



Parent Handbook

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Our staff is delighted and honored that your family will be a part of Peace Early Learning Center this year.

We are looking forward to seeing your child play and work independently and with other children. We are also very excited to share the love of Jesus with your child during our Jesus time and chapel, as well as throughout the school day.

Please read through this booklet and become familiar with our center's policies. If you have any questions, please ask your child's teacher or feel free to contact a director.

After you have finished reading this handbook, please check the appropriate box on your child's Information / Emergency Form that states you have read and will abide by all policies of Peace Early Learning Center. This form is part of the registration paperwork.

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1. Mission Statement

Peace Early Learning Center (ELC) is committed to partnering with families in building a firm foundation of faith in Jesus, a love for others and providing developmentally appropriate learning for the children we serve.

2. Program Philosophy

The staff at Peace ELC provides a safe learning environment where children will receive an outstanding education centered around Christian values. Our teachers strive to model Jesus' unconditional love and forgiveness for all children as they work with them each day.

Our program is designed to meet the developmental needs of children from ages one and walking to four-year-old pre-kindergarten. Our program provides experiences that enrich each child's spiritual, cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. The center's daily schedule allows each child to create, explore their environment, learn problem-solving, develop personal interaction skills, and learn concepts through hands-on experiences. Children will develop a positive self-concept through a balance of self-lead and teacher-directed activities. Opportunities for solitary play, as well as group activities are provided. Staff will serve as positive role models, and provide care that is supportive, nurturing, warm, and responsive to each child's individual needs. We respect families as the primary and most important providers of care and nurturing and believe parents and teachers are partners in the child's care and education.

3. Entrance Requirements and Nondiscrimination Policy

Admission at Peace Early Learning Center is a privilege. Before acceptance into the preschool, a tour is arranged with the child and parent(s). The parent(s) will then complete the enrollment application and pay the non-refundable registration fee to hold a spot. Parents are asked to provide copies of all previous academic records (i.e., assessments, report cards, and developmental tests) and assert the truthfulness and completeness of the application by signing it. Applicants are admitted based on classroom availability. The family will be notified by email of the child's acceptance if a spot is available, or they will have the option of being placed on a waitlist if the desired schedule or classroom is not available at that time. All registration forms are available on Brightwheel and need to be completed before the child can attend school. **The state of Colorado requires all paperwork to be submitted by the first day of school. Any child who is missing the required documents for enrollment will not be accepted until their file is complete.**

Peace Early Learning Center admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national/ethnic origin, or religion in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, athletics, or other school-administered programs.

4. Center Hours and Electronic Access

Our center's hours are 8:15 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The front doors will be open between 8:15 - 8:35 a.m. with the school day starting at 8:30 a.m. Class times run from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. or 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Aftercare is available from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Please plan to arrive no later than 8:30 a.m. for your child to participate in morning activities and play time and limit late arrivals as they can be disruptive to the class. If your child will be late, please inform their teacher via Brightwheel so we can plan for the school day accordingly.

Outside of the morning drop-off hours, our doors at Peace ELC remain locked throughout the day. Each family will be given an electronic access code to enter the building based on their schedule. If you need access at a time other than your code allows or if another individual needs access to the building, please call the director's office for admittance. If you are unable to reach the director, you may use the church entrance located on the east side of the building, Monday – Thursday. This door has a call button that is manned by the church office. Please help us keep your children and our staff safe by not allowing anyone else in the building when using your code. Each family should use their own code to enter the building.

Children may attend school two days (T/Th), three days (M/W/F) or five days per week.

Our school closely aligns with the Jeffco school calendar. An ELC school calendar is provided as a separate document and is also available on our website. Please refer to this calendar for scheduled days off and other important dates.

5. Ages of Children Served

We offer two toddler classes serving children 12-36 months old. Children in these classes can wear diapers or Velcro-sided pull-ups and may work on potty training during the year.

Children entering our 3-year-old class must be three years old by November 1. Children in this class should be fully potty trained or actively working towards being potty trained by the first few months of school. The students can wear Velcro-sided pull-ups if needed, but diapers are not allowed in this class.

Children entering our 4-year-old classes must be four years old by November 1. Children in these classes must be fully potty trained unless there is a developmental delay with documentation from a medical professional.

6. Communication and Brightwheel

Children are a special gift from God, and we desire to support families in the responsibility of bringing up their child to love God and realize His plans for them. We are honored when parents entrust their child's education to us at Peace. Being in close contact with the home is important, as children benefit from their parents and teachers working together.

Open communication is an important part of this relationship. We use Brightwheel for most of our communication between school and home. Please check your email, Brightwheel, and your child's backpack regularly for any important communications from school. Brightwheel is also the best way to send messages to teachers and staff at Peace. Messages sent to teachers through Brightwheel can be viewed by directors and staff members associated with the child's classroom but cannot be seen by other parents. Feel free to send an "Admin" message if you need to message a director with a private message that will not be viewed by other teachers or staff.

Please notify the center if:

- Your child will be absent -- please let us know the reason for the absence including any symptoms if your child is sick
- Your address or phone number changes
- There is any change on the authorized pick-up list
- There are significant changes at home
- Your child has a prolonged illness or will be away from school for an extended length of time
- You have any questions or concerns

Teachers and staff will share updates concerning your child on Brightwheel throughout the week. These updates will often include pictures and videos. The information on your child's feed can be viewed only by the parents who are signed into your child's account. Please respect other's privacy by not posting pictures or videos on the internet or social media that include children who are not your own without permission.

7. Staff

We select our staff carefully and adhere to Colorado's Rules and Regulations that govern Early Learning Centers. We want to provide our students with the best possible early education experience which stems from hiring dedicated and educated staff.

All staff members meet the required educational and experience qualifications for their positions. All staff members have been trained in emergency procedures and protocols to ensure the safety of all staff and students while at Peace ELC.

Our staff also participates in ongoing education each year in the area of Early Childhood Education and attends conferences and trainings throughout the year.

Most importantly, all staff members are Christians who know their Savior, Jesus Christ, and teach by example how to love others as Christ loves us.

8. Reporting Abuse or Neglect

Our entire staff are considered mandatory reporters and will notify Child Protection Services if there is any suspicion of abuse or neglect. Under the "Child Protection Act of 1987" (C.R.S. 19-3-301) in the Colorado Children's Code, our staff is required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Jefferson County Department of Social Services. Their phone number is 303-271-4357.

9. Drop Off Procedures

The State of Colorado requires that childcare centers document who drops off and picks up children on a daily basis. Children should be signed in and out each day. This can be done using the tablets on the tables past the bathrooms or by using the Brightwheel app on your own device by scanning one of the QR codes that can be found throughout the hallways. **A \$10 fee will be assessed each time a family fails to sign their child(ren) in or out.** Sign in and out records are considered legal documents and must clearly show who dropped off or picked up your child.

Children are to be escorted by a parent/caregiver to and from their classroom after the parent has checked in electronically and the child has used the bathroom and washed their hands. Please make sure your child and any siblings walk by your side in the building and do not run ahead. All children, including siblings, need to be under the supervision of their adult the entire time they are in the building until they are dropped off in their classroom or return with their adult to their car. Teachers are actively preparing for class prior to drop-off. Before leaving your child, please ensure their teacher is present and aware that your child has arrived.

10. Pick Up Procedures

Children need to be picked up no later than 12:30, 3:00, or 4:00 p.m. depending on their schedule. If a child is picked up late, a late fee will be charged. If you know you will be late, please send a message on Brightwheel or call the school with an arrival time. The message or phone call does not negate the late fee.

Children will only be released to custodial parents and legal guardians or persons listed as an authorized pick-up person by the parent or guardian on their Emergency Form or in Brightwheel. Parents/guardians are responsible for adding authorized pickups to Brightwheel and having each authorized pickup enroll in Brightwheel for individual check in/out codes.

Each parent/caregiver who drops off or picks up children should have their own Brightwheel code. All members of a family can share a door code, but each individual should use their own personal account and code to accurately document exactly who is picking up. If multiple adults will be picking up your child(ren), please talk to the director to set up Brightwheel accounts and codes for each of them. This includes friends and fellow parents. Also, if picking up children who are not your own, please make sure that any child you check out is available for you to do so on your account and use your own code, not their parent's code. The door code is a separate entity, and that code can be shared among family members. **A \$10 fee will be assessed each time an adult picks up a child and uses a code that is not assigned to them or the child.**

Teachers will request a picture ID if someone they do not know comes to pick up the child. Any restraining orders and custody papers must be on file in the school office. One-time authorization pick up requests may be made in writing or by sending a message in Brightwheel. If an unauthorized person attempts to have a child released to them, we will call the parent for authorization. If authorization is not given, we may notify the police.

Children are released to the appropriate adult at the end of the school day, and the building is checked and secured by staff. **Late pick up fees will be applied if the child is not picked up on time. The late pickup fee is \$15 per child for the first ten minutes and an additional \$2 per minute after, per child.** If a child is left at school after dismissal time and parents/emergency contacts cannot be reached, the appropriate authorities (Social Services, Police) may be contacted.

Please Note: After your students have been picked up for the day, please exit the building to create space in the hallway and classrooms so other parents can pick up their students. This also helps the students who are not leaving to resume their school day. Please make sure your child and any siblings walk by your side in the building and do not run ahead. We welcome parents and caregivers to visit outside in the courtyard while the children run in the grass, but children are not allowed to climb on the rocks by the fenced memorial garden or to play in the landscaping. If children need more room to move, the field across the parking lot is also available. Parents may not leave children, including siblings, unattended anywhere on the Peace campus.

11. Parking

Please be considerate of others. Our children are small and often difficult for drivers to see. Watch carefully and drive slowly in the parking lot and hold your child's hand when you are walking to and from your car. Please review safety information with your child regularly. When parking, please turn your engine off and do not leave any children unattended in a vehicle. It is also encouraged to lock your car and secure any belongings before exiting your vehicle. Only cars with handicap license plates or placards may use handicapped parking. If you need assistance, please talk to a director. Thank you for keeping our children safe!

12. Visitors

All visitors must report to the office when visiting the Early Learning Center. State regulations require that visitors sign in and state the purpose of the visit. Please arrange all classroom observations and visits through the administration. The visit must not interrupt the regularly scheduled educational program.

13. Tuition and Fees

Tuition payments are accepted from August to May of the current school year. Tuition is determined annually and then divided evenly between the ten months of the school year. Therefore, tuition remains the same each month regardless of breaks or other days off, whether scheduled or unscheduled. Tuition payments are due on the first of the month beginning with August 1st and ending May 1st. All tuition is to be paid through automatic withdrawal using Brightwheel. Tuition fees are available on a separate document or on our website. Parents/Guardians are liable for all tuition fees. Failure to pay tuition fees may result in terminating your child's enrollment in our center. Refunds are not given for absences, school breaks or unplanned days off (snow days, etc.).

ADDITIONAL FEES	FEE DESCRIPTION
Registration	A non-refundable fee of \$200 per applicant (\$300 per family) will be collected with enrollment paperwork. This fee ensures a child's spot in our program.
Family Discount	A 10% discount is given to the younger sibling's tuition. This discount only applies to tuition and does not apply to any other fees.
Late Pick Up	\$15 fee per child will be assessed if the child is picked up late, starting with the first minute after the child's designated pickup time, up to 10 minutes (12:31-12:41, 3:01-3:11, 4:01-4:11) and \$2 per minute thereafter. Pick up times are 12:30 p.m., 3:00 p.m. or 4:00 p.m.
Late Payment	A late fee of \$75.00 may be assessed to an account if the monthly payment is not received by the first of the month.
Dishonored Payments	A fee of \$45.00 will be assessed for all dishonored payments that are returned by the bank for any reason. All dishonored payments must be redeemed in the office by cash or money order.
Sign In/Out Fees	A \$10 fee will be assessed each time a family fails to sign their child(ren) in or out or if their child(ren) are signed out using a code not assigned to them or the individual signing them out.
Extra Supplies	Diapering needs: A \$10 fee per day will be assessed if supplies are not provided after parents are notified by the teacher that wipes or diapers are needed. Food needs: A \$10 fee per day will be assessed if a child does not bring a snack or lunch and the center provides food for them. If other supplies are needed, appropriate fees may be assessed.
Damage	If a child causes damage to a Peace building, school property or another person's property, the child's family will be responsible for the cost to repair the damage or to replace the item

14. Curriculum

Our program is designed to share the love of Jesus with with our students throughout the entire school day, as well as guide and nurture children in each of the aspects of early education. Children are taught Bible stories and lessons about themselves and the world around them in a way that is developmentally appropriate for their age level. Our goal as a Christian school is to teach our children to love Jesus, love themselves and love others.

Our program is designed to allow many opportunities to learn about the world around them in developmentally appropriate and intentionally prepared environments. These areas include:

- Classrooms
- Playgrounds
- Outdoor Spaces
- Ballroom (indoor play space)
- Chapel

The learning spaces will include a variety of materials including, but not limited to:

- Art Supplies
- Musical Instruments
- Books
- Dramatic Play Materials
- Blocks and Building Materials
- Sensory Tables
- Toys and Games
- Science Materials
- Climbing Structures

All curriculums are developmentally appropriate for each classroom. Each classroom uses a CPH (Concordia Publishing House) religion curriculum, One in Christ, as well as an age-appropriate creative curriculum map specifically designed for our school. Both meet the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines.

15. Sample Daily Schedule

8:15-8:40 Arrival/ Morning Activities

8:40 Morning Meeting

8:45 Jesus Time

9:00 Bathroom, Wash hands, Snack

9:30 Outside Time

10:15 Story/Circle Time

10:45 Small Group/Center Time

11:15 Clean-up

11:30 Bathroom, Wash Hands, Lunch

12:00 Outside Time (sunscreen applied)

12:30 Half-Day Dismissal/Bathroom Break

12:45 Rest time/Nap - quiet activities provided as children wake up

3:00 Full Day Dismissal/Aftercare Snack

3:30 Aftercare Outside Time (sunscreen applied)

4:00 Aftercare Dismissal

16. Chapel

Peace ELC holds short, age-appropriate chapel services in the main Peace sanctuary on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. Chapels are led by an ELC staff member, a Peace church staff member or a Peace Pastor, and students are often given the opportunity to help with the message. The chapel for each week includes a time of active musical worship and the message normally focuses on the Bible story of the week. We hold chapel twice a week so children with part-time schedules have a day they can attend. We welcome parents and other family members to join us for chapel. The classes take up the front quarter of the rows of pews, and families are free to sit behind the classes.

17. Parent Teacher Conferences and Assessments

Formal parent conferences with the classroom teacher will be scheduled twice during the school year, in fall and spring. Parents may request additional conferences at any time throughout the school year. Parents are also encouraged to speak with the staff about their child at drop off and pick up. If needed, a teacher may ask the director to attend a conference with parents.

The primary reason for assessing children is to help our educators understand each child's growth and development to help determine appropriate classroom curriculum and daily activities for the children. Assessments are also used to create appropriate learning goals, evaluate the effectiveness of a project or program, help manage various behaviors in the class, and to provide feedback to the parents. In addition, assessments can identify developmental challenges so the child can receive appropriate interventions as quickly as possible. Identification of developmental delays and intervention within the first five years is helpful to a child's development later in life.

18. Supervision

Children are supervised in the classroom or on the playground at all times by the teaching staff. Name-to-face attendance is taken throughout the day to account for each child's presence. A staff person will be in the room when the children arrive and remain until all children have been signed out. The teacher only leaves after a final check of the classroom and bathrooms. By state law, all children need to be signed in by a parent/guardian when they arrive and signed out by a parent/guardian when they leave. We use a digital check-in system, Brightwheel, to do this. Brightwheel is reviewed by each teacher for their classroom, as well as center-wide by the administration, throughout the day to make sure all children are accounted for, and at the end of the day to ensure that all children have been checked out.

In the unlikely event that a child cannot be located, the staff will first search the premises, and then they will contact the parents and the police for assistance in locating the child. If a child is left unsupervised by staff at any time, the school will report the incident to the appropriate channels as dictated by state licensing rules and regulations.

Every month, Peace Early Learning Center will participate in fire drills. The children will be escorted out of the building to the parking lot according to the emergency exit plans posted by each fire exit door. The children will also participate in tornado, lock-down, and other safety drills as mandated.

If a child arrives late and the class is away from the building on a field trip or other special activity, the child will be supervised in the office until either the class returns or the parent arrives to pick the child up. Children who are not picked up on time will continue to be supervised by their teacher or in the office until their adult comes to pick them up.

19. Absences

Regular attendance is encouraged so our students get the full benefit of our educational program and have a sense of routine. If your child will be absent from school, please report the absence to the center before the beginning of the school day by or by 9:00 a.m. The best way to do this is through a message on Brightwheel, and phone messages, emails, and Brightwheel messages may be left 24 hours a day. If the absence is due to illness, please disclose symptoms so we can track it on our Illness Surveillance Log per Health Department requirements.

If your child will be gone for a planned absence, we ask you to notify the classroom teacher and the administration ahead of time so that we may plan accordingly.

20. Technology

Screens in the classroom: Students ages two and above may watch videos from time to time that explain a concept or enhance the curriculum being taught in that classroom. Videos with music and movement may also be used on occasion. Videos and screens will not be used at mealtimes.

Special Movies: 'G' or 'PG' rated videos may be used on special occasions or to enhance the classroom experience. In the event a video is scheduled, parents will be given a permission slip to authorize their child(ren) to view the movie.

21. Withdrawal

Our school operates over a full 10-month school year, and therefore, disenrolling mid-year is highly discouraged, although we do understand that families may need to withdraw from school due to personal circumstances. Parents are asked to speak with the director and give at least **one month's notice** in writing that they will be withdrawing their child. Parents are liable for a full month's payment after notice of withdrawal, regardless of the last day of attendance. For families who pay annually for tuition, one month's notice is also required in writing. Refunds will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Children may also be removed from the program if payment is past due for more than 15 days or if payment is past due two consecutive months. Past-due accounts are subject to referral to a collection agency or legal action. Families are responsible for additional fees incurred by the school to collect delinquent payments.

22. Health Policies

Colorado state law requires that every child in attendance at Peace ELC have a current health appraisal signed by their doctor. The health appraisal is valid for six months for children less than two and one-half (2 ½) years, and for one year for children ages two and one-half (2 ½) years and older. The expiration date is determined by the date of the child's last doctor's check-up, not from the date of issue of the form.

Colorado state law also requires that every child in attendance at Peace Early Learning Center have a complete immunization record or valid exemption on file. The record can be obtained from the child's doctor and must be presented with other registration paperwork. All children in attendance are required to be up to date with their vaccines or have an exemption. Families who would like their children to be exempt from immunizations should follow the appropriate steps to obtain an exemption form for their child. Please check out this website for more information:

<https://cdphe.colorado.gov/exemptions-to-school-required-vaccines>. Exempted students may be subject to exclusion from school and quarantined in the event of an outbreak. These requirements

can change as mandated by the State of Colorado.

Please report all illnesses to the classroom teacher or school administration through Brightwheel, including symptoms and diagnoses, if any. Please keep your child home if they are too sick to participate in daily activities or needs medication such as cough syrup, acetaminophen, etc., during school hours. When a child is out of school with a prolonged illness, the teacher or administration should be notified daily of the child's absence, including symptoms. Upon returning to school, a physician's statement authorizing a child's return may be required. For the protection of all children, the teacher or director will have the right to decide whether a child should be allowed to attend if they do not appear well.

We will contact you if your child should become ill while at school. Please plan to pick up your child as soon as possible if you are notified that they are ill. If neither parent can be reached, we will call the people listed on the Emergency Form. The child may be removed from the other children until picked up, depending on the situation. If your child is sent home from school due to fever or illness, the child may return to school after 24 hours fever-free and symptom-free without the use of any medication.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME FROM SCHOOL

How sick is too sick to come to school? Please keep your child home if:

1. The child is at risk of infecting others with a contagious illness, either because of symptoms or recent close contact. Contagious diseases include strep, measles, whooping cough, chicken pox, covid, pneumonia, etc. Please be sure to alert the center immediately so precautions can be taken to protect others from the disease. We ask that you keep your child home until a doctor has advised that they may return to school. Please refer to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) website listed below.
2. The child does not feel well enough to take part in usual activities. For example, if a child is overly tired and fussy, will not stop crying, or needs more care than teachers and staff can give while still caring for the other children in their class, they should stay at home.
3. The child has a fever of 100.4 or higher. Children can return to school when they have been without a fever for at least 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medications.
4. The child has symptoms or an illness that is listed on the website below, and the website indicates that staying home is required.

To see the guidelines determined by the CDPHE indicating when children are too sick to attend school or childcare, please visit

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RcdCmU4SYXwmVhJrA3Pyk0gP0MTDCIkF/view> for the official *How Sick is Too Sick* policy. Your child's pediatrician is also an excellent resource for additional information on when your child can return to school or childcare after an illness.

23. Personal Belongings

Each child will have a cubby in their classroom and a hook in the hall for their personal items. A backpack large enough to carry their lunch, water bottle, folder and two changes of clothes is also needed. Please label all clothing and personal belongings with your child's name. If an item is lost, check the Lost and Found that is located next to the bench across the hall from the bathrooms. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity periodically.

Our center provides a variety of toys and activities, so please keep all other toys and activities at home unless being used for "show and tell" or another learning activity as requested by the teacher. If a toy or other personal item is brought to school for some reason, we require that it be taken home by the parent or remain in your child's backpack. Toy guns, weapons and pets are never allowed at the center. The center is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items.

Children may bring a pillow and a stuffed toy or "lovey" to sleep with during nap time. Toddlers are also welcome to use pacifiers during nap time. These items can be kept at school in the child's nap bin.

Children need to bring the following items to school each day:

- A backpack
- A water bottle labeled with the child's name
- Two weather-appropriate changes of clothes (to be kept at school or remain in the backpack for quick changes. Please replenish if soiled clothes have been sent home.)
- Snack(s) and lunch
- Folder (if given by the child's teacher)

Toddlers should have a separate school backpack and may not bring diaper bags due to potentially hazardous items left in the diaper bag from parent use. Toddler backpacks should only contain items for school use. All diapering supplies can be given directly to the teachers.

24. Use of Restroom Facilities

Our teachers provide the least intrusive assistance possible when assisting with toileting but are always available to give help when needed. Please help your child be successful by wearing clothes that they can handle by themselves and by practicing independence at home.

All students in the toddler classrooms can use diapers and Velcro-sided pull-ups. Students in the 3-year-old preschool classroom can use Velcro-sided pull-ups (if needed) if they are actively working towards being fully potty trained in the first months of the school year. Parents must supply all diapers, Velcro-sided pull-ups, wipes, and other items needed for diapering. If these are not provided, families will be assessed a supply fee of \$10 per day. Students in the four-year-old pre-kindergarten class must be fully potty trained (three weeks with no pull-ups or accidents).

25. Personal Hygiene

Children will wash their hands with soap under warm running water after using the restroom, before eating and often after playing outside. All children who are potty-trained should use the restroom and wash their hands before being dropped off in their classrooms. Even if your child does not use the bathroom or isn't potty-trained, they should wash their hands before class to minimize exposure to outside germs.

26. Clothing

Children should come to the center dressed appropriately for the activities that are planned for the day. Please aim to choose comfortable clothes that allow freedom of movement and are easy to manage when using the bathroom or having a diaper changed. Clothing should also be appropriate to the weather, including shorts when warm and jackets/coats when cold. If children are wearing dresses or skirts, please also wear shorts underneath. All removable clothing should be marked with the child's name.

Tennis shoes and socks are highly recommended for all children as they are the safest for running and playing and work well with the sand and rocks on the playgrounds. Children three and older are encouraged to have shoes that they can put on by themselves.

Please bring two additional complete changes of clothes in a zip-loc bag labeled with your child's name in case your child needs to change for any reason. When soiled clothes are sent home, please replenish the extra clothes. All belongings should be clearly marked with your child's name. These clothes will be used for those times when an accident with toileting occurs or when an activity requires a change - such as water play or art. Should a change of clothes be required, the staff will encourage the child to be as independent as possible to protect your child's right to privacy, but they will assist if the need arises.

27. Hot Weather

Children are required to bring a water bottle from home every day. This water bottle must be labeled with the child's first and last names per Health Department requirements. Water is made available in the classroom and outside. Sunscreen will be reapplied to students throughout the day to stay within the two-hour reapplication window per the sunscreen's instructions before playing outside. Children may play in our gross motor room indoors (ballroom) when the outside temperature is excessively hot.

28. School Closure

Peace Early Learning Center follows Jefferson County Public School closures due to inclement weather or other emergencies, but a decision to close may also be made separate from Jeffco's plan at the discretion of the director. The decision is based on the following: safety of staff and students, road conditions, future forecast (accumulation, size and duration of storm), and/or the area of Jefferson County likely to be affected. If other school districts are closed due to their technical difficulties (e.g. power outage), the director will decide if it makes sense for Peace ELC to remain open. We will notify parents via Brightwheel and will utilize channel 9News and Fox31 in the event of a school delay or closure. In the event school closes early during the school day, parents will be notified, and a staff person will remain in the room until all the children have been picked up and properly signed out. Please note that our classes officially start at 8:30 a.m. with doors opening at 8:15 a.m., and all delay times will be based off the 8:30 start time. For example, if there is a two-hour delay, classes will begin at 10:30 a.m. with doors opening at 10:15 a.m.

29. Transportation to and from School

Transportation to and from school is provided solely by the parents and caregivers. Parents may form carpools if desired. If another person will be dropping off or picking up your child, please let the teacher or directors know through a Brightwheel message. That person will be expected to use their personal Brightwheel code to check your child in. Children can be picked up by anyone who is 18 or older, is listed on their Emergency Form or in Brightwheel as an approved pick-up person, and has their personal code to sign them out in Brightwheel. Children will not be released to any unauthorized person(s). Children will remain in the classroom with the teacher or in the office with a director until an authorized person picks them up.

30. Snacks and Meals

Children are required to bring a clean water bottle daily, labeled with their first and last names. Water bottles must only contain water. Sports drinks, juice, or smoothies are not allowed outside of mealtime.

Children should bring healthy snacks from home to enjoy during morning snack time. If your child stays for Aftercare, please also send snacks for an after-school snack time. Separating the morning snack from the afternoon snack ensures there will be food available for both times, so please leave your child's Aftercare snack in their backpack.

Snacks may include, but are not limited to:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Yogurt
- Granola bars
- Dry cereal
- Applesauce
- Cheese and crackers
- Meat sticks
- String cheese

Gummies or fruit snacks are great for an after-lunch treat, but please do not send them for snack.

Children also need to bring a lunch from home. We strongly encourage you to pack healthy, well-balanced meals for your child, and please include napkins and any utensils needed. Teachers will gently encourage their students to at least try most of the food in their lunch. Feel free to go to <https://www.myplate.gov/> for information on well-balanced meals for your child. If a child is without a snack or lunch, food will be provided by the center, and the family may be charged a fee of \$10.

31. Allergies

If a child has an allergy, this should be documented on the Emergency Form that is part of the registration paperwork, and the classroom teacher should be notified. Our center will do its best to accommodate student allergies and ensure that children are safe and well cared for. This may include prohibiting certain foods in a classroom or from the center as a whole. Because food is brought from home, we cannot guarantee that your child will not be exposed to a certain food, but we will do what we can to try to make sure this doesn't happen. Families can help this process by bringing alternative food to be kept at school for their child to use if there is a class treat that the child is allergic to. If the allergy is severe and requires medication, a Colorado Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan and Medication Orders Form from the child's doctor need to be on file.

32. Birthdays

Parents may provide a store-bought treat to be shared with the class in recognition of their child's birthday. Anything provided must have a complete ingredient list and be in the original packaging. Giving stickers or a small trinket in place of birthday treats is also allowed. Please check with the classroom teacher to set the time and date. Children with summer birthdays are also welcome to celebrate on their half-birthdays or other days during the school year.

If you are hosting a party outside of school and would like to invite all of the children in your child's class, invitations may be distributed through classroom cubbies. If you plan to invite only some of the children, we ask that invitations be sent privately (by mail, email, text, or phone) rather than distributed at school. This helps prevent hurt feelings and ensures all children feel included while at school.

33. Field Trips

From time to time, field trips or other special activities are used to enhance our educational program. The students may take field trips at various times throughout the year.

Parents will be notified in advance of field trips. Written consent is needed for a child to attend a field trip. All in-house field trips are covered by the general field trip permission slip that is a part of our registration forms. In the rare event that we plan a field trip off campus, a separate permission slip will be sent home. Parent helpers are often asked to accompany the class and teacher. If an emergency arises while on the field trip, a phone call will be made to the director to determine an action plan.

If a child arrives late at school after the class field trip has already left, the parent and the director will discuss a solution. This may include the child returning home with the parent or the parent transporting the child to the field trip site.

34. Nap Time Policy

Children who stay for a full day of school will nap or rest in the afternoon. Colorado State Licensing rule 2.223 requires all children in care for five hours or more to rest for 30 minutes, but also for children who do not fall asleep in those 30 minutes to then move to a different area and participate in quiet activities. Teachers will assist children in falling asleep by sitting with them, rubbing their heads or backs, playing quiet music and darkening the room. If a family has a special request for nap/rest time, this can be communicated to the teacher or a director. We will do our best to accommodate the request, but we cannot guarantee that it will work with the flow of the nap room.

Families will provide a nap sheet and blanket labeled clearly with the child's name. These will be sent home at the end of each week to be washed and returned the following week. Peace will provide a cot for each napper, a nap bin and a drawstring backpack to transport bedding. Nappers can bring one stuffed toy or a "lovey" and/or a pillow to sleep with that can be kept at school in their nap bin. Toddlers are also welcome to use pacifiers during nap time. The sheets that fit our cots are "standard cot sheets" (23 x 52 inches) and are available on Amazon. All classes use the same size cots.

35. Administration of Medication

Peace Early Learning Center prefers not to administer medications unless absolutely necessary. We are required by state law to comply with guidelines set up in Section 12-38-132, C.R.S., of the "Nurse Practice Act" and Colorado State Regulation 12 CCR 2509-8 regarding the distribution of medication at school.

Most of our staff have been delegated to administer medication. There is at least one person delegated to administer medication in each classroom at all times. If a child needs to have medication administered to them at school, a Medication Agreement form is required to be signed by the parent and the child's physician. This includes prescription and non-prescription medication. All medicine needs to have the manufacturer's dosage instructions and the doctor's instructions included and be in the original box with an accurate expiration date. All medicine given to students is recorded on a medicine log that is kept with the medicine in the classroom. All severe medical conditions, as well as medicine required for allergies, require a Health Plan.

Anything topical that is needed at school requires a Non-Prescription Topical Medications form. This form is part of the registration paperwork and can be filled out on Brightwheel. Examples of topical medications are hand lotion, lip balm, diaper cream and lotion for dry skin. The parent is responsible for supplying the topical medication which must be in the original container and marked with the child's first and last name. These items should be given to the teacher and will be stored out of reach in the classroom. Please do not send these items to school in your child's backpack.

36. Sunscreen

Sunscreen will be applied by staff 30 minutes before going outdoors in the morning. All children must have a Sunscreen Authorization Form on file which is part of the registration paperwork. Our center provides Coral Isles Broad Spectrum 30 SPF (formerly Rocky Mountain Sunscreen). If you choose to supply your own sunscreen for your child, please indicate this on the Sunscreen Authorization Form. Personal sunscreen should be in the original container marked with your child's first and last name and will be stored out of reach in the classroom. If you choose to not have staff apply sunscreen to your child at school, please indicate this on the Sunscreen Authorization Form and provide appropriate sun-protective clothing (hat or lightweight long sleeves) for your child.

37. Emergency Information

The state of Colorado requires that our center has emergency information on file for each student. This information is included on the Emergency Form that is part of the registration paperwork. We will use this information to contact you in the case of an emergency. We ask that you also fill out this information in your child's profile on Brightwheel, including a current picture, as this makes it easily available to the staff if needed. If your information changes, please update your Brightwheel profile and fill out a new Emergency Form with the office as soon as possible. If an emergency occurs, we will first contact the parents or guardians. If parents cannot be reached, we will notify the people listed on the form as authorized to pick up the child or to be called in the case of emergency.

Our staff is trained in CPR and the basics of First Aid and can handle minor situations. If an emergency of a life-threatening nature occurs, the staff will call 911. The parents will be contacted and informed of how the emergency is being handled.

In case of a fire, staff will direct students outside to the north side of the parking lot to await the arrival of the fire department. Staff will count and check attendance to make sure all children are accounted for and are out of the building.

In case of a tornado, the children will sit in the hallway outside their classroom away from outside doors and windows. Staff will count and take attendance to account for all children.

In case a child cannot be located, the staff will first search the premises, and then they will contact the parents and the police for assistance in locating the child. If a child is left unsupervised by staff at any time, the school will report the incident to the appropriate channels as dictated by state licensing rules and regulations.

In case of a lock-down or lock-out situation, staff will guide children to the designated areas and await police instruction. All outside doors will remain locked and no one will be permitted to enter or exit the building until released by police. Parents will be notified of the situation through email or Brightwheel as soon as it is safe to do so.

If we need to evacuate the building and parking lot, all children will be taken to Colorado Christian Montessori: 9236 W 57th Avenue, Arvada, 80002 (303-942-8014). If the need arises to evacuate further away from Peace, all children will be taken to Vanderhoof Elementary School: 5030 Routt Court, Arvada, 80004. Parents will be notified of the situation through email, phone or Brightwheel as soon as it is safe to do so.

38. Accidents

Our school makes every effort to keep each child healthy and safe. Minor accidents will be treated with ice, soap, water, and band-aids when necessary. When a child is injured at school, teachers will inform parents/guardians either verbally or through a Brightwheel message. If the injury leaves a mark, involves the child's head or if the child sustained a cut that was bleeding, the staff member will document the accident in writing on an Accident Report that will be signed by the staff member and a director and should be reviewed and signed by the parent. The original will go into your child's file and a copy can be sent home at your request. If your child sees a doctor or receives medical treatment due to an injury at school, please notify the administration so it can be properly documented. If needed, an ambulance will be called to transport the injured child under the supervision of the director or another staff member. Expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the parent.

39. Filing a Complaint

Peace Early Learning Center seeks to resolve concerns and complaints with parents in a timely and least disruptive manner. In the event there is a concern, we encourage parents to first speak with the classroom teacher and then to a director, if needed, about their concerns. Concerns may also be escalated to Pastor Guy Roberts, lead pastor of Peace Lutheran Church. Additionally, concerns may be reported to the Colorado Department of Early Childhood at (303) 866-5958.

40. Peace Lutheran Church

- Worship Services: Sundays at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
Nursery is available for children ages three and younger
- Sunday School (ages three to adult): Sundays from 9:15-10:15 a.m.
- Bible studies for all ages throughout the week (check with the church office for a list)
- Monthly Mom's Nights and Men's Events
- Children's Ministry Events including an Easter, Vacation Bible School, Summer Family Events and Reading Programs, Trunk or Treat and Children's Christmas Worship –all ELC families are welcome!



UPK Policies

1. Healthy Development & Child Screenings

To support your child's healthy development, our program provides information on voluntary developmental screening services. Please speak to an ELC Director or email earlylearning@peacelutheran.net for information on obtaining any of the following:

- **Developmental or Health Screenings**
- **Vision, Hearing, or Dental Screenings**
- **Social-emotional, Cognitive, or Language Screenings**
- **Mental Health or Special Education Referrals**
- **Translation Services**

2. Family and Community Engagement

We believe you are your child's first and most important teacher. Our program is committed to partnering with you in the following ways:

- **Language Support:** We provide opportunities to utilize interpreters or other language resources as needed to ensure clear communication.
- **Cultural Sharing:** We invite and encourage you to share your home's cultural and social practices within our classroom community.
- **Goal Setting:** We will partner with you to set individual learning and development goals for your child.
- **Program Decision-Making:** We offer opportunities for families and community partners to engage in our program's operational decision-making processes.
- **Transitions:** We will actively involve you in your child's transitions between classrooms or when moving to a new school.
- **Feedback:** We value your perspective and provide opportunities for you to give feedback on the quality of program-family and program-staff interactions.

3. Annual CDEC Family Survey

Each spring, the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) conducts an annual family survey. You will be notified of the opportunity to participate and share your experiences regarding your meaningful and culturally appropriate involvement in our program, as well as the healthy development supports provided.

Community Resources

Mental Health: <https://cdec.colorado.gov/for-providers/nurturing-connections-colorado>

Early Intervention: <https://cdec.colorado.gov/early-intervention-for-infants-and-toddlers>

Child Find: <https://ed.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/childfindpreschoolsped/child-find-for-children-ages-3-through-5-years-old>

Jefferson County Human Services: <https://www.jeffco.us/4868/Human-Services>

Pediatric Eye Care: <https://www.childrenscolorado.org/just-ask-childrens/articles/pediatric-eye-care/>

Universal Preschool: <https://cdec.colorado.gov/universal-preschool-colorado>

Variety of Help and Resources: <https://raisingcoloradokids.com/en/> and <https://cdec.colorado.gov/for-families/family-support-programs>

Immunization Exemption: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/exemptions-to-school-required-vaccines>

How Sick is Too Sick?
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RcdCmU4SYXwmVhJrA3Pyk0gP0MTDCIkF/view>

Healthy Eating: <https://www.myplate.gov/>

Colorado Department of Human Services: <https://cdhs.colorado.gov/>

Guidance and Discipline Policy

Peace Early Learning Center

The primary goal of this policy is to support children as they learn to function in a social setting, and help them to develop a positive self-concept, self-control and how to take responsibility for their behavior. Discipline should not be used as punishment, but instead as a guide to the children as they learn to communicate express their feelings, consider the words and feelings of others, negotiate conflicts, recognize differences, as well as learning appropriate behavior and expectations for a classroom. We also want to provide an environment that is fun, comfortable and safe and that will encourage learning.

Role of Teachers and Staff

Staff members are responsible for the guidance and discipline of the students under their care. Our center's environment, schedules, routines and activities are all designed to foster positive behavior management. Additionally, staff create appropriate expectations based on age, developmental stage and cultural preferences of the individual children in their care.

Toddler Classrooms

- Be calm and consistent
- State directions clearly and simply
- Accept child's feelings and provide outlets for them
- Prepare a play space that is fun, interesting and safe for all children
- Allow children time to adjust to transitions
- Refocus toddlers' attention before inappropriate behavior occurs

Preschool Classrooms

- Establish simple, consistent rules or expectations for classroom community
- Model and teach children strategies for solving interpersonal conflicts (negotiation, compromise, empathy)
- Manage their class and the environment to alleviate problems before they start
- Allow children to resolve their own conflicts when possible
- Help children to express both positive and negative emotions appropriately, both verbally and through movement, art and play
- Help children to verbalize their feelings, frustrations and concerns
- Involve children in cooperative projects
- Prepare a learning environment that is welcoming, comfortable, interesting, safe and encourages children's self-direction
- Guide children as they learn to problem solve (describing problems, considering the perspective of others, verbalizing alternative solutions)

All Classrooms

- Model positive and appropriate behavior and language, including choice of words, subject and tone
- Praise and encourage appropriate behavior, including creativity, kindness, good listening skills, good problem-solving skills, being helpful, etc
- Ensure discipline/guidance is always positive, productive and immediate when behavior is inappropriate
- Communicate with parents and be available for parent's questions and concerns
- Closely observe and supervise children's activities and interactions

Role of Parents and Guardians

Peace ELC encourages open communication between families and staff. This communication can be done through Brightwheel messages or in person during drop-off or pick-up, or during a scheduled meeting. Our center has scheduled parent-teacher conferences in the fall and spring, and other meetings can be scheduled throughout the year when needed. Staff members will also reach out to parents if a child's behavior is concerning or if patterns start to emerge. We welcome parental input as to what works best for their child, so that the most consistent approach can be established to help a child develop the skills needed to be the best version of themselves.

Negative Discipline that is not allowed at Peace:

- Inflicting or threatening any kind of physical pain
- Any form of emotional abuse, including name-calling, shouting/yelling, threatening, ridiculing, shaming/humiliating, rejecting, or any kind of abusive or profane language
- Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest or the bathroom

Steps for Addressing Challenging Behaviors

We define a behavior as "challenging" when a child consistently does not follow directions, repeatedly hurts themselves or others (physically or emotionally), often disrespects people or classroom materials, or requires constant attention from the staff. The following steps will be taken when a child is struggling with a challenging behavior to help that child to continue to be a valuable member of the classroom and to gain skills in self-regulation, self-control and how to be part of a group.

1. The staff will observe and document the child's behavior, strategies tried, and the child's response to those strategies. This step is helpful when seeking to understand what the child is attempting to communicate with their behavior, as well as anything that might be triggering a specific behavior.
2. The staff will use a variety of techniques to resolve the problems one-on-one with the child.
3. The staff may consult with each other and the directors for help with the issue.
4. The staff will discuss the issue with the child's parents.
5. The staff will request a conference with the parents to discuss the issues, possible causes for the behavior, appropriate consequences and a plan for moving forward. This conference may include a director.
6. A mental health consultant will be asked to come and observe the child and the classroom and work with the teacher to give support in the situation. We partner with the Jefferson Center for Mental Health for this support.
7. If all the steps listed above have been implemented and there has not been significant improvement in the challenging behavior, a meeting will be scheduled between the teacher, the parents, a director and the mental health consultant to determine next steps.

A Note on Exclusion and Expulsion

If a child participates in a behavior that endangers or harms others, they will be temporarily supervised away from other children. An adult can help the child move away from the group and allow the child to process the problem verbally. An adult will stay close to any child who is emotionally out of control and needs some private time to regain composure and be ready to rejoin the group.

As a rule, Peace does not normally suspend or expel students. However, if a child's behavior places the child, other children, adults or property at a consistent or extraordinary risk of harm, it may be necessary for the family to withdraw the child from our program. This would only be in an extreme case and after the steps above have been exhausted.

Resources used in creating this policy:

- *Child Guidance Policy* from the State of Illinois, Dept of Human Services: Illinois Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Program
- *Guidance and Discipline Policy* from Oakton College Early Childhood Education Center
- *Child Guidance Policy* from Owens Community College Early Learning Center, Perrysburg, OH
- *Addressing Challenging Behavior in Young Children: The Leader's Role* by Barbara Kaiser & Judy Sklar Rasminsky (NAEYC Books)