**Imagination Station Preschool Parent Handbook**

1. **Introduction**

Dear Families,

Welcome to Imagination Station Preschool! We are thrilled you have chosen ISPS for your child’s preschool education. This parent handbook will serve to communicate our policies and procedures as well as our goals for the upcoming school year. It is very important to me to build a collaborative and trusting relationship with families. Please do not hesitate to contact the director of the program in the event you need more information regarding our policies, procedures, and daily operations. We look forward to providing your child with an exceptional preschool learning experience!

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**2. Fundamentals of Learning Philosophy at Imagination Station Preschool**

**A. Mission Statement**

The mission of Imagination Station Preschool (ISPS) is to inspire children to become life-long learners, problem solvers, creative thinkers, and global citizens through a culturally competent child-centered teaching and learning philosophy.

**B. Vision**

The vision of ISPS is to strive to foster the cognitive, creative, social, emotional, and physical growth and development of children and to provide an exceptional early childhood education to children throughout the community.

**C. Core Values**

1. ***Individuality:*** We recognize the uniqueness of each individual and strive to cultivate the special talents that lie within each child. We highly value the diversity that each child brings to the classroom and recognize it as an educational opportunity by teaching the concept that all people are different and special, and that this uniqueness comes from their various backgrounds, families, cultures, and past experiences. We understand that we are a community of children, parents, and families of various ethnicities, cultural beliefs, values, backgrounds, family structures, abilities, values, and learning styles. We strive to celebrate and learn about our commonalities and our differences.

2. ***Empowerment:*** We will work to empower children to learn how to make competent decisions in a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment. By encouraging independence and creative thinking and fostering a positive sense of self, children will be learning in an environment that will allow them to feel free to actively engage in the learning process and use their special talents to imagine, create, and explore the world around them. They will feel empowered to learn by experimentation, physical discovery of their environment, as well as observation.

3. ***Child-Focused Practice:*** The child's needs will the primary concern and focus within the teaching/learning environment. These needs include the physical, social, and emotional aspects of the child and will be continually assessed as to bring out the greatest potential in each child. Child-focused practice will help to produce an effective positive change in children when necessary. A child-focused practice will involve actively listening to each child, trying to understand the perspective of the child in a given situation, conveying respect, using developmentally age appropriate responses, setting realistic expectations for each child, demonstrating and teaching empathy, maintaining appropriate boundaries, accommodating individual differences, and promoting positive learning experiences where children are given the opportunity to be successful. These fundamental values within the child-focused teaching philosophy, will give children the greatest opportunity for success in a preschool environment.

4. ***Collaboration:*** A teamwork approach to learning will be utilized inside and outside of the classroom because it is beneficial in achieving positive learning outcomes for children, and it prepares children for future educational learning experiences in elementary education. Using this approach also impacts the motivation for learning opportunities in children as well as allowing them to take ownership of their personal learning experiences. Collaboration between staff and families is very important to ensure that the child receives the most expansive educational experience possible. This may involve extended learning opportunities in the home environment as well as experiential learning activities as a school community outside of the classroom.

5. ***Leadership:*** Obtaining leadership skills in early childhood education allows children to take control of the learning process and helps them to make competent decisions. When leadership skills are introduced and integrated into a curriculum, it instills confidence in children, allows children to become creative problem solvers, and helps them to work collaboratively with others. Leadership in the classroom has a positive influence on the social-emotional aspect of development in children. Leadership will be a concept focused on in the classroom when discussing social-emotional concepts and through assigning different classroom responsibilities in the preschool environment.

6. ***Deep Personal Connections:*** We strive to connect with every family and believe that a strong parent-teacher relationship is the foundation to a successful educational experience. We value a relationship with families where there is mutual trust and open communication. We understand that entrusting your children in our care is a very important decision, and we strive to connect with the whole family on a personal level.

**D. Achieving Our Mission**

Our mission will be accomplished by utilizing a play-based emergent learning curriculum that is child-directed and teacher guided. The classroom environment and curriculum will be inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach to learning. Learning will take place through several different modes such as creative arts, small group learning, individual learning, thematic learning, technological learning, and experiential learning. The Mission and vision will be achieved by educating children with the core values in mind as well as incorporating early childhood educational theorists and philosophies into practice. We will provide children with an exciting educational experience that will help to build a positive self-concept and allow them to take ownership of their personal learning experiences, thereby creating a love of learning throughout their lifetime.

**3 .Educational Objectives**

It is our overall educational goal at ISPS to provide children with an age appropriate education that will allow them to meet the following objectives by the end of the school year. There will be scheduled meetings with parents and teachers three times throughout the year as well as daily, weekly, and monthly communication through various different modes such as email, newsletters, blog posts, educational data platform, etc. If you find that those above mentioned communication strategies are not meeting the needs for your family or child, please contact us in order to identify your specific needs and provide you with the communication that will best meet your needs.

At ISPS, we also strive to obtain kindergarten preparedness for each child. Each child will be evaluated at the end of the year to determine if they are academically, socially, and emotionally ready for the challenges that kindergarten presents. Teachers will be in continual communication regarding these assessments and evaluations and parents should not have any surprises regarding their child's readiness for kindergarten. Teachers and parents will work in collaboration in order to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of each individual child at ISPS. We understand that each child develops at a different rate and do not expect every child to reach developmental milestones at the same time. Your child may not exhibit mastery in all the following educational goals by the end of the year. If that is the case, it does not necessarily indicate that your child is not prepared to enter kindergarten. In this circumstance, the teacher will work closely with the parents to implement a plan that is appropriate for that child. As the teacher will offer suggestions for each child in relation to kindergarten preparedness, we recognize that is the parents ultimate decision as to if they feel their child is ready to move on to early elementary education. We will do our best to help facilitate the goals of the parents in regards to moving on to their child’s next educational goal.

**Social/Emotional Goals**

* Respect for others
* Respect for shared spaces
* Ability to function as part of a group
* Appropriate social interaction with peers
* Social accountability and responsibility for actions
* The basic understanding of values such as empathy, trust, friendship, and giving
* Positive self-concept
* Sense of belonging
* Able to make decisions with help or independently
* Exhibiting independence and confidence
* Willingness to try new things
* Demonstrates a desire to learn
* Plays cooperatively
* Exhibits appropriate manners

**Behavioral Goals**

* Ability to listen attentively
* Ability to follow directions
* Ability to focus on a specific task
* Not disruptive to learning environment
* Exhibits self-control
* Ability to use toys and materials in an appropriate way

**Life Skill Goals**

* Ability to master various self-help skills such as dressing and taking care of personal/private needs
* Ability to clean up after activities and play
* Ability to express feelings, emotions, needs and wants through language

**Language Art Goals**

* Letter recognition
* Phonemic awareness: identification and separation of different sounds in words
* Letter/sound correspondence(phonics)
* concepts of print and books
* Increasing oral comprehension skills and vocabulary knowledge (listening and speaking (receptive and expressive language acquisition)
* Working toward the emergent reading level (decodable books)
* Name recognition and writing
* Writing: correct letter formation of uppercase and lowercase letters

**Gross Motor and Fine Motor Development**

* Ability to use large muscles for gross motor activities such as running, jumping, skipping, balancing, climbing, etc.
* Ability to use fingers and hands for fine motor activities such as grasping a pencil, writing, lacing, stringing, etc.

**Numeracy and Early Math Concepts and Skills**

* Recognize and count to 100
* Counting by 1's, 5's, and 10's
* Recognizing shapes, colors, and patterns
* Increased ability to count, sort, classify, and match

**4. Enrollment Procedures**

If your family is interested in enrolling your child/children into the ISPS preschool program, please contact ISPS via email or phone to schedule an appointment for an interview with you and your child. This provides families with valuable information about the teaching philosophy, daily structure, and routine at ISPS and it also provides ISPS with information about how your family functions and what specific needs your child or children may have for a preschool program. A pre-registration form will also need to be completed prior to the school interview in order to have baseline information about your family. This is required by ISPS because it is an in-home child care business and safety is extremely important to us.

Once the interview is conducted, you will be contacted about further enrollment procedures and will be given an enrollment packet to complete. An enrollment application as well as other state required forms will need to be completed prior to the first day of school. A general health appraisal form and immunization form will need to be completed and signed by the child's physician. The health appraisal form and updated immunization forms must be completed and on file by the first day of school. Immunizations must be up to date in order to attend ISPS. ***ISPS will not accept children for enrollment into our program who are not immunized or who do not have immunizations up-to-date.*** As a board certified family nurse practitioner, I understand the importance of childhood immunizations and refuse to put children attending ISPS at risk of developing preventable and potentially life-threatening diseases. Please contact ISPS directly if you have any questions about the immunization policy.

In addition to completion of forms for enrollment, there will be a **$100 non-refundable registration fee to secure admission into the program.** **Any child with incomplete enrollment forms will not be permitted to attend school until their file is complete.** This policy reflects state inspection standards; therefore, there will be no exceptions.

**5. Enrollment, Tuition & Payment**

ISPS offers half-day and full day program options for the 2018/2019 school year. The maximum capacity for the class is six children. **The half day program will be from 8:30am-12:30pm, Monday through Friday. The full day program will be from 8:30am-2:30pm Monday-Thursday and Friday 8:30am-12:30pm.**

**Preschool Program**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Enrollment Options | Tuition |
| Half Day Program |  |
| Monday-Friday: 8:30am-12:30pm | **$900.00 monthly** |
| Monday, Wednesday, & Friday: 8:30am-12:30pm | **$650.00 monthly** |
| Tuesday/Thursday: 8:30am-12:30pm | **$525.00 monthly** |
| Full Day Program |  |
| Monday-Thursday: 8:30am-2:30pm & Friday 8:30am-12:30pm | **$1100.00 monthly** |
| Monday, Wednesday: 8:30am-2:30pm & Friday 8:30am-12:30pm | **$760.00 monthly** |
| Tuesday/Thursday: 8:30am-2:30pm | **$650.00 monthly** |

**In order to secure a space for enrollment, the first month and last month of tuition will be paid at the time of enrollment.** Tuition payments thereafter will be due on the first day of each month starting in October. The last month of tuition payment is April as the month of May was paid at the time of enrollment. Tuition and registration fees can be paid by check and made out to Imagination Station Preschool. Tuition may also be paid via the Zelle money transfer system through online banking. The contact information for a Zelle transfer is the mobile number, 847.707.4011. **Late tuition payments will be assessed with a $25 non-refundable fee. Please contact the director if ISPS if there is a problem making tuition payments on time. ISPS reserves the right to terminate enrolled families that are consistently late with tuition payments.** Tuition payment receipts will be emailed to families no later than 1 week after tuition is paid. Please keep these receipts for your payment and tax records. **All tuition payments, enrollment fees, and registration fees are non-refundable.**

Tuition for the half day program includes curriculum, teaching instruction, classroom supplies, etc. **There will be a one-time registration and technology fee of $100 that is due at the time of registration.** This fee will be for all programs and includes school and home access to a preschool educational website. There will be 2-3 field trips included in tuition. Additional field trips planned throughout the year will be at an additional cost to the family. The associated fees for the field trips are TBD and will be collected prior to each field trip. There will be a mother's breakfast near Mother’s Day and a graduation celebration at the end of the year that will be included in tuition.

**Fees:** $100 registration & technology, and celebration fee

**6. Snack Program**

Families have two options for snacks. ISPS requires families to pack one healthy snack for the half day program and two healthy snacks for the full day program. ISPS must meet the requirements for the meal standards of the child and adult care food program (CACFP) implemented through the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. ISPS offers a snack program for families who prefer ISPS to provide snacks to their children. Snacks will include fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, and/or grains. The snack program at ISPS will not include foods such as juice, flavored milk, yogurt with high sugar content, processed meats and cheeses, or sweets such as cookies, cakes, candy, etc. The pricing for the snack program is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Snack Program | Cost |
| Half Day Program |  |
| Monday-Friday: 8:30am-12:30pm | **$80.00 monthly** |
| Monday, Wednesday, & Friday: 8:30am-12:30pm | **$50.00 monthly** |
| Tuesday/Thursday: 8:30am-12:30pm | **$40.00 monthly** |
| Full Day Program |  |
| Monday-Friday: 8:30am-2:30pm | **$120.00 monthly** |
| Monday, Wednesday, & Friday: 8:30am-2:30pm | **$75.00 monthly** |
| Tuesday/Thursday: 8:30am-2:30pm | **$60.00 monthly** |

Payment for the snack program is due at the same time as tuition, the first day of each month starting in September.

**7. School Calendar & Closures**

ISPS will mostly follow the DPS school calendar. There may be additional days off that are not the same as DPS. The 2018-2019 school calendar will be available to parents in the enrollment packet as well as on the website for reference. Days off will include national holidays such as Thanksgiving Day, MLK Day, Presidents Day, and Memorial Day. Breaks will include fall break in October, Thanksgiving break in November, winter break in December and January, and Spring break in March. School will be closed three times during the school year for parent/teacher conferences and three times for professional teacher days as well.

ISPS will follow Denver Public Schools policies for closure due to inclement weather. If Denver Public Schools are closed or have a delayed start due to weather, ISPS will be closed or delayed as well. ISPS can also choose to close due to inclement weather even if DPS is in session. This will be decided on by the discretion of the owner and director of ISPS and families will be notified as soon as possible by email, phone, and/or text.

If there is an emergency for the director/teacher at Imagination Station Preschool, and the preschool would need to close early or not be in operation for the day, it is the parent's responsibility to find back up care for their children at home. If the director/teacher should have a situation where she cannot finish the school day, the substitute that would come and stay with the children would be Mark Frank. Mark would then contact the parents of the children that they would need to come pick up the children from school as he is not a licensed teacher but a designated substitute in case of an emergency. Mark Frank has completed all health evaluations, fingerprinting, and background checks in association with the in-home child care licensing.

ISPS allows for up to five unplanned days off if needed due to illness of the teacher or illness of the teacher's children that would require the teacher to stay at home. Families will be notified as soon as possible if there will be a closure to due illness of the teacher or teacher's family members. Refunds for sick days at school will be at the discretion of the director of ISPS. Families will be notified of all communicable illnesses that have been present in the home from the director’s own children. This includes, but is not limited to such illnesses as bacterial pink eye, influenza type A and B, strep pharyngitis, lice, ringworm, hand-foot-and mouth disease, etc. School closure and tuition refunds will be at the discretion of the director of ISPS in these cases.

**8. Environment**

ISPS class time will be conducted in an in-home environment including the main level and basement level of the home. Children will not be permitted on the upper level of the home. The backyard and green space across from ISPS will be utilized for outside play as well as various parks within the Central Park North area of the Stapleton community. Playgrounds are generally 2-3 blocks from ISPS and utilizing any play area not in the direct vicinity of the home is considered a “walking field trip” per licensing standards. The Jet Stream pool and playground area will be the most frequently visited playground for outdoor play. This playground is 2 blocks from ISPS and contains an age-appropriate play structure and swings.

**9. Food Policies**

A nutritious snack will be provided by ISPS every morning. A monthly snack schedule will be available to parents on the website. Please send your child with his/her own healthy snack if the snack option for a specific day will not fit your needs. A microwave will be available to warm up foods for lunches if necessary. Please provide your children with nutritious lunches and drinks. ISPS will accommodate children with food allergies. Foods that will not be permitted at ISPS for snack and lunch will be based on the children that are enrolled and what if any food allergies they have. Any food allergy information will be provided to parents through email or direct verbal communication at the beginning of the school year and when new children are enrolled. Extra snacks will be provided to children who do not have enough food for snacks and lunch; however, this should only be occurring on an infrequent basis. It is the responsibility of parents to pack enough nutritious food for the school day. Parents will be asked to provide more food if their children are requiring additional food throughout the school day. If steps are not taken to provide additional foods, families will be charged for the snack program. At ISPS, we are teaching children healthy eating habits; therefore, we require that parents do not pack treats in their children’s lunches. Treats can be sent for birthday celebrations at school if parents wish.

If the child is transitioning from breast feeding, they will be provided a bottle for feeding purposes and if they are transitioning from a bottle to cup, they will be provided with a cup to drink from while at preschool. Any food transitioning needs for each child will be identified, discussed with parents, and the preschool will provide parents with the necessary supplies to transition their child.

Please provide your children with a healthy breakfast in the morning prior to coming to school. Children should be ready to engage in learning activities upon arriving to school and there will not be additional time permitted for breakfast at school There will be scheduled times throughout to the day for snacks. Children will not be permitted to eat food at times other than designated snack and lunch times unless there is a medical issue present. Please contact the director of the school if your child has difficulty eating breakfast prior to school or participating in scheduled snack times.

**10. Hand Washing Policies**

Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to prevent illnesses. Children will be required to wash their hands upon arrival to school, after using the bathroom, and before snacks and lunch. They will also need to wash hands after coming in from outside play. The proper way to wash hands will be reviewed with children and a handout will be available for parents in the enrollment packet as well as on the website. Children may use hand sanitizer throughout the day, however; hand sanitizer may not be used in place of handwashing per licensing guidelines. Please review proper handwashing techniques with your children at home prior to coming to school. This will help decrease the spread of illness at school.

**11. Arrival and Dismissal Procedures**

Safety at ISPS is of the utmost importance. Below are the arrival and dismissal procedures to be followed by all parents/caregivers at ISPS.

The school day at ISPS will begin at 8:30am. Doors will open no earlier than 8:25am. Parents/caregivers must walk the child into school each day. Please use the driveway or street for parking your vehicles. Upon arrival, please use the sign in/out form located on the main level of the preschool to sign your child in for the school day. Please put any belongings including lunches, clothes, snacks, etc. in the appropriate space. **Each parent/caregiver is required to sign their child in and out on the appropriate form each day.** Please contact the school by email or phone if your child will be late or absent for the day. We also ask that children wash their hands every morning upon entering ISPS. Parents may need to help their children wash their hands during arrival to school. After 8:45am, the front door will be closed and locked for the remainder of the day to ensure safety of the children while at school.

The School day will end promptly at 2:30pm. After 2:45, parents who have not yet picked up their child will be considered late and will incur a $5 late fee for every additional 5 minutes they are late. ISPS will attempt to contact late parents via telephone. If there is a reason you will be late to pick up your child, please communicate that to ISPS either by email or phone. You child must be signed out by an authorized person on the appropriate form each day. This is extremely important as ISPS needs to ensure the safety of each child and needs to maintain arrival/departure records per licensing guidelines.

If a child is present after closure of the school day, activities and snacks will be provided for that child during the time he/she remains at the facility.

**12. Record Keeping**

State licensure requires that ISPS keeps all enrollment records as a hard copy in the home. Each child will have their own file where records pertaining to school, family, and education will be kept. These records include but are not limited to enrollment information, pertinent medical information, educational assessments, incident or injury reports, and parent-teacher conference information. All records will be kept strictly confidential and will only be viewed by the owner and director of ISPS.

To update records, please contact Jennifer Frank, owner/director. The necessary forms will be provided to you either in physical form or will be available for download on the ISPS website. Please make sure forms are updated on a as-needed basis.

**13. Authorized Pick-up**

It is policy at ISPS, that children will only be released to adults authorized to pick them up. This authorization is done by completing the "authorization for pick-up" form in the enrollment packet. A child will not be released to anyone who is not listed on that form. Parents may make changes to the authorization form at any time during the school year**. The process for making changes to the authorization form is as follows:**

* Parents will need to email or hand in a written statement of authorization to the director of ISPS.
* This new written authorization must include the new person's name, address, phone number, relation to the child, and the signature of the legal guardian.
* The new authorized person will need to show photo identification upon pick up of the child.

**14. Visitors**

ISPS welcomes family members and friends as visitors during the school day. Any visitor to ISPS will need to sign in on the appropriate visitor form, provide photo identification and wear a name tag. Upon leaving, the visitor must sign out on the form provided as well.

**15. Transportation**

Imagination Station Preschool will utilize transportation for field trips while at school. The vehicle that will be transporting students is a mini-van with capacity to hold 7 people with 5 children in the back. Children will be required to have a booster seat or car seat and wear car restraints at all times. The vehicle is in good working condition and has maintenance checks as required by the manufacturer. If all children are not able to fit into the director’s car, caregiver volunteers will be asked to drive children to the field trip. Parents will be required to install car seats into the appropriate vehicle prior to the field trip and will be required to remove car seats from the vehicle after the field trip as well.

**16. Media Authorization**

Parents will be required to sign a media authorization form, authorizing their children to use media for learning. Such media that may be used includes television, video, music, and computer. Students will be able to use media for no longer than 30 minutes per preschool day. In general, media times are no more than 15 minutes per day and includes short learning videos, ABC mouse, and music and movement. Parents have the right to refuse media use during the preschool day.

**17. Personal Belongings and What to Bring to School**

All children will need to bring a backpack or tote bag each day to school. Each student will be provided with a hook that is available next to the front door of the home entrance. Please provide a full change of clothes for your child in the bag. This includes a shirt, pants, socks, and underwear. All children need to be fully potty trained in order to be enrolled in our preschool class. ISPS does not have a space where changing diapers is appropriate. Please be mindful of the season when providing extra clothing. Please provide a water bottle for your child as well. All items should be labeled with your child's name to avoid lost or misplaced items. Lunches/snacks/water bottles should be placed in the large basket set out by the hooks. Please send other items such as sunblock, lip balm, lotion, etc, if your child will need access to that at school. Please complete the “medication administration” form in the enrollment packet if you would like any of these items applied to your children during the school day.

We understand that starting at a new school can be stressful for your child. We will allow the children a loved blanket or stuffed animal to come with them to school for the first 2 weeks. After that, we prefer that toys and items of sentimental value stay home where they can be kept safe. Toys will often get lost and can make it difficult for other students in the classroom.

**18. Rest Time and Equipment**

Children will be provided with an area to rest if they are at the preschool for longer than 4 hours or if the child needs to rest due to illness or feeling tired. Children will be provided with a bed for resting or a cushioned nap mat. Pillows and blankets will also be provided for children needing or wishing to rest during the preschool day.

**19. Diapering and Toilet Training**

In order for your child to attend Imagination Station Preschool, they must be fully potty-trained. There will be no diapering area available at the school; therefore, there will be no diapering during the school day. Children are expected to be able to go to the bathroom with little assistance from the preschool teacher. This means they are able to wear under garments during the school day, can say when they need to go to the bathroom, and can take themselves to the bathroom with minimal assistance. We understand that accidents happen; therefore, this policy does not include the occasional accident or minimal assistance when going to the bathroom. We understand that learning to unzip, button, and fasten clothing is a developmental milestone for children, and we know that children will reach this at different ages. Please send your child in clothing that is easy to maneuver and/or that you do not mind getting dirty. We will be playing outside, in sand, and using various art materials during the school day. We prefer the kids to be in clothes that can get dirty. We require that you send your child with a full change of clothes in case of accidents during the school day.

**20. Smoking Policy**

The in-home environment of Imagination Station Preschool is a non-smoking household and in-home business. There will be no smoking permitted in the home or outside of the home. We will do our best to ensure that we protect your children from second hand smoke exposure when outside in public areas such as the library, playground, park or other area outside of the home environment. If there is second hand smoke in an area where the children are, we will do our best to remove the children from that area if possible.

**21. Birthday Policies**

At ISPS, we believe it is important to celebrate the birthdays of our students. Please feel free to bring in a small treat or healthy snack to share with the class for celebration. Please do not bring in any snacks or treats that contain tree nuts or peanuts and please check with the director prior to bringing something in to ensure food allergy safety for all children at school.

**22. Outdoor Play**

The students at ISPS will enjoy outside play on a daily basis. Please dress your children appropriately for the weather so that everyone is able to play outside comfortably. Layers of clothing are often a good idea. Please provide protective clothing for sun exposure during the school year. In Colorado, this could mean sun hats during the winter months as well. If there is now on the ground, please send your children with snow pants, boots, and winter jackets so that they do not get wet and cold if they play in the snow. The children will enjoy free play outside as well as programmed play outside. They will be able to use playground equipment as well as open green space. In case of bad weather that does not permit outside play, we will focus on gross motor skills in an indoor environment.

Please apply sunscreen to your child prior to school arrival every day during all seasons. Please supply sun hats and other protective sun wear during the warmer months in order to prevent sunburn. Sunscreen will be reapplied outside every two hours and as needed by the director/teacher of ISPS. Please do not send your child in flip flops or open toed shoes. They will need sturdy shoes to participate in gross motor skills outside. Please send your child with hats, gloves, snow pants, coats, boots, scarves, etc., during the winter months as we will still go outside if there is snow, and it is 30 degrees or higher in temperature. The weather conditions for outside play will be assessed on a daily basis to ensure the children have the safest outdoor play experience possible.

**23. Health and Safety**

The health and safety of our students is extremely important to us at ISPS. Staff and students attempt to minimize the spread of germs by washing hands several times throughout the day. In addition, toys, materials, and surfaces are sanitized on a daily and weekly basis. All poisonous substances and household cleaners are either out of reach of children or in a locked or inaccessible cabinet or drawer. All electrical outlets are capped and safety scissors are only used under supervision of a staff member. We utilize reasonable precautions to ensure a healthy and safe environment while at school. For that reason, there are instances when you should keep your children at home from school. A child needs to stay home from school when the following symptoms are present:

* A fever of 100 degrees or higher
* Sore throat
* rash
* stomach pain
* conjunctivitis (pink eye)
* vomiting and/or diarrhea
* colored nasal discharge

In general, when deciding if your child should stay home from school, the following are some guidelines:

1. Your child does not feel well enough to participate in usual activities. Signs would include your child is extremely tired, has unexplained irritability and/or persistent crying.
2. The child requires more care than the staff is able to provide without affecting the health and safety of the other children.
3. The illness is on the list of symptoms or illnesses for which exclusion is recommended.

If a child has stayed home from school due to any of these symptoms, they must be **free of the symptoms for at least 24 hours before returning to school**. We fully understand how difficult this can be for working parents, but the illness policy is important so that we minimize the spread of communicable diseases as much as we possibly can.

If any of the above symptoms appear in a child during school hours, the following procedures will be followed:

* When a child becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated from the other children, but remain under the supervision of a staff member. There is a bedroom with a bed on the basement level that the child will be able to use.
* Parents are notified that their child needs to be picked up from school as soon as possible.
* If we cannot reach parents in a reasonable time frame, emergency contacts will be notified.
* In case of a more serious injury or illness, 911 will be called for medical assistance and parents are notified. Emergency personnel determine if the child should be transported to the designated medical facility.

In order to limit exposure from the sun, sunscreen will be applied to students every two hours throughout the day while outside. Caregivers are requested to apply sunscreen prior to attending school and provide clothing that reduces sun exposure such as hats, long sleeve shirts, jackets, etc. The authorization to administer medication form must be completed and on file at the time of enrollment and prior to the first day of school. Infants less than six months old should be protected from sun exposure by providing extra clothing, hats, jackets etc. as it is not recommended to use sunscreen on an infant less than six months old by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). (See below recommendation by the AAP for infants and children).

* To prevent sunburn the AAP recommends that infants avoid sun exposure, and are dressed in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and brimmed hats that shade the neck to prevent sunburn. However, when adequate clothing and shade are not available, parents can apply a minimal amount of sunscreen with at least 15 SPF (sun protection factor) to small areas, such as the infant's face and the back of the hands. If an infant gets a sunburn, apply cool compresses to the affected area.
* For all other children: The first, and best, line of defense against harmful ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure is avoiding sun exposure by covering up. Stay in the shade whenever possible, and limit sun exposure during the peak intensity hours - between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
* Wear a hat with a three-inch brim or a bill facing forward, sunglasses (look for sunglasses that provide 97% -100% protection against both UVA and UVB rays), and clothing with a tight weave.
* On both sunny and cloudy days use a sunscreen with an SPF 15 or greater that protects against UVA and UVB rays.
* Be sure to apply enough sunscreen -- about one ounce per application for a young adult.
* Reapply sunscreen every two hours, and after swimming or sweating.
* Use extra caution near water and sand (and even snow!) as they reflect UV rays and may result in sunburn more quickly.

**24. Medication Administration**

For children who must receive medication at school, a strict procedure is followed.

* All medications need to be in the original container labeled with the physician's name and pharmacy name and number
* The Student Medication Request and Release Form needs to be completed with signatures from the parents and the child's physician. Please request this form from the director.
* Medications will be stored in a safe location with all the proper documentation.
* No medications can be kept in the child's backpack.
* We are unable to administer any medications without proper documentation per state licensing.
* Documentation from the child's physician is required for topical medications.
* If a child has a life threatening allergic reaction and an EPI pen is used, 911 will be called, the parents will be notified immediately and the child will be transported to the hospital. An incident report will be completed detailing the events.

**25. Injuries**

If an injury occurs at school, the child will be assessed and the parent/guardian will be notified as soon as the situation has been resolved. In case of minor injuries, the director and owner of ISPS is trained in first aid, CPR, and universal precautions. She has also held a license as a registered nurse since 2000 and has an advance practice nursing license as a family nurse practitioner since 2006. ISPS maintains a first aid kit on site at all times.

Head injuries of any kind, no matter how minor they may appear, will be reported to the parent immediately. The director will assess the child, call the parent, and the parent can then take the child to their physician if it is necessary.

With any type of injury during school hours, an incident report will be completed and the parent/guardian will be notified as soon as necessary. In the case of two children involved in an injury incident, an incident report will be completed for both children with the parties names kept confidential. Incident reports are kept confidential in the child’s file and can be accessed on an as needed basis by the caregiver. If a child receives medical attention for any injury obtained at school, an incident report will be completed through the department of early childhood education’s website.

In the event of a serious or major injury at school, the director will assess the situation, call 911 immediately, and notify the parents. In the event that the director cannot contact the parents, the emergency contact person will be contacted. **It is extremely important to keep all emergency contact information up to date in order to maintain the proper procedure in cases of accidents and injuries.**

**26. Other Emergencies**

Fire and tornado drills will be conducted on a monthly basis and written in a log book. Fire drills will include children exiting the home through the front door and going to a safe place with the director. The safe place will be the pocket park across from the preschool Tornado drills will consist of the children going to the safest place in the home with the director and assuming the tornado position. The fire department has stated that the safest place in the home in the case of a tornado would be the back wall behind the bar area on the basement level. An emergency and evacuation plan is required through state licensure and the fire department has approved ISPS for operation. ISPS has two operational fire extinguishers. One will be kept on the main level and one will be kept on the basement level. An emergency preparedness kit will be kept on the main level and the basement level at all times. This kit includes first aid items, batteries, flashlights, food, and water.

In the event that the home becomes an unsafe place and it is necessary to evacuate children and staff, the first place we would relocate to would be the park directly across the street. In the event that the park location was not safe, we would seek refuge at the home of a neighbor on Akron Street. In the event of a lockdown of the school/home, all students would be taken downstairs on the basement level and would be locked in the bathroom. If we were not able to relocate to the basement level, we would attempt to relocate to the top level of the home and go to the master bedroom closet. If we were unable to leave the main level, we would go to the laundry room, which is at the back of the home. The house has a security system that will be on during the day and turned off when we leave the home for outside play or field trips. While school is in session, all doors will be closed and locked with the security system on.

**27. Behavior Guidance and Discipline Policy**

It is our goal at ISPS to encourage children to find their interests and strengths and to aid in the development of a positive self-concept. We believe that children are always learning. They learn in many different ways and one of them is by example. We believe that showing the correct example will help children of this age to solve problems in a creative and functional way. When behavior issues arise, we strive to lead the child to a better choice by way of example, distraction, engagement in other activities, and by communicating with peers in a positive and functional way.

Behavior guidance and discipline in the classroom will be related to the age and developmental level of the child and will include positive instruction and reinforcement. We will work diligently to support positive behaviors in the classroom and will use age appropriate discipline techniques and consequences if behavior becomes an issue.

At ISPS, we will cultivate positive relationships between educators, students, and caregivers by using open and honest communication methods. We will use discipline methods that do not cause harm to a child’s self-concept and we will focus on demonstrating and explaining age-appropriate empathy and compassion. If behavior issues arise in the classroom, caregivers will be notified either through verbal or written communication. If the issue cannot be resolved through the initial method, the ISPS director/teacher will schedule an in person meeting with the caregivers in order to develop a behavior plan that all parties agree to. Teachers and caregivers will both be expected to implement the plan at home and in the classroom environment. All communication with students and caregivers will be of a respectful nature. Negative reinforcement will not be utilized in the early learning environment. Disrespectful communication will not be tolerated. If this occurs at any point, expulsion from the program can be decided at the discretion of the director of ISPS.

At ISPS, our goal is to implement strategies that promote and support positive behavior, positive peer interactions, and overall social and emotional competence in preschool-aged children. This will be accomplished by specifically defining appropriate behaviors in the classroom. Behavior expectations will be provided to both families and students. Students will be taught the behavior expectations in the classroom and it is expected that caregivers provide information and instruction regarding these behavior expectations at home as well in order to reinforce the information. Appropriate behavior will be supported through positive feedback in the classroom and during meetings with caregivers. Data will be used to guide the teacher/director for future supportive interventions regarding behavior.

An individualized positive behavior support (IPBS) system will be utilized at ISPS. This process includes five steps: 1) establishing a collaborative team and identifying goals, 2) gathering information (functional assessment), 3) developing hypotheses, 4) designing behavior support plans, and 5) implementing, monitoring, and refining behavior support plans. The collaborative team at ISPS will be the director and the caregivers of the student. Developing a hypothesis involves the educator making the best educated guess as to why a certain behavior is occurring after careful observation and assessment. Behavior support plans will be designed with prevention strategies and replacement skills in mind. Prevention strategies include a plan on how to prevent certain behaviors from occurring. For example, if we know a child behaves aggressively when he is around new adults, we would limit the number of new caregivers around him in order to decrease the amount of perceived stress. Replacement skills include teaching a new skill or way to manage a behavior issue. Instead of a child hitting if they cannot play with a toy someone else is using, we might encourage them to use words to tell the child that they would like to have the toy when they are finished. Both prevention strategies and replacement skills will be developmentally appropriate for the age and maturity level of the child. Teacher responses to the challenging behavior are also extremely important. This includes the interventions that the educator will put in place to ensure that the challenging behavior does not persist and that new skills are attained by the child.

We use Love and Logic techniques in the classroom in order to minimize harm to the student’s self-esteem and to encourage children to make good choices. In the case of a child being disruptive to the learning environment, the teacher may provide a quiet area for the child to think about their choices or a sensory stimulation activity that may allow the child to calm down if necessary. Once the child is ready, he or she can then choose to join the group and act as an active participant. The teacher may need to redirect the child to another activity or may need to spend time verbally explaining a situation. We do understand that this method of behavior guidance may not work for all children. In the case where a child is demonstrating challenging behaviors on a consistent basis, the director will work collaboratively with the parents in order to assess the frequency and exact nature of the behaviors, notify the parents of the information gathered, and work together to provide a behavior plan with clear short term and long term goals.

In cases where behavior is a constant disruption to the learning environment and where it is affecting the other students, parents will be notified within the proper modes of communication and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the behavior. A plan of action will be developed that both parents and teachers will be able to work on simultaneously in order to bring about a positive change in behavior. If the child does not respond positively to the action plan put in place by the teacher and parents after repeated attempts to encourage the improvement of behavior, they may be asked to withdrawal from ISPS. We make every effort that that does not need to happen, but if behavior cannot be managed and is affecting the learning experience of other children in a negative way, withdrawal may be necessary. All behavior incidents and examples will be documented by staff and kept in the student's file for review.

**28. Curriculum**

The curriculum used at ISPS is called Mother Goose Time Preschool Curriculum, and it will be utilized in a play-based, emergent learning environment. Mother Goose Time is a curriculum that has monthly thematic unit study with further break down into weekly thematic units. This will be the backbone to the curriculum at ISPS, however, ISPS will utilize other resources for curriculum such as Little Passports, Kidssoup, and A to Z learning, etc. Please contact ISPS if you would like more information about any of these curriculum programs. Information about the curriculum will also be available on the ISPS website.

In addition to the above resources, ISPS will use ABC Mouse and Epic Books as online curriculum resources. In order for children to use these resources both in the classroom and at home, the parents need to complete a media consent form at the time of enrollment. The class will also have a monthly book club that will allow the children to take home a book and participate in learning with their parents. This program is developed by the director of ISPS. All supplies will be provided by ISPS and sent home with the child on a monthly basis. Additional curriculum resources may be added by the director of ISPS at any time during the school year in order to provide the most comprehensive preschool educational environment.

**29. Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences will occur three times throughout the school year. Conferences are a way to keep parents informed of their children's progress throughout the year; however, they are not the only way teachers should be keeping parents aware of the progress of their child. This is also a way teachers are able to learn more about family dynamics and other commitments that students and families have besides preschool. Each child’s skills will be assessed at the beginning of the school year as well as before each conference as a way to demonstrate the progress the student is making. Assessments will be completed for children who are 4-5 years of age to determine kindergarten readiness. Three year old children will also have assessments, but these will not assess phonemic and phonological awareness as this is not developmentally appropriate.

**30. Volunteers**

ISPS welcomes parent or family volunteers to come into the classroom and share their wealth of knowledge with the students. Children feel very proud when their family members volunteer and are a part of their day at school. Please contact the director at ISPS if you are interested in volunteering in the classroom.

**31. Field Trips**

There will be two to three field trips throughout the school year that will be part of tuition. Field trips are meant to enhance and extend the material that is learned in the classroom. Transportation for field trips will be provided by ISPS, but we may ask for volunteers for field trips if needed. You are always welcome to volunteer to help for field trips. If extra field trips are scheduled, there may be an additional charge for each family to accommodate the trip. Information regarding field trips will be provided through email communication and newsletters.

There will be a monthly field trip scheduled to the Sam Gary Library in Stapleton. This will require transportation from the school to the library by the director of the program. Parents will be required to complete a field trip permission form prior to each field trip.

**32. Voluntary Withdrawal from School**

If a family needs or wants to withdrawal their child from school, ISPS asks that there be 1 month notice given and that tuition be paid through that month. We will not pro-rate tuition for voluntary withdrawal from the school.

**33. Americans with Disabilities Act**

[The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)](http://www.ada.gov/) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodation, communications, and governmental activities. The ADA also establishes requirements for telecommunications relay services.

The Department of Labor's [Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)](https://www.dol.gov/odep/) provides publications and other technical assistance on the basic requirements of the ADA. It does not enforce any part of the law.

In addition to the Department of Labor, four federal agencies enforce the ADA:

* The [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)](http://www.eeoc.gov/) enforces regulations covering employment.
* The [Department of Transportation](http://www.dot.gov/) enforces regulations governing transit.
* The [Federal Communications Commission (FCC)](http://www.fcc.gov/) enforces regulations covering telecommunication services.
* The [Department of Justice](http://www.usdoj.gov/) enforces regulations governing public accommodations and state and local government services.

Another federal agency, the [Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (ATBCB)](http://www.access-board.gov/), also known as the Access Board, issues guidelines to ensure that buildings, facilities, and transit vehicles are accessible and usable by people with disabilities.

Two agencies within the Department of Labor enforce portions of the ADA. The [Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP)](https://www.dol.gov/ofccp/) has coordinating authority under the employment-related provisions of the ADA. The [Civil Rights Center](https://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/) is responsible for enforcing Title II of the ADA as it applies to the labor- and workforce-related practices of state and local governments and other public entities. See the [Laws & Regulations](https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/disability/laws) subtopic for specific information on these provisions.

Imagination Station will provide services for special needs children in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**34. Child Welfare and Child Abuse Response**

call 1-844-CO-4-KIDS if you suspect child abuse or neglect is occurring. (1-844-264-5437)

**Call 911 IMMEDIATELY if it is an emergency or you are witnessing a child in a life-threatening situation.**

Colorado has one toll-free phone number to report child abuse and neglect 24/7, 365 days a year. All calls are confidential and will be routed to the county where a child resides.

Professionals such as teachers and medical personnel are required by law to report suspected child maltreatment. DHS is responsible for investigating alleged physical child abuse, alleged sexual child abuse, alleged child neglect and alleged institutional abuse. Families who live in Denver county may make requests for child welfare services by calling the statewide hotline, 1-844-CO-4-KIDS. Our hotline staff are available 24**-hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.**

**35. Filing a Complaint**

To file a complaint please contact the Colorado office of early childhood health and human services division.

**Report Child Abuse or Neglect**

Call 1-844-CO-4-KIDS (844-264-5437) to report child abuse or neglect

**File A Complaint with the Division of Early Care and Learning on any of the following types of facilities**

* **Child Care Centers**
* **Day Treatment Programs**
* **Family Child Care Homes**
1. Call 303-866-5958 Monday through Friday between 8 AM and 5 PM.
2. Complaints must be made by a witness or someone that has first-hand knowledge of the abuse.
3. It is Division policy not to accept anonymous complaints except for unlicensed provider complaints. Please be prepared to give your name, telephone number and mailing address to the complaint intake person. This information is required for the following reasons:
	* To call you back if the investigator needs more specific information about the complaint,
	* To call you back if the investigator received contradictory or unclear information during the complaint investigation, and
	* To call you to let you know the results of the investigation.
4. The Division will keep all information about parents and children in care confidential.

**Report Suspected Unlicensed Child Care**

Call 303-866-5958

**Report Alcohol or Drug Abuse**

Call 303-866-5958. If the provider is currently under the influence of alcohol or drugs and the provider’s ability to care for children is impaired, please follow these steps:

1. Contact the police (be sure to get the name of the contact person you speak to)
2. Contact the Division at 303-866-3755. Please be prepared to give the following information:
	* Your name, phone number and mailing address
	* The Licensee’s name, phone number and address
	* Where the incident occurred
	* Brief description about the incident/circumstances

**Complaints about Division of Early Care and Learning Staff**

* Call 303-866-5958; or
* Write out a description of the complaint.
	+ It is Division policy not to accept anonymous complaints. Please include your name, telephone number and mailing address. This information is required for the following reasons:1.  To call you back if the investigator needs more specific information about the complaint,2.  To call you back if the investigator received contradictory or unclear information during the complaint investigation, and3.  To call you to let you know the results of the investigation.
	+ Mail written complaints to

Colorado Department of Human Services

Division of Early Care and Learning

Attention: Complaint Intake

1575 Sherman Street, 1st Floor Denver, CO 80203

**36. Rules and Regulations of Child Care Centers**

Please visit **http://www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com/rulesandregulations** to obtain a copy of the rules and regulations for child care centers.

The secretary of state website is: **https://www.sos.state.co.us/**. Please visit this website for regulations on home businesses in the state of Colorado.

**37. Identification of Consumer Product Recalls**

Identification of consumer product recalls will be done on a periodic basis through the consumer product safety commission. The website for the consumer product safety commission is **http://www.cpsc.gov/**

Imagination Station Preschool intends to only use toys and equipment that complies with safety standards. If a toy or preschool equipment is unsafe, we will remove that from the school environment immediately. We will be checking on recalls on a monthly basis to determine if Imagination Station Preschool is using anything in the school environment that has been deemed unsafe and has been recalled. Please contact the director of ISPS if you have any concerns about safety or recalled products being used at the preschool.

**38. Response to Guardians/Parents under the Influence**

In the case of a parent/guardian/caregiver arriving to pick up a child and is under the influence of a controlled substance, the director/owner of ISPS will refuse to release the child to that parent/guardian/caregiver and immediately contact another individual previously designated as an authorized pick-up for that child. In the case that no one else is authorized to pick up the child, the owner/director of ISPS will contact the designated emergency contacts for that child. If there is no one authorized that is able to pick up the child, the owner/director of ISPS reserves the right to notify law enforcement of the issue for the safety of the child. Authorization for pick up must be completed at the time of enrollment and on file at ISPS prior to the first day of school.