



## **THE PARENT HANDBOOK**

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Dear Parent(s),

I understand entrusting others to care for your child is difficult. However, I take the responsibility very seriously and will do everything possible to make the time at Elements Academy a wonderful experience for you and your child.

As the staff at Elements Academy and I partner with you in this exciting journey, it is essential that we communicate effectively. The Parent Handbook has proven to be a valuable tool in this first step in the communication process. However, communication is ongoing and I encourage you to contact me with any questions or concerns you have.

I look forward to a bright future with you and your child at Elements Academy.

Sincerely,

Barbara Townsley  
Owner/Manager

## **Our Purpose**

- To grow in faith
- To partner with parents
- To provide high quality child care at a reasonable price
- To provide a healthy, clean, and safe environment
- To provide a challenging environment
- To teach a child how to be a critical thinker
- To teach a child the value of being a lifetime learner
- To provide an environment where learning is fun
- To provide an atmosphere where a child feels safe being him/herself

## **Our Philosophy**

- Each child deserves to know Jesus Christ
- Each child deserves a safe, clean, and organized environment
- Each child deserves to have fun learning
- Each child deserves respect
- Each child deserves to be heard
- Each child deserves a childhood of laughter
- Each child deserves independence based on his/her capability
- Each child deserves to be embraced as a unique individual

## **Mission Statement**

**ELEMENT** – a component of a whole. The mission of Elements Academy is to embrace each child as a whole placing equal value on the five elements; social, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical.

## **Age of Children**

Elements Academy cares for children ages six weeks to thirteen years.

## **Admissions and Registration**

A tour of the center is required before a child is accepted into the program.

At the time of registration a non-refundable deposit based on the Rates and Fees Schedule is required.

All required forms must be completed and returned to the Director before the child is eligible for care. These forms are to be updated when information changes and on an annual basis.

If required paperwork is not returned when requested, Elements Academy reserves the right to deny care until all forms are up-to-date. However, no tuition credit will be given for days missed due to missing forms.

Elements Academy reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause.

Elements Academy reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Elements Academy welcomes families from all ethnic, racial, religious, and national backgrounds. We do not discriminate based on background, race, creed, or gender. Parents and children can expect to be treated fairly and equally. Children with special needs are welcome at the center. We are committed to doing our best to meet each child's individual needs.

### **Teachers and Staff**

All employees have been selected based on qualifications, experience, education, and abilities. We employ those who have the core beliefs as Elements Academy and fit well within the culture. All our staff is trained in CPR/First Aid and Universal Precautions and take the state required ongoing training. If they are hired without this training, they are required to become trained at the earliest possible date.

They are also encouraged to continue their education and surpass the number of training hours required by the state for Early Childhood Educators as this is a benefit for them personally, for the children, and their families.

Elements Academy staff and volunteers are not permitted to baby-sit or transport children at any time outside the program. Please help us to uphold this policy with staff members of Elements Academy.

### **Staff/Volunteers Babysitting**

Elements Academy staff and volunteers are not permitted to baby-sit or transport children at any time outside the program. Please help us to uphold this policy with staff members of Elements Academy.

### **Hours**

The hours of operation are Monday – Friday from 6:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Children must not be dropped off earlier than 6:30 A.M. and must be picked up by 6:00 P.M.

For safety purposes, the doors to the building will remain locked until 6:30 A.M. and under no circumstances can families enter the building before that time. Parents should arrive to pick up their child ensuring enough time to visit with the teacher, collect the child's belongings and leave by 6:00 P.M.

Any child who remains at the center after closing time will be assessed a \$5.00 late fee for the first five minutes and \$1.00 every minute thereafter. Elements Academy reserves the right to disenroll a child if he/she remains at the center after 6:00 PM consistently.

### **Center Closure Notification**

Parents will be notified of closures, a late start, or an early closing due to inclement weather through text messages and email. Please make sure we have current information on file at all times.

## **Holidays**

Elements Academy will be closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day (Professional Development Day)
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day (Professional Development Day)
- Thanksgiving Day
- The day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve (2:00 closing)
- Christmas Day
- The day after Christmas

If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the center will close on Friday  
If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will close on Monday.

(Please note there is no tuition credit for scheduled holidays.)

## **Arrival and Pickup**

Please have your child at the center by 9:00 AM. If your child arrives at the center after 9:00 AM and interrupts the learning in progress or disrupts the naptime of others, your child may not be able to attend Elements that day. However, no refund will be given for tuition for days missed.

Upon late arrival, if your child's teacher and classmates are not in the classroom, we ask you take your child to his/her group or remain with your child until the class returns.

If your child is going to be absent, please let us know by 9:00 AM by writing it on the "need to know" board by the front door (if you know in advance) or by giving us a call.

If a parent is not at the center to pick up the child 15 minutes after closing time, a phone call will be made to him/her. If either parent listed on the Child Enrollment Form cannot be reached, staff from Elements Academy will contact those people listed as emergency contacts. If the child is still not picked up by anyone within one hour after closing time, Social Services agency or the police department will be called. Please note late fees apply for each child picked up after 6:00 PM.

When your school age child does not need picked up from school please let us know by noon, if not sooner. We reserve the right to refuse transportation for families if communication is a recurring problem.

### **Check-In/Check-Out Procedure**

Elements Academy takes the security of children very seriously. Therefore, physical access to the building is controlled at all times. Authorized persons are given a personal code to enter the front door. Everyone who enters the building is required to input their personal code upon each front door entry as this information is logged and used as an official record of those entering the building.

Once in the building the parent or guardian will use Procare to sign the child in. Parents are required to walk the child to his/her classroom and make contact with the teacher. The teacher will record the time the child arrived in Tadpoles.

Elements Academy discourages parents from sneaking out when it is time to drop off your child as this can cause your child to become distrusting. If your child exhibits separation anxiety when it is time for you to leave, we ask that you follow the same routine each day and leave after saying goodbye.

At pickup, the reverse will be done. The parent must make contact with the teacher before removing the child from the classroom. The parent must use Procare to sign the child out. If for some reason, you are not able to use Procare to sign the child in or out, please sign the child out manually using the white card next to the computer. Once again, this is an official record of the children in our care.

Elements Academy reserves the right to charge a family \$5.00 each time a child's arrival/departure is not recorded. If you have another person picking up your child from your emergency contact list, please advise him/her of the sign in/out procedure.

Please refrain from talking on your cell phone in the center as this does not allow the teacher to interact with you about your child's day and takes away the attention your child is anticipating at pick-up time.

Once contact is made with the child, the parent is expected to take full responsibility for the child. The parent is responsible for the child during all center wide activities, if the parent is attending. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground.

We encourage communication with families, but conversations that will take more than a few minutes should be scheduled rather than done during a teacher's workday while overseeing several children in the classroom. Not only is this practice unsafe, it is not an effective way to communicate important information.

### **Additional Days**

If you need to add a day to your child's part-time schedule, please complete the form, which is available up front. We will make every attempt to accommodate your needs. You will be charged for the extra day at the daily rate, if space is available.

### **Custody**

Persons identified as a parent on a child's enrollment form will be allowed to pick up the child. If a court has issued an order limiting or restricting access of a parent to a child, a court stamped copy of such an order must be submitted to the Director and revised copies of both emergency and registration forms must be completed before we can restrict a parent access from his/her child.

### **Special Circumstances**

If any staff member at Elements Academy believes an adult who is picking up a child is not in a condition to drive or adequately care for a child safely, the staff will not release the child to the adult until the child's safety is assured. A person listed on the Emergency Contact list will be called. If no one can be reached or if staff feels the situation is a threat to anyone, 911 will be called.

### **Visitors**

Visitors to the program will be kept to a minimum for safety purposes. All visitors must ring the doorbell and be let in by a staff member of Elements Academy. Visitors must sign in on the visitor log. If appropriate, proper identification is checked. When verified a staff member will walk the visitor back to the classroom to let the teacher know the visitor has been cleared to be in the classroom.

It is imperative everyone put the assigned personal door code in before entering the center. Please do not allow others to follow you in or hold the door open for others to enter. This could be a security issue. If the person is a visitor, he/she should be instructed to ring the doorbell.

### **Volunteers**

Once in a while Elements Academy will have a volunteer present. Parents are welcome to volunteer in the classroom. We have found a child does best when given time to settle in his/her new environment before a parent or family member spends time volunteering. Please allow your child this adjustment period.

### **Parent Access**

Parents may enter the center at any time without an appointment. However, please consider your child's daily schedule when planning your arrival to avoid interrupting classroom activities.

### **Release Authorization**

Children will not be allowed to leave the center with anyone other than those people listed on the Child Enrollment Record. We ask that you inform us who will be picking up your child by writing on the "Things We Need To Know" sheet up front, so we can expect someone other than yourself at pick up time. If you need to make changes to the list of people who are authorized to pick up your child, this must be done in writing.

In an emergency situation, we will accept a faxed written permission slip or an email from the parent or guardian.

A picture identification will be mandatory when a fingerprint is not on file for those authorized to pick up your child. We will not release a child to anyone under the age of 18 years old unless it is a special circumstance and we discuss the situation with the parents beforehand. Also, written permission will be required.

An unauthorized person attempting to pick up your child will be denied. We will make every attempt to contact the parent of the child. If the attempt is unsuccessful, we will ask the person to leave the premises and make a note of the situation for future communication. At any time, if staff feels the situation is threatening to the child or others, 911 will be called.

### **Vacations**

Children attending Elements Academy on a full-time basis will be awarded one-week vacation credit after attending the center for one year. Vacation days must be used concurrently before the next anniversary date and may not be carried over to the next year. When requesting vacation time, please complete the vacation request form located at the front of the center at least two weeks prior to the start of your scheduled vacation.

### **Weather**

Our center strongly supports children playing outdoors. Research shows there are many benefits to children being outdoors, so we make every effort to spend time outdoors twice a day when the weather is between 32 degrees F and 100 degrees F.

### **Clothing**

Please label all your child's extra clothes.

Your child should be dressed in layered "play clothes" each day as we play all day. If your child wears a dress to school, she must wear shorts underneath as she is tumbling, flipping, and rolling throughout the day.

All children are required to wear tennis shoes or rubber soled shoes for safety purposes. Flip flops, sandals, or other types of open toed, slippery shoes can be dangerous and are not to be worn to school.

Sending your child in a jacket, hat, gloves, and snow boots for time outside may be appropriate, but tennis shoes will still be needed for indoor time.

We ask that you send two changes of clothes to keep at the center should an accident happen. If your child is potty training, we ask you send several changes of clothes.

Elements Academy provides the cot/crib sheet, bibs, and wash clothes. The sheets are laundered at the center once a week or more often, if necessary.

For infants, a sleep sack can be used. However, we are not able to swaddle an infant according to licensing standards. Older children are required to have a blanket available for rest time. Every Friday our families are required to take the blanket home to be laundered.



Parents are responsible for providing disposable diapers and wipes. An extra supply should be kept at the center at all times. Please put your child's name on his or her diapers and the diaper wipe container.

Parents with infants supply bottles and baby food with each item clearly labeled with the child's first and last name, the date, and its content if it is in a container. Each night unused bottles and food must go home. However, jars of unopened baby food may stay in the cubby.

### **Rates and Fees Schedule**

Please see the Weekly Tuition and Rate Schedule.

The tuition and rates will be reviewed during the month of January to determine if a change is necessary. If so, a letter will be sent to each family 2 weeks before the scheduled change.

### **Payment and Fees**

Registration and Equipment Fee - \$125 per child/\$150 per family.

This non-refundable fee is required at time of registration and not meant to serve as a contract guaranteeing service for any duration.

Annual Equipment Fee - \$100 per child/\$125 per family is due the second full week in January.

### **Tuition**

Tuition is due every Thursday for the following week of care. A \$10.00 per day late fee may be assessed for payments received after close of business on Friday.

Late Fee - \$35 non-sufficient fund fee may be charged for all payments returned by the bank.

Elements Academy reserves the right to dis-enroll any child for unpaid tuition. If there is an outstanding balance on the last day of care, Elements Academy may pursue legal action to collect payment of all past due balances and additional fees owed.

A two-week written notice for a schedule change or withdraw from Elements Academy is required. Full payment of tuition is required until the withdraw date.

Any discount offered pertains to full-time students. A 10% sibling discount applies to the oldest child.

A rate change due to a birthday is in effect the Monday following the birthday. It is the parent's responsibility to notify Elements Academy of the rate change. Any change in rate cannot be retroactive.

There is no credit given for scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather, or acts of God.

## **Curriculum and Assessment**

Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold is used in the infant, toddler, preschool and prekindergarten room.

The highly regarded Creative Curriculum is used as a basis for curriculum, but the teachers are given the opportunity to use their education, experience, and creativity to teach the children the way that works best for them.

Every child is observed and assessed throughout the year using Teaching Strategies Gold. The curriculum and assessment tool fit together perfectly, so the teachers can create an individualized learning plan to give every child the chance to succeed. While these tools complement each other they are also fully aligned with Colorado Academic Preschool Standards and Colorado State Kindergarten Standards.

## **Immunizations**

For the safety of all children and staff members, children must be properly immunized or have a signed in-process plan on record to become up-to-date as soon as possible with immunizations. The only exemption is for medical purposes. A doctor must fill out paperwork to confirm immunizations are a danger to the child.

## **Sick Child Policy**

Please call the center by 9:00 a.m., if your child will be absent and let us know the reason. This is important to determine if it is reportable to the health department.

Sick children need more care and constant individual attention than is feasible in a group setting. Therefore, we ask that you keep your child home when displaying the following symptoms currently or in the past 24 hours:

- The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in usual activities
- Diarrhea and/or Vomiting
- Fever over 100 degrees
- Rash without diagnosis
- Severe coughing or wheezing
- Pinkeye
- Asthma or severe upper respiratory infection unless parent provides evidence that the child is under a physician's care
- Chicken pox, hand, foot and mouth disease, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, impetigo, diphtheria or herpes simplex
- Untreated scabies, tinea corporis or capitis (ring worm)
- An ear infection, unless provided notification that child is under physician's care
- Untreated head lice
- Croup
- Cold sores if the sores are open and the child drools uncontrollably

If your child develops these symptoms while in our care, we will contact you. If we are not able to reach you, we will contact those listed on the Emergency Contact list. Please make sure your child is picked up within an hour of being contacted.

We reserve the right to disenroll any child if the child is not picked up within an hour of being contacted or we have reason to believe a child continues to attend childcare while ill.

Please respect the staff and children of Elements Academy by keeping your child home, if he or she displays any of the above symptoms.

### **Medication**

Occasionally, children will need to receive medication while at the Center. If you choose to come during the day to administer the medication, we welcome you.

Another option is to ask the center to assume the responsibility under the following guidelines:

Prescription medication must be ordered by a physician for the child to receive the medication. Under no circumstances are we able to administer medication that was prescribed for another child or member of your family. Prescriptions must be in the original container with your child's name on the prescription.

No medication, whether prescription or non-prescription, can be administered to a child without written parental authorization. Permission to administer medication forms are available in the office. The medication form must include the following:

- A. Name of medication
- B. Amount of dose
- C. Time to be given
- D. Date(s) to be given
- E. Parent signature

Medication should be handed to the Director or Office Manager. If so, the teacher will remove it and put it in a locked cabinet up front out of the reach of children.

Over-the-counter medication must be kept in the originally labeled container and be labeled with the child's first and last name. In the case medication needs to be given on an ongoing, long-term basis, the authorization and consent forms are reauthorized on an annual basis. Any changes in the original medication authorization require a new written order by the prescribing practitioner and a change in the prescription label. Elements Academy has many staff members trained in giving medications. The requirement is to attend an four hour medication administration class.

Medications are kept in an area, locked and inaccessible to children unless used for a life threatening illness. If a child needs medication for a life threatening illness, the medication is kept in the room. Children are not allowed to bring medications to childcare unless accompanied by a responsible adult. If a medication is out of date or left over, parents are responsible for

picking up the medication. If parent do not respond, the center will dispose the medications. Disposal of medications is documented.

A written medication log is kept for each child. This log is part of the child's records. The log contains the following:

- Child's name
- Name of the medication, dosage, and route
- Time medication is to be given
- Special instructions
- Name and initials of the individuals giving the medication
- Notation if the medication was not given and the reason

Topical preparations such as lip balm, petroleum jelly, diaper rash ointments, sunscreen, bug sprays, and other ointments may be administered to children with written parental authorization. These preparations may not be applied to open wounds or broken skin unless there is a written order by the prescribing practitioner.

### **Sun Protection**

Elements Academy provides Rocky Mountain Sunscreen for all children. An authorization allowing staff to apply the sunscreen to their child's exposed skin prior to outside play is required. If for any reason, the sunscreen provided does not meet your child's needs, you may provide sunscreen labeled with your child's name and a written permission slip.

### **Discipline Policy**

Teachers use positive reinforcement throughout the day for behavior that is encouraged and appropriate or redirect the child to avoid misbehavior.

However, we expect all children will make some poor choices at times because they are learning proper behavior. As teachers, we can help lessen behavior issues by remaining consistent with our rules and clear with our expectations.

If a child is behaving inappropriately, he/she may need to separate from the group to regain self-control. This may be sitting in a chair while still in the classroom or sitting up front with the Director, depending on the issue at hand.

Staff will observe and document ongoing problem behavior to help recognize any patterns or triggers. Please understand if the teacher updates you at pickup on any behavioral issues that went on throughout the day. We are simply communicating so we can work with you to come up with the best solution.

If we are not able to resolve the problem behavior within a reasonable amount of time through appropriate behavior techniques, the parent may be called to have the child removed. A follow-up meeting may be set with the child's parent and staff to come up with additional solutions to address the behavior issues. If the child is determined to be harmful to him/herself or others, Elements Academy reserves the right to disenroll the child immediately.

### **Identifying Where Children Are at All Times**

Safety is a top priority for staff at Elements Academy. Every precaution will be made to keep your child safe.

Teachers check children in and out through the Tadpoles application. Teachers are trained to count the children who are in our care many times throughout the day. Scanning the room for the whereabouts of children and what they are doing is an additional way teachers keep children safe. Teachers are taught to be aware of their surroundings during their scheduled time at the Center for the safety of everyone.

### **Lost Child, Tornado, and Fire Drill**

**Lost Child:** Staff attempts to locate the child informing appropriate authorities, including the local authorities. The parent will be informed immediately upon recognition of the child being lost.

**Fire Drills:** The Center conducts regular fire drills. Building maps are posted near the door of every classroom. Children are taught to respond quickly but calmly to the fire alarm. The lead teacher in each classroom is responsible for ensuring all children are accounted for, bringing the IPAD to access Tadpoles, for ensuring that all children leave the classroom and lead children out of the building. The assistant teacher is responsible for bringing the 1<sup>st</sup> aid bag, closing the classroom doors, and overseeing the line of children. The children will walk in a single file line to a designated spot and remain in a group. Once in the designated spot the lead teacher will again take roll call and report the number of children to the Director. Teachers are taught to remain calm and in control at all times so not to frighten the children. The Director is responsible for the overall count of children and staff. Children may return to the building once the director has instructed the classes to do so. The Director is responsible for bringing a list of all children checked in on ProCare that day to match it to the Tadpoles report.

**Tornado Drills:** On occasion, the Center conducts tornado drills. A NOAA Weather Radio with batteries is at the front desk of the center to alert staff of any tornado threat. In the event of a tornado, teachers are to quickly and calmly lead children to the designated “safe” areas within the building. (If out on the playground, the class immediately enters the building and goes to the designated safe area for their group.) The lead teacher in each classroom is responsible for ensuring all children are accounted for, bringing the IPAD to access Tadpoles, for ensuring that all children leave the classroom and lead children out of the building. The assistant teacher is responsible for bringing the 1<sup>st</sup> aid bag, closing the classroom doors, and overseeing the line of children. The children will walk in a single file line to a designated spot and remain in a group. Once in the designated spot the lead teacher will again take roll call and report the number of children to the Director. Teachers are taught to remain calm and in control at all times so not to frighten the children. The Director is responsible for the overall count of children and staff. Children may return to the building once the director has instructed the classes to do so. The Director is responsible for bringing a list of all children checked in on ProCare that day to match it to the Tadpoles report.

Active Shooter Drill: In the event an active shooter becomes a danger to those inside Elements Academy, the staff and children will be taken to a location designated in the evacuation plan. Teachers are to quickly and calmly lead children to the designated “safe” areas within the building. (If out on the playground, the class immediately enters the building and goes to the designated safe area for their group.) The lead teacher in each classroom is responsible for ensuring all children are accounted for, bringing the IPAD to access Tadpoles, for ensuring that all children leave the classroom and lead children out of the building. The assistant teacher is responsible for bringing the 1<sup>st</sup> aid bag, closing the classroom doors, and overseeing the line of children. The children will walk in a single file line to a designated spot and remain in a group. Once in the designated spot the lead teacher will again take roll call and report the number of children to the Director. Teachers are taught to remain calm and in control at all times so not to frighten the children. The Director is responsible for the overall count of children and staff. Children may return to the building once the director has instructed the classes to do so. The Director is responsible for bringing a list of all children checked in on ProCare that day to match it to the Tadpoles report.

### **Field Trips, Television and Video Viewing, and Special Activities**

Each age group provides various activities for children to participate. A permission slip for non-vehicle field trips is offered to parents, which allows their child to participate in walking field trips off Elements Academy property. Children who are 5 years and older are offered the opportunity to participate in field trips that require a vehicle field trip permission slip to participate. All staff-child ratios are maintained while on field trips.

Teachers are responsible for the children at all times on field trips. The teacher is required to make a list of the children and adults who will be attending the field trip. Field trip information (date, time, attendees, and where) is input into Tadpoles for a permanent record for parents and the center.

At this time, there is no television watching or video viewing at Elements Academy unless permission is granted by a parent for a special occasion.

### **Transporting Children**

Staff uses the Elements Academy vehicle to transport children ages 5 years and older on field trips and to/from school. The owner follows all vehicle policies set by State of Colorado Licensing Division.

### **Riding in Vehicles, Seating, Supervision, Emergency Procedures**

The number of staff members who accompany children when being transported in the vehicle meets the State childcare staff/child ratios. The driver of the vehicle is considered a staff member. Children will not be permitted to ride in the front seat of a vehicle. Children must remain seated while the vehicle is in motion. Children are loaded and unloaded out of the path of moving vehicles. Children are not permitted to stand or sit on the floor of a moving vehicle, and their arms, legs, and hands must remain in the vehicle at all times. Elements Academy verifies that all drivers have a valid driver’s license upon hire and driving records are pulled and carries required insurance. Drivers take a defensive driving training course approved by licensing.

## **Personal Belongings**

The Center provides sheets for both cots and cribs. We ask the child only bring one security item at a time, as it becomes hard to keep track of several items for every child and the cubby is not sized to fit several items. We ask you do not bring a bed size pillow as it is too hard to store. Please make sure you take home the blanket on Friday and return clean on Monday.

Please label all items brought to school with your child's name. Elements Academy may not be held responsible for items brought to the school without appropriate labeling.

We ask that children not bring items from home unless the day is designated show-and -tell day.

Teachers have "show and tell" twice a month allowing children to bring something special from home. These items should be appropriate according to Elements Academy policies and a Christian environment.

To avoid issues in the classroom any items brought from home will be required to be placed in the "toy basket" located in the front office. These items can be picked up as the child is leaving for the day. We appreciate your support in this matter as it can cause many problems between the children in the classroom and can at times, cause health and safety issues as well.

To protect the children in childcare centers, the State of Colorado strictly prohibits posting photos on any social media website without written parental consent of each individual child. Therefore, we ask you refrain from posting photos or videos of children other than your own on any social media sites. All rights for Elements Academy and the logo are reserved and may not be used without written permission.

## **Cubbies/Mailboxes**

Your child will be assigned a cubby for storing his/her personal belongings. Please go through the cubby often and take home items not currently needed.

Your child's project folder is in his/her room. Please make sure you check the project folder often as your child worked hard on everything in there.

Also, every teacher has a mailbox outside his/her door labeled with his/her name. If you have information for your child's teacher, please feel free to put it in the appropriate box.

## **Birthdays**

Your child's birthday is a special time for him/her. If you wish to celebrate at school, please discuss your plans with your child's teacher. You may bring a store bought item to share with your child's classmates, if they are store bought items (and don't contain peanuts) so we can identify the ingredients. Please do not bring party favors, balloons, gifts, or games.

For out-of-school parties, invitations may be distributed via children's cubbies. If you are not inviting everyone from the classroom to the party, please be considerate of everyone when sending out the invitations.

## **Meals and Snacks**

Infants – We require all infant parents to input your child’s information into Tadpoles each day before arriving at the center. This information is important for our teachers to have in order to keep your infant on a schedule. If the information is not input into Tadpoles, the teacher will check your child out and contact you to collect the information.

You must provide a food plan and update the plan as your child changes his/her meals. You must bring prepared bottles to the center on a daily basis labeled with your child’s first and last name on every bottle and lid, the date, and have green or pink tape applied to the bottle to label whether they contain breast milk or formula.

When your child is ready to start cereal and baby food, you must supply enough for each day your child is in our care. We cannot make substitutions. If we do not have enough food to last the entire day, we will contact you when we run out and ask you to come pick up your child or bring food.

Bottles will be refrigerated and warmed in a crock pot by the teachers to the desired temperature. Empty bottles will be rinsed and placed in your child’s diaper bag each night.

For older children, the meals are prepared on-site and served in the classroom. We use meals and snack time as part of our overall health and learning experience at Elements Academy in several ways. We pray, work on manners, try new foods, etc. The menu is posted throughout the center.

Breakfast is served until 8:30 am. If your child arrives later, please make sure he/she eats before arriving. Morning snack is served at 9:45 AM, lunch is served at 11:30 AM and afternoon snack is served at 3:30 PM daily.

Unless your child has a special dietary need and it has been discussed with the Director, we ask that you do not bring food into the center.

If a child’s diet must be modified for health reasons, a physician’s written explanation is required. If a child’s diet is modified for preference, cultural or religious reasons, the parent is asked to put the request in writing, and will be asked to provide meals. We do our best to provide quality meals based on the choices offered to us.

There are times during the school year that you will be asked to bring your child a sack lunch. Please provide a healthy lunch with a cold pack as the lunch must be kept in your child’s cubby. We do not have facilities to refrigerate all sack lunches. We will continue to provide milk, breakfast, and snack on these days.

**PLEASE NOTE: WE ARE A PEANUT FREE ZONE**



**Diapers**

We understand that considerable controversy exists concerning the use of disposable versus cloth diapers. Although there are benefits and drawbacks to each, cloth diapers do not provide containment and absorption as well as disposable diapers. Therefore, we use only disposable diapers at Elements Academy. Each child is changed every 2 hours and/or more frequently, if needed (unless the child is sleeping).

We ask that you bring an extra supply of disposable diapers and wipes for your child. Teachers will note in Tadpoles when your supply is low.

**Toilet Training**

Please see policy

**Conferences**

Parent and staff conferences will be held twice a year in or around the months of March and October or when requested by a parent or staff member.

**Miscellaneous**

Bathrooms in the classrooms are strictly for children enrolled and may not be used by an adult. Children will be in the bathroom with those of the same gender only if supervised by a teacher. Otherwise, children will go to the bathroom one at a time.

Leaving children unattended in the car is strictly prohibited. If the temperature is dangerous to an animal, leaving an animal in a car is strictly prohibited.

No smoking is allowed on Elements Academy property.

Elements Academy will ask parents of infants to sign an Infant Policy.

Elements Academy reserves the right to change the Parent Handbook at any time deemed necessary.

Should your child be involved in a non-urgent incident/accident during the course of the school day, a staff member will complete an incident report and send immediately through Tadpoles. If your child is involved in a more serious incident/accident, a call will be made immediately to the parents and possibly a call to 911 will be made if deemed necessary.

**Policy to Withdraw from Center**

A withdraw from Elements Academy requires a two week notice in writing. Full payment of tuition is required until the withdraw date. If payment is not paid, Elements Academy, LLC may pursue legal action to collect payment of all past due balances and additional fees owed.

**Program Satisfaction/Complaint**

Elements Academy makes every effort to provide a center in which parents feel comfortable and proud to bring their child. However, we are always open to suggestions and feedback to improve our program. Also, suggestion and compliment cards are available by the Procure computer.

Should you wish to file a complaint about this program, you may contact Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care at 303-866-5958.

**Child Abuse Reporting**

All employees of a child care center have a legal responsibility as a mandated reporter to report suspected child abuse or neglect immediately according to the Child Protection Act of 1987 in the Colorado Children's Code. In doubtful cases a mandated reporter may confer with a Director or supervisor to see if they have "reasonable cause to know or suspect" that child abuse or neglect has occurred. Ultimately, however, the mandated reporter has a personal responsibility for making the report, and the mandated reporter cannot avoid that responsibility by asking a supervisor or employee to determine whether the report should be made. The telephone number to report abuse for Jefferson County is 303-271-4357.