome to the Carlson Early Childhood Program. We look forward to your involvement in the program and getting to know your family as we work together. We view our program as a partnership with families and welcome any input you may have for the program. Feel free to participate in classroom activities, planning sessions, volunteering, as well as offering suggestions that may aid us in the education of your child. We are interested in providing services to support the families in the Clear Creek County area as well as providing direct services for your child. We hope this handbook will help answer any questions you may have about our program.

A. Program Philosophy and Goals

The purpose of our program is to provide an individualized informal program designed to foster a positive self-image, develop skills and concepts necessary for interpersonal relationships in the home, community, and future school environments. The child's culture and family values are at the core of our program thus building a base for self-identity, acceptance, and understanding of differences. Our curriculum is based on educational theory and practice involving: Piaget's theories of learning, Erikson's stages of development, and Vygotsky's emergent curriculum and scaffolding techniques. Through a developmentally appropriate learning environment, children are encouraged to learn by doing, exploring, and creating which allows them to feel free to follow their natural desire to learn. The program exposes children to many learning areas using choice centers, projects, field trips, and peer interaction rather than specific academic tasks.

The goals are:

- To develop close caring relationships with each child and to provide individual attention, care, and affection
- To provide a relaxed and caring learning environment in which children are encouraged to explore, develop and practice readiness skills in the following areas:
 - Fine and gross motor
 - Cognition
 - Language
 - Vocabulary
 - Visual and auditory perception
- To foster exploration, creativity, and independence in each child
- Through the activity, choices foster feelings of competence, self-understanding, and esteem, and develop autonomy.
- To assist children in developing skills in conflict resolution and to enhance their interpersonal relationships.
- To support a solution-oriented problem-solving attitude that children work through with adult support.
- To have parents and teachers work closely together to gain an understanding of the total development of the child.
- To provide support to families by providing information pertaining to their child, giving referrals, and providing opportunities for education and interaction with other parents associated with the center as well as working with the teachers in the classroom environment.

B. Program Description

Our program is a nonprofit developmental preschool and childcare center. We provide services for children 3 to 7 years of age. We have an extension that reaches families of younger children in their homes when they qualify for special education services. Our hours are from 8:30AM to 3:00 PM (Monday thru Thursday). We operate during the regular public school year, August through May. Our program offers a part-time room as well as a full-day room. We receive funds from Special Education Services of the Colorado Education Department (Child Find) and the Colorado Preschool Program. We collect tuition from families who are not eligible for support from either of these categories. We are licensed for 50 children ages 3 thru 7 years of age. We maintain an 8 children to 1 adult ratio in the classroom at all times. Our classrooms are considered full with 15 children.

We operate out of Carlson Elementary School, which is part of the Clear Creek School District. We work closely with the Special Education Department, which involves receiving services and consultation from a Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist, and Child Psychologist. We serve children with a variety of needs in a blended classroom environment. Our acceptance policy is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Our goals are to give as many opportunities and experiences to the children in order for them to reach typical development before they reach the elementary program, as well as address issues that may be getting in the way of that development. We also support parents in becoming a part of their child's classroom experience by requesting that they volunteer at least once a month. If you feel your child is delayed or your family has special circumstances affecting your child, please contact the Preschool Director for a Child Find Screening at #303-679-4431 Ext 5717.

C. Goals and Objectives

Identity and Initiative

- ◇ Solving problems through play
- ◇ Awareness of physical traits
- ◇ Using their first name in written form
- ◇ Making decisions
- ◇ Following through with plans
- ◇ Participating in classroom activities/being a part of a functional group

Self Reliance

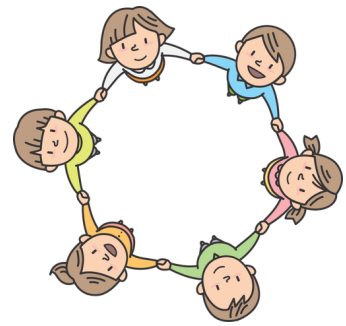
- ◇ Attending to personal needs
- ◇ Maintenance of personal belongings

Social-Emotional Development

- ◇ Playing with others cooperatively
- ◇ Using self-control
- ◇ Problem-solving
- ◇ Respecting other's rights and needs.
- ◇ Taking turns
- ◇ Conflict resolution
- ◇ Expressing feelings to others
- ◇ Developing lasting respectful relationships

Motor Skill

- ◇ Using scissors, pencils, and other tools
- ◇ Planning and controlling movement.
- ◇ Recognizing their body location in relation to space
- ◇ Bouncing and catching a ball
- ◇ Jumping, climbing, running
- ◇ Stopping, starting and changing direction.
- ◇ Lateral and bilateral movement
- ◇ Locomotor and Non-locomotor movement.
- ◇ Movement to a beat and rhythm
- ◇ Hopping on one foot



Thinking Skills

- ◇ Problem solving
- ◇ Cause and effect relationships
- ◇ Classification
- ◇ Correspondence
- ◇ Maintaining attention
- ◇ Using memory through utilizing past experiences and daily routines
- ◇ Perspective
- ◇ Movement
- ◇ Identity
- ◇ Equivalence
- ◇ Use of color
- ◇ Use of shape

Language Development

- ◇ Sharing experiences with class
- ◇ Expressing themselves in a variety of ways
- ◇ Vocabulary
- ◇ Books and stories
- ◇ Symbolic representations
- ◇ The use of the alphabet
- ◇ Writing

Creative Development

- ✧ Exploring ideas
- ✧ Expanding on thoughts, words, actions
- ✧ Trying a variety of ways to complete tasks and taking risks
- ✧ Critical thinking and reasoning skills
- ✧ Enhance desire for exploration of the environment



D. Admission Policy

We provide services for children between the ages of 3 and 7. Children must be fully potty trained. All documentation must be completed before the child can begin attending. **Documentation includes enrollment forms, physical within the last year, immunization records, emergency information, and a \$200.00 non-refundable* snack fee.** As part of our admission policy, each parent/guardian must read and be familiar with the family handbook. Moreover, the last page of the handbook must be signed and returned stating that you have read it. We strongly encourage you to observe a class before registering your child. We adhere to the rules and guidelines as required by the Colorado Department of Education and Department of Human Services. If you wish to read in further detail about the rules and regulations, please see the Program Director. Screenings for special challenges are held twice a year. If you feel your child is delayed or your family has special circumstances affecting your child, please contact the program coordinator for Child Find Screenings. Your child will not participate in the program free of charge until the results of the screening are completed and delays or needs are determined.

E. Fee Schedules and Hours G.

Annual

Snack fee	\$200.00
Activity fee	N/A

Monthly

Full Week Program (Monday-Thursday)	\$625
Half Week Program (Monday & Wednesday or Tuesday & Thursday)	\$310

F. Program Hours

Monday - Thursday program 8:30 am to 3:00 pm
Monday/Wednesday program 8:30 am to 3:00 pm
Tuesday/Thursday program 8:30 am to 3:00 pm

Students may begin arriving at 8:15 am.

G. Program Hours

Our school schedule follows the regular school Calendar August through the Thursday before Memorial Day. More information will follow regarding the last weeks of the 22-23 school year in May/June.

H. Parent Responsibilities

- ❖ If your child qualifies for the special services program the state will pay all fees except the required snack fee. Your responsibilities will be in assisting us in your child's progress, attend staff meetings pertaining to your child, cooperating with recommendations we develop together, as well as supporting the classroom directly and indirectly.
- ❖ **Parents are also responsible for:**
 - ❖ **Tuition paying parents will be responsible for paying their tuition on the 1st of each month.** Children will be disenrolled the first week of the following month for unpaid bills.
 - ❖ Providing snacks in the form of a yearly fee.
 - ❖ Participate in at least 2 meetings pertaining to the services provided including Parent-Teacher Conferences, collaboration meetings, classroom support, or special program support activities
 - ❖ Send your child to school dressed for the weather and with items specific to their care.
 - ❖ Providing the structure to get your child to school on a regular basis, picking and dropping off your child on time.
 - ❖ staying all day).
 - ❖ If your child is in a full-day program it will be your responsibility to provide a mat cover and blanket.
 - ❖ Turning in all required paperwork on time.
 - ❖ Notifying the school of any absences that your child may have.
 - ❖ Signing your child in and out of their classroom daily or an authorized adult over 18 years of age.



I. Assessing your Child's Development

We will be observing your child throughout the year to assess their development: physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively, creatively, and language skills. Twice a year a child assessment will be done. This information will be provided to you at Parent-Teacher Conferences held in September and February. There will be additional information given at this time as well as a conference log. We follow the standards set by the Colorado Department of Education and children are assessed through Teaching Strategies GOLD. Feel free to make an appointment to talk with your child's teacher at any time.

J. Dental/Vision/Hearing Screenings

We provide free dental/vision and hearing screenings during the course of the school year. The **Lion's Club** provides the screenings in the Fall and will provide a direct referral for children who have vision issues. Hearing is monitored throughout the course of the school year by the district audiologist and results will be given to parents as well. Dental screening and referrals take place in January and are provided by **All Kids Dental**.

K. Dual Language Learners

Families who speak a language other than English will receive written and verbal information in their home language. Your child will also be assessed in their home language according to TS GOLD. Classroom instruction will remain primarily in English and will be translated via Google Translate as needed. It's the intention of this program that your child is given the opportunity to learn English as well as their home language.



L. Communication

A **Bulletin Board** is on the wall as you enter the door. We display many items of interest, including current activities, events, and information. Please stop and take advantage of the valuable information. **Monthly Newsletters** will also be sent home to update families on what students are learning and the current activities that are being provided.

M. Arrival and Departure Procedures

Each **child must be signed in and out daily by an individual who is 18 years of age or older.** No child should be left in the room at any time unsupervised. The doors will remain locked until 8:15 am

N. Picking up your child

If you wish for another adult to pick up your child you will need to have them listed on the emergency card, or send in a written and signed notification of who will be responsible to pick up your child. We will ID all persons other than you until we are familiar with them picking up your child.

O. Visitors and Parent Volunteers

Visitors must stop in at the front office to sign in and obtain a visitors pass.

This is a building security precaution, as well as signing in at your child's preschool room. We love to have parents volunteer within the classroom setting. Please see the volunteer policy that stipulates the requirements for doing so. We do however, reserve the right to grant access to our preschool program. Additionally, due to licensing, we are not able to have siblings join in these visits.

P. Calling on the Phone

Please feel free to contact the preschool office at any time-#303-679-4431 Ext 5717. If you receive the recording, leave a message and we will contact you ASAP. If it is an emergency, please call the Carlson front office staff at #303-679-4431.

Q. Religious and Cultural Practices

We respect the religious practices and cultural values of our families. No child will be required to participate in activities they are not comfortable with. Additional activities will always be provided. Due to the fact that our curriculum comes from the children's interests, there may be a reflection of other cultures and religious celebrations in the room. This is in no way a reflection of direct teaching practices but only a reflection of our community.

R. Dual Language Learners E.

We respect that some of our children and families may speak a different home language than English. Please note that all material is also available in Spanish as well as English. Our developmental assessment is designed to accommodate this difference as well. While we do not have an ESL specialist within our district, we have the resources to translate in both English and Spanish verbally as well.

S. Inclement Weather E.

When the weather is so severe that the school will need to be closed you can find out by listening to the morning TV news or tuning your radio to KHOW AM 630, KYGO FM 98.5/AM 950, or KOA AM850. If school is canceled after it starts students will remain under the teacher's supervision until parents can come to get them. It is our strong desire to take children outside daily. If we feel it's either too hot or too cold for the child's comfort level, we will limit the duration of time we remain outdoors.



T. Clothing and labeling E.

Children should dress in washable sturdy clothing. We engage in a number of messy activities that despite smocks can get clothes dirty. We do not want to inhibit their exploration, so we ask that you send them in clothes that they can play in without the worry of getting dirty. It is a good idea for all children to come with a change of clothes, including socks and underwear.

Sturdy shoes are a must. Tennis shoes are the best, but because of our climate, boots must also accompany the children when necessary. Slick dress up shoes and cowboy boots can be very dangerous on the playground especially if there is the possibility of ice. We understand that these are usually the children's favorite to wear but please check the activities planned for the day as well as the weather before you get to school. It might also be a good idea to send an extra pair of shoes on that day.

Remember that the weather here in Colorado can change quickly so send your child prepared in the winter months with boots, gloves, hat and coat. If you cannot afford such items please let us know, and we can get them for you (please label all items in non-washable marker).

U. Personal Possessions

Sometimes children feel the need to bring in special toys or something special to share. We encourage children to share their discoveries with their classmates, therefore it is okay for them to bring them to school. We discuss and make agreements with the children at the beginning of the year to help them work together on this issue. When a special item causes problems that cannot be solved we may ask the child to put the item in their cubby. Please do not send toys to school with your child.

Another problem is losing these items or another child may want to take them home. Teachers cannot be responsible for keeping track of these items though they do their best. We encourage children to keep them in their cubbies so that they can be found later. If the item you are sending with your child is important to you, you may want to set your own guidelines and come in to search for it if it is lost. Most items show up eventually.



V. Cubbies

Each child will be assigned a cubby to keep belongings in, with space for hanging a coat and backpack.

W. Birthdays

Since celebrating a birthday can be a cultural and religious ceremony, we will not directly include birthdays as a part of the curriculum unless requested by families.

X. Field Trips and Outing H.

We have included a walking field trip permission slip in the registration packet. Typically our walking trips will be in close proximity to the school. Some locations that we frequently explore are the Library, the Train, the Water Wheel, and the Waterfall located in the center of town, the Forest Service trails, and surrounding neighborhoods. We will let you know when these trips are scheduled and will leave an attendance sheet as well as the location at the Carlson front office. Please keep in mind that on occasion, our field trips may be spontaneous as they are based on the interest and direction of our children's learning interests. We encourage parents to join us on these trips and welcome the help. These are wonderful opportunities to be part of your child's education. Due to licensing requirements, we may not bring along siblings.

Y. Safety procedures

We will never leave the school grounds without a minimum of 2 adults per 10 children. For longer field trips we request ratios much lower depending on the destination. We leave an accurate itinerary and list of children present at the school even when going out front. Permission slips including emergency information for each child are located with the accompanying teacher.

Z. Nap Time H.

We provide a nap or rest time for all full-time children. Some children may sleep and others may only rest. We accommodate each child's specific sleep needs. Dim lights and calming music is played at this time for a peaceful atmosphere. Please

send a blanket and snuggle item from home (this helps your child to transition easier). This is an important time in the day for your child to have some “quiet time” in order to enable a better learning experience. Please keep in mind that children are not required to sleep but to rest quietly for the duration of the time. Quiet toys and books are also provided at this time depending on need. All mats are placed three feet apart from the nearest child. Individual containers are provided to each child to keep their belongings in for sanitary reasons. All bedding is washed once a week within the school building.



AA. Lunch and Snacks

Lunch is served at 11:10 am each morning. You may send students with their lunch or students may participate in the lunch program **for \$3.25**. Reduced rates and free lunches are available if you are income-eligible. These meals follow the federal guidelines that provide nutritious and well-balanced meals. There is a limited choice so if your child has a special diet we encourage you to provide your child’s lunch or speak with your child’s teacher to ensure your child’s health and well-being. If you send lunch to school with your child, please ensure that it contains a serving of protein and have a limited amount of sugar.

AB. Snacks

Are provided in the morning and afternoon each day. **There is a \$200.00 non-refundable registration fee that is used to defer the cost of daily snacks for each child.** Please note that we are unable to process your registration until this fee is paid.

AC. Health

You are the best judge of your child’s health and we trust you not to bring a sick child to school. However, if the teaching staff notices something not evident when you drop off your child, we will call you and expect that you will come to get your child ASAP. The following criteria will help you determine your child’s health.

- ❖ Fever of 99.5 degrees or more within the last 24 hours
- ❖ Inflammation, discharge or excessive redness of eyes
- ❖ Vomiting within the last 24 hours
- ❖ More than one incident of diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- ❖ Communicable disease

- ◇ Unknown rash
- ◇ Discharge from the nose that is green, yellow, or continual

When and if your child displays any of these symptoms please keep them home until he/she has been free of symptoms for 24 hours. This is to allow your child ample time to recover and stop the spread of illness to other children. Any of these symptoms can be excused with a note from a physician.

Covid protocols will be adapted as need be and situations change.

It is your responsibility to notify the center if your child has a communicable disease such as measles, mumps, chickenpox, head lice, etc. A child may be readmitted by a physician's signature or by waiting for the incubation period of the disease specified by the Department of Health and Social Services. On occasion, if a health concern persists, the Early Childhood Director may request that a physician's notice is required prior to the child returning to the program.

AD. Hand washing

Frequent hand washing with soap and running water is necessary to prevent the spread of disease. **Children will be encouraged to wash frequently but especially upon arrival at school,** before and after eating, water play, after handling animals, toileting, coughing, and wiping noses. There is a specific hand-washing procedure that is required by licensing that will be used throughout the day.



AE. Toileting Procedures

Our bathrooms are planned and built for children to be successful using them. They are available at any time the children need to use them. We will be sure that they wash their hands when they are done. We supervise the bathrooms to ensure that only one child is in the bathroom at a time unless the door is open and the children are just washing their hands.

AF. Toilet Training

Children in our program must be toilet trained, though there is the occasional accident and special needs. We have a designated space and provide disinfectant and plastic gloves, but you will need to provide all other materials; including a change of clothes, diapers, wipes, and a plastic bag. We will send all the soiled clothes home for you to wash. Children will be expected to wash up thoroughly after each change under the supervision of an adult. Please send a change of clothing with your child to keep in their cubby for possible future use.

AG. Cleaning of Equipment

All toys are cleaned on a weekly schedule or daily (if required) with a bleach solution as stipulated by the local Health Department. Furniture and equipment are cleaned with soap and water on a weekly basis as well. Tables are washed/rinsed and sanitized with a bleach solution before every meal and/or snack is served. This is a 3-step process and is required by licensing and is best practice for the health of your child.

AH. Injuries at the School

All staff are trained in First Aid and CPR and are informed of signs of communicable disease and other illnesses. Minor injuries will be treated with soap and water, ice, and band-aids. Should there be a serious accident, parents, guardians or other emergency contacts listed on the emergency card will be notified. If we are unable to reach someone, we will call the physician you have listed to determine the need for transportation to the hospital by ambulance. If the emergency is urgent, we will call the ambulance first.

AI. IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- ✧ It is your responsibility to inform us in writing of allergies, dietary restrictions, chronic illness or disabling conditions your child may have so that we can protect your child from situations that may cause him/her harm, and make informed decisions in the event of an accident or display of the effects of the condition.
- ✧ We need to be informed and familiar with steps to follow for allergies or conditions that need medical treatments.
- ✧ Provide emergency information and keep your contact numbers current so we can reach you in case of an accident.
- ✧ **Be sure your child is current with physicals and immunizations. Children will not be enrolled without them.**

AJ. Medications R.

In general we feel that a child on medication needs to be at home. However, some medication must be given every day or for longer periods. **These medications can only be given out when we have authorization signed by a physician.** The authorization needs to include the name of the medication, dosage, and instructions for administration. The medication needs to be in the original container with the child's name on it and a list of precautions and side effects needs to accompany it. This applies to over-the-counter drugs as well. There are special forms to be completed by the physician, parent, and staff who administer the medication.

AK. Emergency Procedures H.

We have regular fire and disaster drills at school. We practice building exits and lockdown procedures so that the children will not be frightened in the event of an accident. The children are taught to listen to the teachers in case of emergency. We assemble and count everyone, give aid and comfort as needed. If necessary, we will stay with your child/children until someone you have listed on the emergency card picks him or her up.

Safety Procedures H.

- ◇ Persons not identified in the center shall be asked their purpose and be directed immediately to the main office for a visitor's permit. The director will be alerted of any problems on the premises, including the parking lot.
- ◇ Teachers are responsible for identifying and documenting procedures (i.e. keeping headcounts) for transitions in and out of the room, playground, field trips, and emergencies.
- ◇ No child will be left alone for any reason. All rooms will be under constant supervision.
- ◇ Volunteers, parents, student teachers are not considered staff and do not count toward ratios. Children will not be left alone with them.
- ◇ **Required ratios are 8 children to 1 teacher.** Due to the nature of our program, this is our required ratio. Each teacher is responsible to ensure these requirements are met. The playground is considered a part of the classroom. All areas of the playground being used will have constant supervision by the staff.

AL. Discipline Policy

Our philosophy on behavior problems is as follows: children are not misbehaving but most of the problems arise from lack of knowledge. Some behaviors are learned, or develop patterns from needs that are not getting met, that cause unusual frustration. We label all these behaviors as mistaken behaviors. It is for

this reason that our program will neither suspend nor expel a student enrolled in our program for any reason.



We have clear expectations for classroom behaviors concerning safety and respect but understand that children will probably need reminders to be able to work within the system. We deal with each situation as they occur with problem-solving and conflict resolution techniques. We see these situations as a learning opportunity where we can support children to come up with their own answers, using words and express feelings, following through with ideas to relieve the problem and ensure safety. We encourage positive behavior as part of the program.

We also structure the environment to alleviate most problems so the children experience mostly success in their everyday interactions thus eliminating problems before they occur. Our curriculum is developmentally appropriate and expectations are within the children's abilities, thus ensuring a positive self-image.

Most problems that develop are dealt with quickly and everyone leaves happy. Our approach to guidance includes encouraging the children to work it out between themselves with teacher support. Sometimes mistaken behavior has to do with hunger, fatigue, or environmental conditions which we look at if the behaviors are repeated often. If the situation is not or cannot be resolved, we suggest other activities. If the behavior continues we will command a change in the situation, for instance; if a child continues to throw sand after the first two approaches they will be asked to leave the sand table and given a choice of other activities. The teacher will ensure that the conditions are followed through. If behaviors persist we will contact the parent and we will discuss other alternatives.

AM. Tooth Brushing Policy

Tooth brushing plays an important role in the prevention of tooth decay, and can help ensure the overall quality of health for all children. Studies have shown that brushing once a day in the Preschool classroom, and using fluoride toothpaste will prevent cavities. For this reason, toothbrushing is a part of our daily routine. All children brush their teeth with fluoride toothpaste for 2 minutes, followed by minimal or no rinsing. The children do not eat or drink anything for 30 minutes following this procedure. It's best that children also brush their teeth every night at home as well and again in the morning prior to school. We will have a visit in

January from the Tooth Fairy to further instill best practices in your child's dental practices. Free dental screenings are also offered at this time.

AN. Kindergarten Transition Policy

Your child will be developmentally assessed using Teaching Strategies GOLD throughout the school year. Specific requirements and readiness for transition will be given at Parent Teacher conferences or at a prearranged alternative time. Children are split into 2 groups as they transition to the Kindergarten classroom. Each class will visit both rooms prior to the end of the school year. This will allow for the opportunity to meet the teacher, explore the classroom, and read a story with the existing Kindergarten students. They will then be "buddied" up for further exploration of the classroom. Parents are also permitted to request specific Kindergarten teachers via written request to the school building Principal. Parents may also set a time with the Kindergarten teacher to visit (based on the availability of the K teacher). We will host an onsite visit during the month of March for families to visit individual classrooms to observe what is being taught and what the routine looks like. It's our goal to not only have children comfortable for the transition but also for the parents. We know that this is a big step and a milestone in your child's life. Supplementary transition information will also be directly given to families



Please sign below that you have received and read the 2022-2023 Carlson Early Childhood Handbook and return it to the Preschool Director or your child's Teacher.

Student's Name: _____ Class: (Please circle) M-H M&W or T&H

Parent Guardian Signature: _____

Parent Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____



