



The Wildflower School

Family Handbook

2024-2025

1439 W. Babcock St., Bozeman, MT 59715
www.thewildflowerschoolmt.com

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Dear Family,

We are thrilled for you to become part of The Wildflower School family. We recognize the considerable trust you demonstrate by placing your child in our hands. We take this responsibility seriously and strive to provide the highest quality care and early education.

Our families and our Bozeman community are an integral part of our school culture. Your identities, traditions, history and hopes help build our school. We are excited to have the opportunity to be a part of your family's childcare experience. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. Our doors are always open, and we will make ourselves available.

We look forward to many months and years of dialogue, celebrations, and happiness with you and your family. We anticipate and celebrate an ongoing partnership with you in this new and amazing journey in your child's life! We are dedicated to promoting the value of social consciousness, integrity, trust, and education in a nurturing environment for children, educators, and families.

Warmly,
Haleryn Dunlap
Director & Lead Teacher

POLICIES WERE WRITTEN AND DEVELOPED BASED ON MONTANA STATE CHILDCARE LICENSING REGULATIONS. THESE REGULATIONS ARE REFERRED TO THROUGHOUT THE HANDBOOK. THESE CAN BE NOTED BY A NUMBER, TOPIC AND REGULATION. A FULL VERSION OF THE MONTANA STATE CHILDCARE LICENSING CAN BE FOUND AT:

[HTTPS://DPHHS.MT.GOV/QAD/LICENSURE/CHILDCARELICENSING](https://dphhs.mt.gov/qad/licensure/childcarelicensing)

Philosophy and Vision

*At the Wildflower School, our mission is to cultivate curiosity, independence, and compassion in our young learners. We are committed to whole-child development through academic curiosity, social-emotional skills and life-skills. We believe in the agency of young people and envision a rich future in which each of our students has a powerful sense of self, and an equally powerful sense of responsibility for their community and for their environment. Our pursuit of this goal is based on five primary value pillars: *Belonging, Diversity, Sustainability, Exploration, and Engagement*. Our promise is that your little one will flourish through their successes and their mistakes together and discover a true passion for learning!*

Rights and Equity

Non-Discrimination Clause:

Our program at The Wildflower School admits families of any race, creed, color, faith, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, and handicapping conditions. Our admissions process is based on order of submission.

In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9710 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The Rights of the Child:

We believe that the child has a right to be seen as a capable and valuable individual. We believe that children are inherently ready and eager to build compassionate relationships and to be an

explorer in their own world. We believe children have the right to learning that is influenced and guided by their own interests and choices. Children have the right to support from thoughtful and reflective adults who scaffold and support their play experiences, and continuously seek the perspective of the child. Children have the right to have their ideas considered and their autonomy respected. We will treat children as today's citizens, not future ones. We commit ourselves to creating a culture that fosters their self-esteem and Dignity, through love and respect.

The Rights of the Families:

We believe that families have the right to be viewed as capable and devoted guardians of children. We believe that family partnerships are essential in creating a community of learners and constructing our school culture. Families have the right to be respected, offered clear communication, to have personal privacy and to be an integral part of the learning process. We will always seek and respect the parent's points of view and perspectives.

Equity and Social Justice:

We believe that every adult and child is endowed with certain inalienable rights that include the right to attain his or her fullest potential through creative expression, thought, inquiry, collaboration and dissension. We pursue thoughtful anti-bias and social justice education every day.

The Natural World and Conservation:

Environmental awareness is a primary and core value at The Wildflower School. We believe that one vital role of education is to connect young children to the natural world and to offer them the skills to care for the Earth in their own right. We use natural and recycled materials, guiding children to care for their world through conservation, recycling and reusing. Our program will emphasize eliminating waste; using recycled and found materials, utilizing products that do not harm the earth and making these practices part of our learning approaches with our students, their families, and our community.

Enrollment

Admissions:

The admission procedure is as follows:

1. Our enrollment process begins with a submission of a family application. Families may return their application by mail or by email, along with a \$40 application fee.
2. When the family has returned an application and a space becomes available, a family interview will be scheduled. If there is no space available, the child will be placed on our wait list.
3. Once it has been mutually determined that The Wildflower School would be a good fit for the family and school, a welcome letter and an enrollment package will be sent to your home.
4. Prior to the family's first day at The Wildflower School, we will have a home visit.
5. Upon entering the program all parents are required to fill out and maintain the required forms for the child's file, including a statement from the physician and proof of current immunizations.
6. These necessary forms (some by state licensing and some by The Wildflower School) include the following:
 - ***Medical Authorization Form*** (if applicable)
 - ***Over the Counter Medical Authorization Form*** (if applicable)
 - ***Emergency Contact and Parental Consent***
 - ***Complete Immunization Records***
 - ***Signed Family Contract Agreement***

Parents agree to provide alternative childcare whenever the child does not meet the school's sick policy guidelines and emergency contact information including the names and phone numbers of persons available for immediate pick up as required. Parents are asked to keep the center up to date on any changes in contact information (i.e. cell phone numbers, change of address, etc.)

Tuition and Payment:

Parents will be asked to fill out a contract with a permanent schedule. Tuition can be paid via cash, check, or by direct deposit through the Brightwheel app. Payments are due on the 1st of the month. The monthly fee is constant from month to month. There are no reductions for absences (planned or unplanned), school closures (See Holiday Schedule), or unplanned closures due to inclement weather. Program options and tuition are as follows:

PROGRAM OPTIONS	HOURS	MONTHLY TUITION
<u>2 Half Days</u>	9:00 – 1:00	\$530
<u>2 Full Days</u>	9:00 – 3:30	\$635
<u>3 Half Days</u>	9:00 – 1:00	\$710
<u>3 Full Days</u>	9:00 – 3:30	\$810
<u>4 Full Days</u>	9:00 – 3:30	\$965
<u>5 Half Days</u>	9:00 – 1:00	\$1,020
<u>5 Full Days</u>	9:00 – 3:30	\$1,130
After School Care (8 slots)	3:30 – 5:30	\$15/hr

(The Wildflower School)

PROGRAM OPTIONS	HOURS	MONTHLY TUITION
<u>2 Half Days</u>	9:00 – 1:00	\$625
<u>2 Full Days</u>	9:00 – 3:30	\$750
<u>3 Half Days</u>	9:00 – 1:00	\$830
<u>3 Full Days</u>	9:00 – 3:30	\$955
<u>4 Half Days</u>	9:00 – 1:00	\$1,030
<u>4 Full Days</u>	9:00 – 3:30	\$1,160
<u>5 Half Days</u>	9:00 – 1:00	\$1,180
<u>5 Full Days</u>	9:00 – 3:30	\$1,335
After School Care	3:30 – 5:30	\$15/hr

(Wildflower Sprouts)

* Tuition fees are subject to change year to year based on inflation.

After School Care:

After school care is \$15 per hour, per child. If a child stays after school for more than 10 minutes into an hour, families will pay for the full hour (ex. If a student stays for 45 minutes, they will pay for 1 hour. If a student stays for 1 hour and 15 minutes, families will pay for 2 hours). Payment for after school care will be made with the next month's tuition. Families will be given an invoice for the previous month on the 1st of the next month. There are only 8 available slots for the after school program.

Late Fee:

Delays beyond 10 minutes past contracted pick-up time will result in a charge for one full hour of after school care.

Payment Delinquency and Collection:

Payment is due on the 1st of every month. A \$50 late fee will be applied if tuition is not paid by the last day of the month.

There is a \$35.00 fee for bounced checks and a late fee will accrue weekly until payment is satisfied.

A payment due is delinquent when it is more than sixty (60) calendar days behind its payment schedule. The following steps will be taken in dealing with delinquencies:

The responsible person(s) for payments shall be contacted via telephone and e-mail notifying them of the delinquency. If, after five (5) calendar days there is no response from the responsible person(s) the childcare facility will turn the delinquent account over to a third-party agency for collection. Once an account is 60 days past due services may be terminated.

Annual Fees and Deposit:

A deposit of **\$100** is due at the date of registration. This tuition deposit will be applied to the last month's tuition for the registered school year. This deposit is not refundable after the school start date (*to be paid at the time of registration*).

Families will be responsible for three annual fees, paid once a year or twice a year and paid at the time of registration.

- 1. Liability Insurance Fee: \$150 (once yearly)**
- 2. Supplies and Materials Fee: \$200 (once yearly)**
- 3. Meals Fee: \$200 (twice yearly)**

Withdrawal:

If circumstances such as moving, change of employment, etc., make it necessary for you to withdraw your child from the childcare program, a 30-day written notice is required. This will give the childcare facility an opportunity to gather your child's belongings and avoid any confusion in billing. Tuition will be expected to be paid through the end of the month.

Enrollment deposits are non-refundable fees.

Discipline and Guidance Principles

Relationships are the most important component to all learning. Children need to be seen, heard, respected, and held accountable in order to thrive. At the Wildflower School, we do not practice discipline or negative reinforcement of any kind. We have a system of conflict resolution and cultivating communication based in the latest research in child brain development which supports and maintains healthy behaviors. Some of these strategies include:

- 1. Meeting children at their own level** - literally and metaphorically.

2. Acknowledging feelings – we practice consistent acknowledgement of children’s feelings, before attempting to solve or address them directly.
3. Maintaining consistent and appropriate boundaries – we set and keep clear limits for children. These boundaries help students feel safe and secure. We communicate boundaries as clear, positively framed statements.
4. Encouraging autonomy – we offer children choices and agency in their own problem solving. This gives children the right to take responsibility for themselves and their actions, and for their learning and improvement. Choices also give children acceptable alternatives to unwanted behavior.
5. Discussion – we always prioritize discourse in conflict management. Talking helps to further explore motivations and needs, and serves to deescalate to a point where children are better able to regulate their emotions and behaviors. We always give children the opportunity to prove and unpack their experience with support.
6. Encouragement – We always meet conflict and negative behaviors with love and with high standards. We never shame, judge, blame or reprimand. We use consistent encouragement of positive behaviors to guide and inspire our students. Encouragement leads to confidence and joy, which leads to self-regulation.

Conflict Resolution Policy:

Teaching staff will assist children in resolving conflicts by helping them identify feelings, describe problems, and try alternative solutions. The guidance philosophy, policies, and techniques of the childcare facility are consistent with the Montana licensing standards. Physical hitting or hurting of a child by another child is not permitted. Sitting a child in a corner is not permitted. Time out is not the preferred method of child guidance at our facility. Instead, redirection and setting limits is mandated to prevent and discourage such behavior.

37.95.606 DISCIPLINE (1) Caregivers shall use appropriate forms of discipline. Physical punishment, including spanking or other forms of corporal punishment, is strictly prohibited in day care facilities. Discipline shall include positive guidance, redirection and the setting of clear limits that foster the child's ability to become self-disciplined. (2) Any punishment or discipline which is humiliating, shaming, frightening, or otherwise damaging is strictly prohibited. (3) Parental or guardian permission does not allow for the use of any punishments listed in (1) or (2) above. (4) The provider is responsible for ensuring that each caregiver participates in an in-service training session regarding discipline and guidance techniques appropriate for children.

Disciplinary Issues as a Cause for Termination of Enrollment:

We will make every effort to meet the needs of individual children and to provide a happy, safe environment for all children. When behaviors exist which do not respond to the positive behavioral management techniques of the childcare facility, the teacher will meet with the parent and together they will develop additional techniques in an effort to help the child to respond appropriately. In the event that the teacher and the parent together are unable to resolve the inappropriate behaviors exhibited by the child, the childcare facility will notify the parent that we will seek professional assistance through outside resources. This may include having a behavior

specialist observe the child and develop a behavior modification program. If, after these attempts have been made to meet the child's individual needs, the child demonstrates inability to benefit from the type of care offered, or whose presence is detrimental to the group, the childcare center will notify the parent of the intent to discharge the child from the program. When it is determined that it is in the best interests of the child to terminate enrollment, the child's and parent's' needs shall be considered, and the facility will assist the parents to plan for alternate care.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect

The director and any staff member of our facility who has reason to suspect that any child is or has been abused or neglected, is required to personally report the matter promptly to the department child abuse hotline at 1(866) 820-5437 and/or directly to local law enforcement. The provider or staff member shall make the report within 24 hours of receiving information concerning suspected child abuse or neglect.

Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect:

All staff are required to inform the director and/or report directly to local law enforcement immediately if there are any signs that suggest a child may have been abused or neglected. This includes any concerns regarding unexplained bruises or marks on a child, observations of neglect, or physical or verbal mistreatment of a child. Once a report of suspected child abuse is made, the director and staff will immediately contact law enforcement to start an official investigation. If an educator or other staff member is being investigated, the director will notify parents of the child(ren) involved that an investigation is underway. All investigations of suspected child abuse and neglect will be handled in a confidential manner to protect the rights of both the child and the adults involved.

Lost or Missing Child:

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group either at the school or on a field trip, all available staff search for the child. If the child is not located within five minutes, 911 will be called and the family will be notified.

Right to Refuse Child Release:

In the case that we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child, we may refuse to release. For the protection of your child, we may request that another adult on your child's Authorized pick-up list. We may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Recurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

Scheduling

Days and Hours:

The Wildflower School will be open from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Drop-off is available from 8:45-9:00 am. Half-day students are picked up between 12:30 pm and 1:00 pm. After school care is available from 3:30-5:30 pm. Please be courteous and be on site before your child's official pick-up time.

Yearly Calendar:

Yearly calendars are given to families prior to child enrollment. The yearly calendar is also posted at www.thewildflowerschoolmt.com. The yearly calendar is subject to change. Notifications of change will be sent to parents 30 days prior to a date change.

School Closures:

School Closure Due to Holidays:

To review the dates that the childcare facility will be closed, please view our yearly calendar. These dates are subject to change, please check each month for updates. Our holiday schedule and school closure will be published each year by the start of the summer. We are closed for most national holidays, which include, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and all of Thanksgiving Week, along with TWO staff development days; one in the spring and one in the fall. We are also closed for one week for Spring Break, and two weeks during Winter Holidays. We strive to have all of these holidays and closings coincide with the Bozeman Public School District schedule, except for the staff development days, which are coordinated with state and national early childhood conferences.

School Closure Due to Loss of Power, Heat, or Water or Physical Defects:

In the event of loss of power, loss of water, or other physical plant defect that prevents the school from opening on time or at all, or necessitating early closure, families are contacted by text, telephone and/or email. If any of these conditions happen during the school day and are deemed to persist for longer than one hour and in the case where proper care of the children beyond that time will not be possible, parents and/or emergency contacts will be called to pick up children as soon as possible. Appropriate staff will remain at the center until all children are picked up. The school will maintain emergency supplies order to provide basic necessary care for at least 24 hours.

School Closings Due to Inclement Weather

In case of extreme weather, the school follows Bozeman Public Schools with regard to school closings. In the case of severe weather (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes) please listen to the local news and/or radio station. If Bozeman Public Schools closes early or is closed due to inclement weather, The Wildflower School will also close early or be closed. Families will be officially notified of the school's closing or closure via telephone and/or email. For the safety of school employees, there will be no exceptions to this policy.

Field Trips and Transportation

Field trips are an important part of our program. Parents are informed of trips in advance and are encouraged to participate. We will walk to field trips or have parents drive their own children for insurance purposes.

37.95.132 TRANSPORTATION

(5) Children under four years of age may not be transported in a vehicle which does not provide age-appropriate safety restraints or in a vehicle which cannot accommodate a car seat or a booster seat in a manner that conforms with National Highway Transportation Safety Administration recommendations.

Emergency Transportation:

If emergency relocation of staff and children is required, normal safety rules will be followed, as much as possible, but the highest priority is to relocate to a safe location.

*please review relocation transportation agreement form

Organization of the Day

Arrival and Departure:

For the child's safety, state law requires that parents or a designated adult accompany their children into and out of the childcare facility. Please sign your child in and out using the BrightWheel App on a tablet. Anyone under the age of 18 MAY NOT sign another student out. Be sure to check in with a staff member. During pickup, make sure that a staff member knows when your child is leaving. Children and parents should wash hands upon arrival into the childcare facility. Parents should check their child's "cubby" and "mailbox" for artwork, notes from the teacher, etc. No child will be allowed to leave the facility with anyone other than a parent unless the parent has notified a staff member ahead of time, or they are on the authorized pickup list. Persons picking up must be 18 or older with a valid ID.

Your child will be our responsibility the moment you leave the classroom. Each family will have different needs with regards to drop-off transitions, and we want every family to feel comfortable honoring these needs. Some kiddos will be able to say goodbye right away, some will experience bigger emotions and need more time. We are committed to ensuring each child's positive emotional and social experience while at The Wildflower School. We want to school to be a fun, joyful memory! However we can support this transition, we will do our utmost!

Please be prompt in picking up your children and sign-out as soon as you arrive at the end of the day. You are fully responsible for your child the moment you enter the school. We encourage parents and caregivers to arrive no later than 15 minutes before departure. This allows for you to gather your child's belongings, briefly talk to the educator about your child's day and say goodbye to friends. These times are crucial in establishing positive transitions into and out of the school day. To ensure smooth transitions, it is necessary to be on-time when dropping-off and picking up your children.

Daily Schedule

8:45	Drop Off & Free Choice Play
9:00	Exploration and Discovery + <i>Personal Care</i>
10:00	Mid-Morning Tea
10:15	Morning Circle
10:45	Guided Centers
11:15	Movement + Music
11:15	Lunch Preparation + <i>Personal Care</i>
11:30	Lunch
12:00	Stories & Wind Down
12:30	Rest & Relaxation
12:30	Half Day Pick Up
2:00	Projects & Afternoon Adventures
3:00	Afternoon Tea
3:15	Afternoon Circle
3:30	Full Day Pick Up
3:30 – 4:30	After School Care

Going Deeper

Drop off and Free Choice Play

Caregivers sign their children in using the BrightWheel App. Children are met by educators with hugs or happy hellos to help them transition and develop their own ways of saying goodbye to parents; some children desire more time during this transition than others. The room is open for quiet play.

Guided Exploration and Discovery

This morning block is dedicated to play and student-lead, teacher-guided exploration. In warmer months, we spend this time outside discovering new imaginative games and working on our social and interpersonal skills. In colder months, we will spend this time indoors exploring our many play-based learning centers. Students will make choices about which games and activities they want to explore, and teachers will ask questions and participate with observation and encouragement. They may choose to do a puzzle, play a make-believe game, draw a picture, read a book, build a structure, help clean up or re-organize, or sit and have a conversation with a friend.

Personal Care and Organization Time

Most children are fairly independent at this age and they may use the toilet as needed. However, for some children that still need more guidance, teachers will invite them to use the toilet every hour or as needed. Teachers will support development with skills such as hand washing and dressing.

Mid-Morning Tea

By this time, most little ones are getting hungry! We take a short break to have a snack and a drink of water along with a short social break before our learning block. We start every meal with a meal blessing.

Morning Circle

This meeting is the point in our day when we meet as a whole group for targeted discussion about our weekly theme and focus topics. We will learn patience, listening, stamina, and turn-taking during morning circle. We will discuss calendar skills and practice learning songs about the alphabet, shapes, days of the week, months of the year, and informal greetings. We also learn about sign language and Spanish skills during this time. This is also a constructive space to do what kids love to do most – share.

Guided Centers

This period is dedicated to learning centers. Teachers work with small groups on targeted learning activities, differentiated for interest and age. Students can explore early literacy skills, writing skills, and mathematical skills through hands-on activities and play. We utilize song, movement, building, sensory play and inquisition in our exploration of these early academic areas.

Movement + Music

While our little ones have ample time to move and play throughout the day, this is our time to take a structured movement break, and also participate in music. Our movement exercises include yoga flows, shake outs, dance breaks, gross motor skill games, and many others. For music, we often practice songs for our traditional celebrations, sing songs together, practice rhythm and tempo exercises, or play music games. We often blend music with movement during this time!

Lunch Preparation

We heavily encourage both independence and sustainability at the Wildflower School, and students participate in these goals by participating in their meal preparation. During this time, students will practice washing vegetables, using knives safely, organizing food and choosing healthy options.

Lunch

We all come together for a family-style lunch. Children eat at one large table alongside their peers and teachers, or outside at our picnic table. We start lunch with another meal blessing. Children are full participates in this experience, helping to set the tables, creating center pieces, engaged in full conversations about the day, and sharing in the responsibilities of cleaning up. We encourage healthy choices and intuitive eating methods during lunch time.

Stories, Rest and Relaxation

After play, the children take care of their bodies by washing their hands and faces and using the restroom. We sit and listen to a story, and then we get ready for rest. We may do more yoga, have quiet time exploring books, or listening to quiet music. Many children are initially resistant to naps, so we emphasize quiet rest time rather than mandatory sleep. Soothing music is played in the classroom as our students rest. As older children and children who don't require nap time start to become wiggly, we move those kiddos into the cozy room to continue their rest time looking quietly at books.

Projects & Afternoon Adventures

During our afternoon adventures, we will participate in other projects and activities that inspire us. We encourage students to take some time to explore their interests and

passions! During this time, you may find us baking bread, making simple machines or silly monsters with craft materials, tending to a garden, practicing foreign languages, investigating creatures outside, playing dress-up and exploring theater, singing together with musical instruments, or walking around our community. We may do a themed science activity, an art project, or practice our week's learning objectives. This is a free exploration and learning period, where we spend time following our interests and passions liberally.

Afternoon Tea

We take one more brief break to have a light snack before going home.

Afternoon Circle and Pick Up

At the end of the day, we work with our students to take responsibility for their own clean-up process. We re-organize our tools and resources, we clean tables and sweep the floors. Then, we meet once more as a class to sing a goodbye song and check in with our feelings about the day. Caregivers sign their children out using the BrightWheel App.

After School Care

After school care will involve supervised free play, including one snack. Students will have access to the classroom and all of its materials, and will be expected to care for the space as they do during school hours.

Outdoor Play:

Children will play outdoors daily when weather and air quality conditions do not pose a significant health risk. Weather that poses a significant health risk shall include:

1. Temperatures at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, including wind chill: Students will be outside 10 minutes or less, if at all, depending on teacher's judgement of weather.
2. Temperatures between 1-10 degrees Fahrenheit: Children may only stay outside for a length of 15 minutes or less. Temperatures between 11-20 degrees Fahrenheit: Children may stay outside for a length of 45 minutes or less.
3. Temperatures 90 degrees Fahrenheit or higher: Students will be outside 10 minutes or less, if at all, depending on teacher's judgement of weather.
4. Temperatures between 80-89 degrees Fahrenheit; children may only stay outside for a length of 30 minutes or less.
5. Hazardous weather conditions such as poor air quality, hail storms, lightning storms, etc.
6. Air quality conditions that pose a significant health risk shall be identified by announcements from local health authorities. Such air quality conditions will require that children remain indoors. Children with respiratory health problems, such as asthma, shall not play outdoors when local health authorities announce that the air quality is

approaching unhealthy levels. In the event that children are unable to engage in outdoor play, appropriate gross motor activities will be substituted inside the classroom.

Risky Play:

Risk and uncertainty are part and parcel of a healthy lifestyle. Protecting children from risk is not always to their long-term benefit, and anxiety about risk-taking actively impacts the ability to confront inevitable risks.

At The Wildflower School, we need to provide plenty of supervised yet rich opportunities for children to step out and be brave; to create times for adventurous play where children can learn about coping with uncertainty and to offer long stretches of freedom. Our kiddos climb, run, and even play fight, and as a result we sometimes get bonks, scratches, and hurt feelings. We support them in taking these risks and owning all the feelings that come with getting hurt. All, of course, within a reasonable structure of overall safety.

Such play is by nature both exciting and exhilarating, with an element of joyful fear. Bravery comes more naturally in this sort of environment, rewarded with satisfaction and fulfilment. And throughout this positive framework of risk and boldness, we speak support and challenge in equal measure as we encourage children to be brave.

Children need to hear both ‘supportive’ and ‘challenging’ language when taking risks. As they test new waters and try out new skills, encouraging and reassuring language demonstrates faith and trust in children’s capabilities and skills, and challenging language encourages them to step out of their comfort zones.

We believe in giving children freedom to take risks, make mistakes and ultimately, make a difference. When children learn how to manage risk, their self-esteem soars, they start to embrace more opportunities and crucially, they can become confident and independent learners.

Drop-in Care:

The Wildflower School DOES NOT have a separate drop-in program.

Media

The Wildflower School reserves the right to use photos of students during school hours for the purposes of the school’s website and social media accounts, including Facebook and Instagram. If you have restrictions or a no-media requirement, please contact the Director to discuss options. Posting photos and videos of our day is a primary and important part of how we communicate our learning and activities to families.

Screen Time and Technology:

We support the structured, intentional, and very limited use of technology at school. Student interaction with screens is limited to guided yoga videos, songs, short educational videos, special movie celebrations, and a reading tablet app (Epic!). Student use of these tools is always closely monitored and brief. We believe that limited and intentional integration of these tools will help prepare our students for the environments they will be moving into when they leave Wildflower. Technology is never used for time consumption or entertainment, and students will not interact with screens for more than one hour per week at maximum.

Curriculum and Assessment

Academic Instruction:

At The Wildflower School, we emphasize exposure and student-lead learning, and do not participate in a formal organized curriculum. However, academic learning starts at the age of 3 years old at our school, flowing up through our pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) to line up with kindergarten curriculum and standards. Our curriculum covers early literacy, early mathematics exposure, as well as science and social studies explorations. Our students will leave our school with the skills they need to start Kindergarten, including academic skills, student skills, and social skills. More importantly, they will leave our school excited and passionate about learning!

An Intradisciplinary Approach:

We believe in and encourage *academic curiosity*. At The Wildflower School, children will be met at their level, not pushed beyond their readiness. Through curricula that promote growth in academics, life-skills, and social/emotional skills, we guarantee whole-child development. We are dedicated to an integrated educational program which includes mathematics, early literacy, writing, health and wellness, Spanish exposure, music, dramatic play, fine motor skills, food preparation, art, animal care, science, early geography, community building, and conflict resolution.

Inquiry Based Learning

We believe that the children are innately curious about the world around them. This inquiry fuels a longing for knowledge. We seek to foster and celebrate a community that seeks truth and knowledge through questioning and discovery. In this process, the learner is passionately engaged in acquiring his or her education by researching problems, collecting data with their senses, proposing theories and creating new meaning. Far from a pre-prescribed curriculum, we are most interested in fostering a community that is delighted by curiosity.

Health and Illness Policies

Handwashing:

For the health and safety of our students and staff, parents and staff must wash their hands thoroughly upon entry into each room and the kitchen. Students are instructed to wash their hands upon arrival, after visiting the restroom, playing outside, and before and after eating. Use of hand-sanitizer is not an acceptable substitute for soap and warm water. State mandated signage for instructions on proper handwashing is displayed in each restroom in the school.

Illness Policy:

If a child becomes ill at school, the school will take every measure to isolate the sick child from the other children in order to avoid contamination of others. The Wildflower School does not provide sick childcare. Parents will be notified to come and take their child home. It is expected that parents will arrive to pick up a sick child no more than one hour after being notified. When parents cannot be reached, persons listed on the emergency contact form will be contacted. Children who are sick should not come to school. We consider your child sick and should stay home or will be asked to be picked up if she or he displays any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 101 degrees F or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Eye irritations with swelling, or green or yellow discharge
- Unexplained rashes or skin lesions

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- (1) The parents of each child admitted to the day care facility shall provide the name of the physician or health care facility the parent wishes to have called in case of an emergency.
- (2) If, while in care, a child becomes ill or is suspected of having a communicable disease reportable to the health department while in care, the parent shall be notified by the provider. The parent is responsible for arranging to have the child taken home.
- (3) The director, owner, manager, or person in charge of the day care facility must designate a staff member to check daily the health status of each child immediately upon that child's entry into the day care facility, and to exclude any child showing symptoms of illness, under the following guidelines:
 - (a) Children must be without fever of 101F or greater for 24 hours before they return to the day care facility, except that children with immunization-related fevers need not be excluded if they are able to participate in the routine of the day care facility;
 - (b) Children must be without vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before they return to the day care facility. Vomiting includes two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools, increased water in the stool, and/or decreased form to the stool that cannot be contained by a diaper or clothing;
 - (c) Children with any of the bacterial infections listed below must be treated with antibiotics for 24 hours before they return to the day care center:
 - (i) strep throat;
 - (ii) scarlet fever;
 - (iii) impetigo;
 - (iv) bacterial conjunctivitis (pinkeye); and
 - (v) skin infections such as draining burn or infected wounds or hangnails;
 - (d) Generalized rashes, including those covering multiple parts of the body, must be evaluated by a health care provider to determine their cause before the child can return to the day care facility;
 - (e) Children with chickenpox may not be admitted to the day care facility until their sores dry up, which usually takes five to seven days. Day care providers must not purposefully expose susceptible children to chickenpox, even with the permission of the susceptible child's parents;
 - (f) Children who are jaundiced must be excluded until a health care provider evaluates the cause and authorizes the child to return to the day care facility;
 - (g) Children with symptoms of severe illness, such as uncontrolled coughing, breathing difficulty or wheezing, stiff neck, irritability, poor food or fluid intake, or a seizure, must be evaluated by a health care provider before they may return to the day care facility;
 - (h) A child need not be excluded for a discharge from the nose which is not accompanied by a fever.
- (4) If a child develops symptoms of illness while at the day care facility and after the parent or guardian has left, the day care facility must do the following:
 - (a) isolate the child immediately from other children in a room or area segregated for that purpose;
 - (b) contact and inform the parent or guardian as soon as possible about the illness and request the parent or guardian to pick up the child;
 - (c) report each case of suspected communicable disease the same day by telephone to the local health authority, or as soon as possible thereafter if no contact can be made the same day.
- (5) When a child is absent, the day care provider shall obtain the reasons so the interest of the other children may be properly protected. If a reportable communicable disease is suspected, the provider shall inform a health officer. No child shall be readmitted after an absence until the reason for the absence is known and there is assurance that the child's return will not harm that child or the other children. Disease charts that identify the reportable diseases are available from the department.
- (6) The day care facility may readmit a child excluded for illness whenever, in its discretion:
 - (a) the child either shows no symptoms of illness;
 - (b) the child has been free of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours; or
 - (c) the child has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours for bacterial infections.
- (7) The parent or guardian may also provide the day care facility with a signed certification of health from a licensed physician, except that the following restrictions must be followed:
 - (a) If a child is excluded for shigellosis or salmonella, the child may not be readmitted until the child has no diarrhea or fever, the child's parent or guardian produces documentation that two stools, taken at least 24 hours apart, are negative for shigellosis or salmonella, and the local health authority has given written approval for the child to be readmitted to the day care facility;

(b) If a child is excluded for hepatitis A virus infection, the child shall remain excluded until either one week after onset of illness or jaundice, if the symptoms are mild, or until immune globulin has been administered to appropriate children and staff in the day care facility as directed by the local health authority.

(8) The facility must have a plan for preventing and responding to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions.

Non-Negotiable Health Policies:

Fever	If the child has a fever for any reason s/he cannot attend school. The child should be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school. If the child develops a fever of 101 or higher during the school day, parents will be contacted and the child will need to be picked up immediately. If the child is sent home with fever during the school day they cannot attend school the following day.
Diarrhea	Any child with diarrhea of unknown origin should not attend the school. Diarrhea is defined as loose stools of large volume and/or abnormal frequency (two or more watery bowel movements that cannot be contained in underwear or diapers). Children who develop diarrhea at the school need to be picked up by their parents. The child should not come to school until he/she is deemed noncontagious by a physician or has had no diarrhea or vomiting for 24 hours.
Vomiting	Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a noncommunicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
Strep Throat	The child should return only after 36 hours on medication. The child must be showing signs of improvement and be willing to eat and drink
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease	The child should be on medication for 48 hours and be clearly responding to the treatment before returning to school.
Pinkeye	The child should be on medication for 48 hours and be clearly responding to the treatment before returning to school.
Impetigo	Parents must present evidence that the child is being treated for the skin sores. Children with impetigo or skin sores must have sores completely covered when attending the school.
Ringworms	A child may return 24 hours after treatment has begun. Infection must be covered.
Head Lice	The child may return to school when free of ALL nits.
Common Cold (Bad Cold)	Heavily running nose, colored mucus - frequent coughing, runny eyes, hoarseness, general listlessness.
Chicken Pox	A child may not return until sixth day after onset of rash or when lesions have dried and crusted.

Children should stay home for at least 24 hours after the LAST symptom ceases, including fever. Please refrain from masking a fever or cough by giving medications before coming to school. Children requiring cough medicine or an analgesic may not attend school.

Communicable Diseases:

When an employee of the school or an enrolled child has a reportable disease, we will notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Botulism
- Bacterial Meningitis
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illnesses

Your doctor may confirm that your child is well enough to attend school with a note.

The burden of caring for a child that is showing questionable symptoms and possibly exposing other children and staff to illness belongs to the school and the family. We will work closely with the families in assessing each situation and making reasonable predictions about the child's ability to fully participate but ultimately, the decision to allow a child to attend school rests upon the school administration, not the doctor.

If your child is absent due to illness or other reasons, please call and leave a message. If your child has contracted a contagious condition or disease, please notify the school so that we can notify other parents and staff who may be affected.

Head Lice:

If there is a case of head lice found in the facility:

- Every student and staff will be checked upon arrival every morning for at least a week for nits and lice.
- All blankets, clothes and other cubby items must go home immediately to be washed by parents, bringing back a clean set the next day
- Staff will take dress up clothes and other soft wearable items to be washed, as well as, cleaning all surfaces, toys and carpets
- There will be a formal notice to all parents with a request that parents also check daily until the facility has been cleared.
- If your child is infected, parents must pick up immediately and not returned until student and home surfaces are completely cleared. Any soft surface in your home or vehicle will

need to be treated. (If you do not treat all surfaces the lice will keep coming back) Your student must be completely cleared with no signs of the bug or knit for an additional 24 hours before returning to school.

- Upon return to school a teacher or director/other administrator must clear the child to stay. If any bugs or knits are found, your child will not be allowed to stay.

First Aid Emergency:

In the event of a medical emergency situation, all staff have been certified in First Aid and CPR and will administer aid to the child according to what would be appropriate. In less dire situations, our staff will try and contact one of the child's parents/guardians first. If the parent/guardian is unavailable, the director will attempt to contact the other emergency contacts listed on the child's emergency contact sheet. When a child suffers a bump or scrape, we do not consider it an emergency. It is our policy to communicate these incidents verbally to families.

On a daily basis, the staff is instructed to greet children at the beginning of the day and to be watchful of the health of all children as they enter the classroom. Please inform us of any medications your child is taking, including antibiotics.

Injuries, Injury Prevention and Reporting:

Keeping your child safe is our responsibility. We attempt to prevent injuries by creating a safe environment with careful adult supervision. However, because young children are active learners and risk takers, there will be bumps, falls, scratches, scrapes and bruises.

Safety inspections are completed daily inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid is administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). If an injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you are contacted immediately. Our classroom is equipped with an emergency backpack that includes a first aid kit meeting state regulations and emergency contact information.

In the case of a serious accident at school, parents will be notified and consulted immediately. Appropriate action will be taken by contacting paramedics, taking the child to the nearest emergency hospital (or location indicated on your emergency form) or contacting the child's pediatrician or dentist as indicated on his or her emergency form.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, 911 will be contacted at once and the child will be transported immediately by ambulance to Bozeman Deaconess Hospital at 915 Highland Blvd. Parents and/or emergency contacts will be notified at once. If an authorized person cannot be contacted or arrive before the ambulance, the director or teacher will accompany the child.

In case of a potential poisoning or if a child is suspected of having ingested any poisonous or toxic substance, providers on site will call the Emergency Montana Poison Control Center at 1(800) 222-1222 and follow all instructions provided.

Immunizations

All students enrolled must be immunized in accordance with the Department of Health and Human Services Department of Montana prior to attendance. Records of immunization must be submitted to The Wildflower School before school begins. For a complete list of required immunizations, please contact The Wildflower School.

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IMMUNIZATION

- (1) Before a child may attend a Montana day care facility, that facility must be provided with the documentation required by (5) that the child has been immunized as required for the child's age group against measles, rubella, mumps, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, varicella, hepatitis B, pneumococcal, and Haemophilus influenza type B, unless the child qualifies for conditional attendance in accordance with (7):*

We strive to maintain excellent health and hygiene standards in every aspect of our program. In an effort to manage and prevent the spread of disease, the state requires us to keep on file children's current immunization form. The form must be completed by a MT licensed physician's staff, who will provide an expiration date on the form. It is the parent's responsibility to maintain the validity of their child's immunization records. Reminders will be provided to parents by school administration. Parents are expected to stay current with their child's immunizations and to strictly observe the Health Policies.

★ NOTE The Wildflower School does accept immunization exemptions on religious grounds.

Medication Administration

The Wildflower School will only administer life threatening medication or medication prescribed by a licensed physician. A lead teacher will administer all prescribed and documented medicine. A Medication Authorization Form must be filled out completely in order for administrative staff to administer medication with the exception of EpiPens which will be kept in the classroom's emergency bag. All other medications must be given to the Program Director. Medication will be administered at 11:00 a.m. and/or 3:00 p.m.

All Prescribed Medication Must Be:

In original container

Labeled with the following information:

Child’s first and last name clearly marked

Name of the health professional that prescribed the medication, or a note from the health care provider recommending the over-the-counter medicine

Date prescription was filled and prescription number

Expiration date

Specific instructions for giving, storing and disposing of medication from the health professional (instructions for over-the-counter may be faxed in)

Authorization for medicine can be for no longer than two weeks

medications also require a doctor’s note.

Do not let children carry their own medication or backpacks to transport or store medication. No medicines should be kept in the classrooms and should be kept out of children’s reach at all times. In case of adverse medical reactions, parents will be notified immediately. If parents cannot be reached, staff will call the emergency numbers listed on the enrollment application. If the situation is critical, we will call 911. If your child requires special medical procedures, you or the prescribing health care provider will demonstrate the procedure to ensure accurate implementation by staff.

Emergency and Disaster Plans

In the very unlikely event of an emergency, The Wildflower School has thorough plans for any and all potential situations. Our priority and primary concern is always to keep our children safe, and we take every precaution to avoid emergency situations. However, if something were to happen, our staff members are trained and prepared to protect and care for your children. A complete list of emergency procedures and plans can be found in our Emergency Planning Binder, located in our facility, and we are more than happy to share these with you upon request.

Emergency Contact Information:

Program	Name	Phone
Program	Name	Phone
Medical Emergency	Emergency Response	911

Fire	Emergency Response	911
Emergency Law Enforcement	Emergency Response	911
Gallatin County Sherriff's Office	Gallatin County Sherriff's Office	406-582-2100
Hospital	Bozeman Deaconess Hospital	406-414-5000
Poison Control	MT Poison Control	800-222-1222
Insurance	Liberty Mutual	800-290-7933
Out-of-area contact person	Kristen Wells	707-484-7885
Near evacuation site contact	Round House Ski	406-587-1258
Far evacuation site contact	Bozeman High School	406-522-6200
Child Care licensing specialist	DPHHS	406-444-2012
Child Protection Services	CPS	406-994-4531
Electric/gas company	Northwestern Energy	888-467-2669
Water company	City of Bozeman	406-582-2300

Emergency procedures in the case of disaster or mass casualty, such as an earthquake or fire, may require evacuation of the building and relocation to a safe location. These locations are included in the Emergency Disaster Plan located inside the facility.

Evacuation Plan:

This plan will be effective for the following situations: fire, oil or chemical spills, gas leaks; natural disasters which can include but not be limited to a hurricane, tornado, earthquake; a disgruntled individual or sniper that might threaten the well-being of the children.

1. We will exit our building in the normal fire drill practice (children will be escorted outside in a single file line) and proceed to the front sign on W Babcock St. If further evacuation is necessary, we will continue west on the sidewalk, and around the west lawn towards our near disaster location at Round House Ski.
2. The Director or designated person in charge will contact 911.
3. Educators will bring the Emergency Backpack which includes children's emergency contact information number.
4. Parents will be notified of the situation.
5. At the assembly area, educators will immediately take a head count to ensure that everyone is present and accounted for.
6. The Director or designee will have a fully charged, working cell phone to contact parents and/emergency personnel.
7. We will not re-enter the building until we are given the "ALL CLEAR" command. Many times the situation must be verified as safe, so be patient. Remember, this is for your protection.
8. Medical supplies including children's medication and emergency contact information will be taken when facility relocates.

Contingency Plan:

Our priority evacuation sites will always be (in order of the severity of the emergency) the front sign for the school located on W Babcock St., Round House Ski located on Main St. at the back of the school, or Bozeman High School across Main Street from the school. In the case that these

locations are unavailable or unsafe, we will relocate to the Gallatin County Sherriff's Department at 615 S 16th Ave #220, Bozeman, MT 59715. Parents will be notified of the children's location and will be asked to pick them up as soon as possible.

Shelter-In Place Procedure:

(Proximity to wild animal, tornado/severe weather i.e., thunderstorm, ice storm, etc.)

1. An emergency radio with extra batteries is located in the emergency backpack by the back door.
2. If a severe weather watch is issued staff will gather children at a shelter-in place room located in the interior of the building (interior hallway or one of two bathrooms)
3. Educators will take a head count to ensure all children are accounted for. Names of any missing children or missing personnel must be given to the Director.
1. Children will sit with their backs to the wall and heads tucked between knees during a tornado warning.
7. Staff will keep children calm by reading books and singing songs.
8. The Director or designee will have a fully charged, working cell phone. If possible, the Director will make contact with all parents to let them know of the situation.
2. No children are allowed to leave the center while a severe weather watch is in effect without the legal parent or guardian.
9. When the threat has passed, staff may continue with the daily schedule.

Lockdown Procedure:

(Imminent threat to safety including armed intruder)

1. Lock outside doors and windows.
2. Close and secure interior doors.
3. Close any curtains or blinds.
4. Turn off lights.
5. Keep everyone away from doors and windows. Stay out of sight, preferably sitting on floor.
6. Maintain calm atmosphere in room by reading or talking quietly to children.
7. If phone is available in classroom, Director or designated person in charge will call 911 to ensure emergency personnel have been notified.
8. Remain in lockdown until situation resolved and law enforcement give the all clear.
9. Notify parents/guardians about any lockdown, whether practice or real.

Emergency Supplies:

Emergency Backpack:

Our emergency backpack is located by the front door and is well equipped with the emergency information for each child. The Director always keeps the backpack with the group, so the information is available if the group seeks shelter within the building or chooses to leave the building. The emergency backpacks will contain the following supplies: emergency contact and

release information for each student, first aid supplies, 2 flashlights, cellphone chargers, portable radio with extra batteries, notebook, pens, and necessary medications.

Emergency Tub:

We also have a large emergency tub in the facility in the event of a prolonged shelter in place or lockdown. This tub includes the same items as the backpack, with the addition of extra water, non-perishable food, extra blankets, matches and candles, duct tape, etc.

Drills:

At the Wildflower School we conduct drills for all four emergency responses (Fire, Earthquake, Shelter in Place, and Lockdown). Throughout the year, we will hold *at minimum* eight drills: four fire drills, two earthquake drills, one shelter in place drill and one lockdown. Parents will be notified the day of the lockdown drill.

Responsible Parties During After School Care + Events:

The Wildflower School welcomes families and friends to come to school for many occasions throughout the school year. During school events outside of paid school hours and in which families are present, parents or guardians are expected to bear full responsibility for their own children. Any time that we have parents present for each student and those students are checked out on our attendance platform, teachers will be present and attentive, but not responsible for the behaviors or whereabouts of individual students.

Nutrition and Food

Nutrition and Health Policy:

Food preparation is a large part of our life skills curriculum. We provide healthy snacks and lunches every day for our students, and we work together to make these happen! We follow state nutrition recommendations and avoid all high-processed foods. We use predominantly organic and local foods in all of our meals.

Meals and snacks are planned to meet the nutritional guidelines established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Please find Montana nutrition regulations at: <http://www.mtrules.org/gateway/ShowRuleFile.asp?RID=15409>

Snacks and Lunch:

We are committed to providing a wholesome variety of fresh vegetables, fruits, dairy products, lean meats and flavors and spices found locally and from around the world. It is also important to us that children have a connection to the natural world and to the food they consume. During growing season, we will garden and harvest as a class community.

Meals are served family style using real utensils and dishes. Mealtimes promote good nutrition habits and are pleasant social and learning experiences for children. Staff members sit with the children whenever possible to demonstrate appropriate table manners and pleasant conversation.

The Wildflower School holds the following snacks and meals:

- A morning snack during Mid-Morning Tea (10:00 am)
- Lunch (11:30 am)
- Afternoon Snack (3:00 pm)

Food Allergies:

Please inform us of any food allergies that your child may have. (See enrollment forms). Special accommodations for food allergies are made on an individual basis. If a child in our care has a severe nut allergy (or other severe food allergy), we reserve the right to restrict nuts and nut products from being brought into the program. If you would like your child to have a SPECIAL snack on a daily basis that is different from what we provide, please bring enough for ALL children.

A Note About Waste:

At The Wildflower School, we are committed to reducing as much waste as possible. We focus on recycling, composting, and re-using every day. We request that you do NOT send single-use foods or food packaging to school. Do your best to send re-usable and washable containers whenever possible! We will maintain eco-friendly practices such as composting, washing and re-using Ziploc bags, repurposing jars and plastic containers, etc., and appreciate your help in our green endeavor!

Rest and Nap Policy

ALL children will participate in rest and relaxation time at 12:30 PM every day. All children will have their own mat, pillow, and blanket at school. At 12:30 we will use the bathroom and go to our mats. We will read stories, play soothing music, and set up individual spots with special rest companions and comfort items from home. It is an expectation that *all* of our students lay down on their mats and spend this time in quiet rest or sleep.

Rest and relaxation time may last until about 2:00. If children wake up early or do not to sleep during that time, they will be expected to stay in their spot and rest quietly until 1:15 and will then have the choice to move to the cozy room to do quiet activities. Based on research regarding REM cycles for this age group, we will gently encourage students to wake up after 45 minutes

and again after 75 minutes of sleep, if their bodies are ready. If a family would prefer their child not fall asleep, they can discuss this with us at any time.

Birthday and Special Occasion Celebrations

Birthdays:

We love any occasion to celebrate our little ones! Birthdays will be celebrated at lunch time with song, affirmations, and any other special treat that brings your child joy. If you wish to send treats, please let your child's teacher know prior. Parents are always welcome to join us in the classroom for the celebration.

Other Holidays:

We celebrate many holidays at The Wildflower School. We also respect each family's holiday traditions as well as those who choose not to celebrate holidays at all. We welcome and encourage families to come in and share with the rest of the school what holidays they celebrate and why.

What to Bring to School

At the beginning of the school year, please share with us a family photo of your choosing. We will use this to create a collage for our kiddos, and a learning environment that reflects each individual family in our community.

What to bring to our Welcome Picnic:

- Wet bag
- Water bottle
- Any comfort items that your child needs, such as lovies, stuffies, etc. for rest and relaxation time.
- A blanket that is no smaller than 3'x3' and no larger than 4'x4'. We provide pillows and pillowcases.
- A complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing (labeled) including extra socks and shoes, that will easily fit into the child's personal space.
- If your child needs special sun screen or other items, please bring those as well.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or misdirected items that are not properly labeled.

Other Things You May Bring:

- Objects from nature that the child has found while at home (for instance, fall leaves, flowers or pinecones). Such items may be shared with the class and used to provide rich connections between home and school experiences.

- Books from home: Give the books to the teacher upon arrival and the teacher will find a time to read them during the day. Be sure to label all items from home.

Please Leave These Items at HOME:

- Toys from home are not allowed at school, with the exception of stuffed animals.
- Coins and small items that may cause choking.
- Candy, bubblegum, nuts, vitamins, and other foods items which are inappropriate to share
- Lip balm, lotions, ointments may not be kept in a child's cubby or possession
- We will discourage unnecessary hair accessories, sunglasses, or jewelry

What to Wear to School:

When you select clothing for your child to wear to school, please choose items that can get messy! Suitable clothing should allow a child to move about freely, encouraging creativity and freedom of expression. It is difficult for children to fully engage in their learning when they are restricted by attire. We do encourage smocks whenever possible, however wearing a smock will always be the child's choice at The Wildflower School. We will not be held responsible for damage to or loss of clothing that is inappropriate in a childcare setting in which outdoor play and art activities are an integral part of the program. Here are some general guidelines for dressing your preschooler:

- Children should wear clothing which promotes independence and allows them to help themselves feel empowered.
- We recommend that preschool children in this setting do not wear overalls because they are hard to unbuckle.
- We recommend pants with elastic waists that are easy to pull up and down; t-shirts that do not require snapping at the bottom.
- Shoes should be appropriate for active play such as running, climbing, risk taking, and protect your child's feet. We do not recommend flip flops, open toes shoes or sandals. Shoes must also be the appropriate size for the child's foot to prevent tripping and allow for ease of movement.
- Be sure to dress your child in clothing that is appropriate for the season and current weather conditions! Please remember that we go outside twice a day. Please send sun hats in the summer and coats, gloves, hats, and snow pants and in the winter!

Open Door Policy

While your child is in our care, you are always welcome here. Please feel free to visit us any time. Not only do we love to have you join us, but it is your right to do so! Parent participation is always welcome and appreciated at any time during operating hours. We encourage parents to share their culture, language, customs, or job-related skills if they wish to do so. We even love guest teachers! Please contact a teacher or the Director before you plan to visit.

The licensing agency also has the right to enter and inspect our program without notice. They have the authority to conduct private interviews with the children and staff and audit child or facility records without prior consent. They also have the right to observe the physical condition of the children, and to have a licensed medical professional physically examine the child(ren). This authority is not meant to be frightening in any way, and is only meant to ensure the safety and well-being of children in any state licensed facility.

Communication

Families play a valued and crucial role in every aspect of our school community. Family participation in the education process is paramount to the Wildflower philosophy of early childhood education. Parents are viewed as equal partners and are invited to share their ideas and perspectives on common goals. It is important to have strong connections between home and school.

Our time together begins with a home visit and from there we create many other opportunities to build relationships. Important messages and announcements are posted on our website or relayed through email or the Bright Wheel App. Communication between parents and staff is always encouraged. There are several types of communication utilized:

Modes of Communication:

1. Home Visits- Home visits are conducted prior to enrollment to build relationships and learn about the identity of the family and educators
2. Daily oral communication with parents is encouraged.
3. Written reports will be given upon request.
4. BrightWheel App- Families and educators use this app as a mode to communicate including signing in, sending messages, and sharing photos.
5. We also regularly update our social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram).
6. You may also call the facility at any time during our hours of 9:00 am to 3:30 pm. If the phone is busy or we are not available, please leave a message. The answering machine messages are answered as soon as possible.
7. Email and BrightWheel are the preferred methods of communication.

The Wildflower School values the concerns of parents and believes that a courteous, respectful partnership is essential in order to build healthy relationships between school and home. If you have questions or concerns regarding the policies, procedures or operation of this school, please contact the Director by telephone or email in order to set up a conference. We are happy to hear your concerns and value open and honest communication in an appropriate setting.

Confidentiality

Conversations between parents and educators at drop-off and pick-up times are encouraged. These can be wonderful moments for brief exchanges related to family activities and customs. To honor confidentiality, we do not have any conversations with adults about other families or children. We include children in conversations when appropriate. We do not talk about concerns in their presence and strive to keep all conversations in the presence of children positive. For more extensive conversations or for time to discuss concerns, a meeting should be scheduled. To respect confidentiality, we do not give any personal or private information to anyone without that person's prior consent. This includes e-mails, phone numbers and addresses for play dates or parties.

In the event that a child is injured by another child, state licensing prohibits us from giving the name of the child who caused the injury to the parents of the victim.

Children's enrollment files are kept confidential. Occasionally, for assessment and screening purposes, it may be necessary for some school personnel to have access to children's files. This information is never shared with school personnel not involved in the assessment process, or other families.

The Wildflower School Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Your signature will be required on your Family Contract to acknowledge that you have read and agreed to these policies and school details. The family handbook may be updated, and families will receive notices of those changes. Thank you for choosing The Wildflower School to be a part of your life. We look forward to building a strong and lasting relationship with you and your family. Welcome!