

# Sangre de Cristo Preschool



## Parent Handbook

(In compliance with CO Licensing Rules and the  
American Academy of Pediatrics)

Sangre de Cristo School District

8571 Lane 7 N.

Mosca, CO 81146

(719)378-2321

[www.sangreschools.org](http://www.sangreschools.org)



**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Sangre de Cristo School District is to challenge every student who attends this school to develop his/her full academic potential and be prepared to make competent decisions and choices in the rapidly changing world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To achieve this mission while providing a safe learning environment requires all of us : students, teacher, administrators, parents and community members, working together guided by the 3 R's – rights, respect and responsibility.

**Hours of Operation**

S de C Preschool provides a morning and an afternoon class during the school year, Monday through Thursday. The morning class begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 11:30 a.m. The afternoon class operates from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Anti-Discrimination**

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, 14<sup>th</sup> and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202)270-5924.

**Ages**

Sangre de Cristo Preschool accepts children 3 years, 0 months with three significant risk factors or as an English Language Learner according to the Colorado Department of Education's Eligibility Score Sheet. Otherwise, children must be 4 years, 0 months by June 1<sup>st</sup> of the year they are attending preschool. Children are accepted up to six years of age.

**Enrollment**

To enroll, a parent needs to contact the preschool director for application information. A child is not considered enrolled until all of the registration materials are complete.

**Learning Environment**

The ratio of staff to child will be in accordance to licensing regulations (1adult:12 children). However, at Sangre de Cristo Preschool we maintain a ratio of 1 adult to 8 children. Families wishing to enroll after this ratio is met will be put on a waiting list.

The preschool teacher/staff shall be sensitive to children and their families, understand the program's philosophies and practices, and demonstrate caregiving skills. It will be essential that the teacher/staff communicates with families and the program, ensuring every day that the child's experience is known to the family. Also, the teacher/staff will relay parental concerns and suggestions to other staff. The teacher/staff will advocate for the children and the families in this program. This could mean translating individual concerns and needs into action. The teacher/staff will develop a nurturing, caring relationship with the child; making sure needs are met and establishing security and trust. The teacher/staff will interact with children in ways that maximize language experiences and learning potential in daily interactions and monitor the learning environment to ensure it works for all children. Finally, the teacher/staff will observe, assess, and evaluate the children's experiences in our program to provide a positive outcome for them and their families. These experiences will be regularly processed and noted.

Preschool students will have the same teacher/teaching staff daily. If a child is in our program for more than a year, the child will stay with the same teacher and staff member(s) in the same peer group for the following year. This allows for continuity of care.

### **Rates and Fees**

At this time there is no fee for preschool in our district. If the student does not qualify for UPK funding, the school district will use general funds for their education. Children of staff members will be receive priority enrollment and be given reduced rates for preschool if there is a fee charged.

### **Visitors**

All visitors must check-in at the front office and sign the visitor's log. Then they shall receive a visitor's badge to be worn while in the school. Upon leaving the school, the visitor shall sign out and return the badge to the office.

### **Curriculum**

The center cares for the whole child and provides them with a well-rounded education based on the Creative Curriculum which includes age-appropriate activities for fine and large motor development, art, drama, and music expression, social skills, math, early literacy, and science.

As part of their social development, children need to learn limits as well as rules of safety and interaction. These rules are enforced through logical consequences, redirection and other

developmentally appropriate means. If a child has difficulty limiting their behavior, the family will be consulted.

### **Language/Communication Policy**

S de C preschool understands the importance of communication and will communicate and provide information to families in their home language. We shall provide support to children whose primary language is other than English or who needs sign language to encourage and support their full participation and involvement in the classroom. At least one teacher/aide in their classroom will be bilingual in their dominant second language. When necessary, staff may refer to SLV BOCES/Child Find (San Luis Valley Board of Cooperative Services) with parent/guardian consent for needed instructional and planning services for English Language Learners.

Parents/Guardians can contact BOCES/Child Find at:

San Luis Valley BOCES/Child Find

2261 Enterprise Drive

Alamosa, CO 81101

Phone: (719)589-5851

The Child Find Program through SLV BOCES is provided throughout the six counties in the San Luis Valley for children ages 0-5 for screenings, assessments, and, when appropriate, comprehensive multidisciplinary evaluations. Child Find is mandated by law, is a free service, and connects children and families to intervention services when appropriate.

### **Family Involvement**

Family members are welcome to visit the preschool any time. Volunteers are appreciated in the classroom and on field trips.

Family members are encouraged to participate on parent committees including S de C Boosters, school committees, and the District Accountability Committee. Please contact the director if interested.

Families are also asked to give feedback on the program annually with a family survey.

Preschool holds many events throughout the school year including open house, family nights, and parenting classes. Family night themes have included literacy, games, math, social skills (relaxation), and Kindergarten transition. These school-community events take place at least once per month. Parent-teacher conferences are also held twice per school year according to the school calendar.

**Special Needs**

The preschool serves children with special needs consistent with the “Americans with Disabilities Act” and in conjunction with the child’s “Individual Education Plan” with the support of San Luis Valley Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES). Sangre de Cristo Preschool supports inclusion for students with special needs within the classroom and our program. We also partner with BOCES and families to meet the learning goals of those with special needs.

**Illness**

Children are observed and checked for signs of illness throughout the day. Children who have a fever, are vomiting, have diarrhea or become ill during the day will be separated from the other children. The child’s parents or emergency contact person will be asked to take them home. Children should not return to the school until they are free of symptoms and/or have been treated by their medical provider. Copies of the Academy of Pediatrics’ recommendations on when children need to be excluded from school are available from the director.

**Immunizations**

Records of current immunizations are required when a child is enrolled. Children who require alternative immunizations will be considered on a case by case basis.

**Medications**

If children require prescription medication to be administered at the preschool the parent must obtain and submit with all medications in the original prescription container an authorization form from the medical provider directing administration procedures. All medication is stored out of the reach of children. The school nurse or staff qualified in medication administration will administer the medication.

Non-prescription medication requires the same procedure as outlined above. These procedures comply with the Nurse Practice Act.

**Injury**

If a child is injured at the preschool, appropriate first aid measures will be taken and parents will be contacted per their instructions on the medical authorization. An accident report will be completed with a copy for the parent and a copy for the child's file.

Staff at Sangre de Cristo School District is required by law to report any possible or suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the Colorado Department of Human Services.

### **Emergency Procedures**

If there is an emergency that causes evacuation, the school district will provide transportation by bus to the city park in Mosca, CO. Emergency preparedness kits will be available on the bus. Parents/guardians will be notified via text message. For emergencies that require in-house shelter, we will remain in the classroom where an emergency preparedness kit is located in the closet. Please see the district policy manual for more detailed emergency response procedures.

### **Clothing and Toilet Training**

Children should dress appropriately for the weather and active play. Children play outside daily unless the weather is extreme. Children should have a change of clothes at the preschool. Children should not bring any items from home with the exception of comfort items and water bottle. All clothing should be marked with the child's name.

Children must be potty-trained before entering preschool, with the exception being a medical condition/development delay.

S de C preschool is not responsible for any items a child brings to school. Please return any items belonging to the preschool that are accidentally taken home.

### **Transitions to Preschool and Kindergarten**

Transitioning can be a challenging process. S de C Preschool wants transitions from home to school and from preschool to kindergarten to be a positive experience for both the child and the family.

New students are welcomed at registration in the spring before their preschool school year. Home visits are done before school begins to meet with the child and their family. This gives the child an opportunity to meet their teacher in their most familiar and comfortable setting, their home. The child's strengths and concerns are addressed in the preschool forms and an assessment is used (ASQ). This information is helpful to the teacher who can then provide an easier transition from home to school for the child and parent.

Sangre de Cristo preschool provides a “transition day” at the end of May where preschool students and their families are introduced to the kindergarten teacher(s) and given the opportunity to visit the classroom. There is also an evening program where the school’s principal gives a brief explanation of expectations and welcomes the families. Every child receives a “transition kit” filled with school supplies and goodies.

### **Parent/Teacher Engagement**

Children thrive when parents and teachers work together. Regular communication builds a strong parent-teacher dynamic and relationship. Parents may contact the teacher to discuss any questions or concerns they have on a daily basis.

Children’s progress is assessed continually with My Teaching Strategies. Three formal observation check points will be completed during the school year. A final report will be given to the parent at the end of each year, included in the child’s portfolio of work. A portfolio of work samples, observations, photographs and assessment reports will be shared with the parents of each child. Ask the teacher for more information on following your child’s progress throughout the year on My Teaching Strategies. Parent teacher conferences are held twice yearly – one in the fall and one late winter. Parents may request additional conferences at any time. Two attempts will be made to complete a conference before the assessments are sent home for signature.

Teachers will make weekly lesson plans. A copy will be given to parents and/or posted visibly and given to the principal/director. Lesson plans will be appropriate to children’s and family’s individual needs to build a better community. Planning time is factored into the weekly schedule and all staff will be paid at least one hour of planning time per week. Planning time will occur outside of the classroom where lead teachers and teaching staff are not responsible for supervision of children.

### **Community Engagement**

The Sangre de Cristo Preschool will collaborate with the County Departments of Human Services and the SLV BOCES to create IFSP’s and IEP’s to better individualize learning plans and family service plans for a child’s optimal growth and development.

### **Inclement Weather**

If temperatures are below 20 F or over 90 F, or if the weather is not conducive to outdoor play, the children at our facility will participate in gross motor activities inside the classroom. If the district closes due to inclement weather, the preschool will also be closed. Parents will be notified by text message.

### **Supervision**

The students at Sangre de Cristo Preschool will be monitored at all times and the proper staff-to-child maintained always. Students cannot leave the building unattended. Attendance will be taken upon arrival, verified on a half-hour basis, and at any activity outside our facility, including fire drills and field trips, and during outside play. If there is an occasion where children are out of the classroom or playground area, a name-to face head count will be taken. Sangre de Cristo Preschool will occasionally show educational G-rated videos for children. Parents will be given the choice to “opt-out” of any video/movie.

### **Positive Interactions**

Each teacher at Sangre de Cristo Preschool has been trained on positive teaching practices to ensure that children’s behavior is guided in a positive manner. We continuously involve our families through daily communications regarding their child and encourage them to guide their child in a positive direction. The teachers encourage positive interactions with each child through demonstration and teachings that allow children to learn and be capable of respecting others socially and emotionally.

Through training each teacher is able to effectively and positively reinforce children’s positive behavior and re-direct any behavior that is harmful to a wanted behavior. Each teacher consistently demonstrates positive interactions with each child, which helps children learn how to treat others in a positive manner and allows them to be more socially and emotionally aware of the feelings of their peers.

Teacher(s) provide individualized social and emotional intervention supports for children who need them, including methods for understanding child behavior; and developing, adopting, and implementing a team-based positive behavior support plan with the intent to reduce challenging behavior and prevent suspensions and expulsions.

Sangre de Cristo Preschool believes in working as a team to identify the specific social and emotional needs of each child. Our staff is trained in understanding children’s behavior and developing positive behavior support plans for each child. We will provide an early childhood mental health consultant or other specialist as needed.

### **Guidance/Discipline**

Parents will be notified as to their child’s behavior in writing, phone call, or personal meeting. Parent – teacher conferences are held twice annually. Discipline consists of re-direction, talking through conflicts, or a “time-in” approach where students are encouraged to sit with the teacher or aide and discuss what behavior was observed. The “time-in” will correspond to the student’s age. For example, a three-year-old will not sit with the teacher for more than three minutes. Students will be encouraged to do “restorative justice” practices. For example, if a student knocks down another’s block “castle”, then the student will help to build it again. In the case of significant behavior challenges, a behavior

management plan will be made with agreement by the child's family and the staff. An early childhood mental health specialist will be contacted as necessary.

### **Response to Challenging Behavior**

The preschool will conduct observations and documentation of ongoing concerns, progress and accomplishments. This information will be shared with parent/guardian and action plans will be updated accordingly.

### **Transportation**

Children will be released only to persons listed on their enrollment form. Anyone not known to the staff at Sangre de Cristo Preschool will be asked to provide an ID. If you have an emergency and need someone not listed on the enrollment form to pick up your child you will need to call and give verbal authorization. That person will need to provide an ID. If someone attempts to pick up your child and they are not authorized 911 will be called. A parent has the right to pick up their child whether they are listed on the enrollment form or not unless court orders do not allow for this. We will need to have a copy of any court orders. If you or any other person arrives to pick up a child and appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol we will encourage you to call someone to come get you. If you leave with your child I will call 911 and report the situation. Transportation is available for students either in the morning to school or to go home after school. Transportation is also provided for field trips. Parents must provide their own transportation for the half-day program. (Students in the morning class may ride the bus in the morning, but must be picked up by an authorized adult at 11:00 a.m. Students in the afternoon class may ride the bus home at 4:00 p.m., but must be brought to school by an authorized adult at 1:00 p.m.) Parents must sign a transportation agreement. For more information on bus routes, please call Mr. Bobby McKinley at 378-2321 Ext. 167.

While transporting children on field trips, we ensure the Colorado State Laws are followed at all times. A qualified driver will be present in each bus with each group of children. All vehicles are equipped with first aid supplies and have an individual currently certified in First Aid and CPR. Each driver will also be instructed in emergency roadside procedures. Children are required to remain seated with their seatbelt fastened appropriately and children are never left unattended in a vehicle.

### **Releasing Children**

If your child has not been picked up within 20 minutes after closure and the school has not heard from you we will begin to contact the emergency contacts on your enrollment form. If no one can be located within 15 minutes we will contact local authorities (Alamosa County Sheriff Department) and/or Alamosa County Social Services to pick up your child. Children may be released only to adults authorized by the parent/guardian listed on the authorization form of the Sangre de Cristo Preschool. Persons picking up children will be verified through identification of a valid state driver's license or identification card to ensure they are an authorized pick up person. S de C Preschool will not release children without verifying that the person picking up the child is authorized to do so. Either the teacher or director will stay with the child until the sheriff's department/social services arrive.

### **Late Arrivals**

If a child arrives after his/her assigned class has already left on a field trip or excursion away from the school, that child will be sent home immediately with the parent.

### **Personal Belongings**

Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of the student's belongings. However, the preschool is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please do not send your child with something so valuable it cannot be replaced. If a child brings an item that is valuable (i.e. working cell phone) or amount of money more than \$5.00, the preschool will notify the parent or guardian via phone call or text and hold the item or money until after school and return it to them.

### **Meals and Snacks**

Breakfast will be provided at 8:20 a.m. in the cafeteria of our school if your child is in the morning preschool class. Those with food allergies will be posted in the room.

### **Services Withdrawn**

In the event that the preschool would permanently close, parents/guardians will be notified two weeks prior to the event.

### **Withdrawal & Dismissal Policy**

A two-week notice is required before withdrawing a child from our program. Accounts must be paid in full before withdrawing. The director at Sangre de Cristo Preschool reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child at his/her discretion, or for the following possible reasons: • Not observing the rules of the center as outlined in the parent agreement. • Child has special needs that we cannot adequately meet with our current staffing patterns. • Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child. • Expired or non-immunizations and/or physical (well-child check).

### **Difficult Behavior - Suspension or Expulsion**

We will make every effort to work with the parent or guardian to ensure a cooperative approach for children having difficulties with behavior. A parent/guardian will be called if the child exhibits uncontrollable behavior that cannot be modified by the preschool's staff. The parent /guardian may be asked to take the child home immediately. The following steps will be taken regarding children who display chronic disruptive behavior.

**Initial Consultation:** The director may request that the parent or guardian meet for a conference. The problem will be defined and intervention strategies will be discussed. The best solution toward solving the problem will be agreed upon by the preschool director, teacher, and parent or guardian. The agreement will be written down as a "contract."

**Second Consultation:** If the initial plan for helping the child fails or the contract is "broken," the parent will again be asked to meet with the director and teaching staff involved. Another attempt will be made

to identify the problem, and establish a new, or revised, approach for solving the problem. If the child is a danger to themselves or other children, we may choose to suspend your child for an agreed period of time.

Expulsion: When the previous attempts have been followed and no progress has been made toward solving the problem, the child may be expelled from the program at the discretion of the director, principal and superintendent of schools. It is only as a very last resort that we would ask you to remove your child from our preschool.

### **Physicals**

Health information records are required for all children in order to comply with Colorado's state requirements. All children three-years-old and older admitted to the program shall have a dated statement of the child's current health status, dated within the last twelve months. A dated statement of the child's current health status signed by the child's physician or nurse practitioner shall be submitted annually thereafter. If you do not have health insurance and need help obtaining resources for medical insurance or other medical needs, please contact the director for a list of community resources. If you have concerns about your child's health or development, please contact either our school nurse or preschool director. They will provide resources and/or referrals to the appropriate agency. Vision, hearing and dental screenings will be provided by Sangre de Cristo Preschool at the beginning of the school year.

### **Recording Policy**

Filming, photography, or audio recording on Sangre de Cristo School property is only allowed when authorized and in approved public areas.

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

Suspected or known child abuse should be reported to the Colorado Neglect and Abuse Hotline at (844)264-5437. Help is also available for domestic violence and sexual abuse at Tu Casa in Alamosa at (719)589-2465.

### **Addressing Concerns/Referral Policy**

The S de C Preschool Director is available to discuss concerns parents have about the preschool, its policies or operations and can be contacted via phone or e-mail. If parents do not feel their concerns are adequately addressed, they will need to follow the chain of command within the school district.

Unresolved concerns should be addressed to the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care, 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, Colorado, 80202-1714 or phone (303)-866-5958.

If your child needs assistance or further assessing outside the scope of expertise of the preschool teaching staff, the parent will receive contact information to Child Find which will ensure that further assessment is conducted appropriately. Parents are encouraged to contact outside agencies for

programs/services directly. Contact the preschool director for a list of resources about organizations that provide early intervention. The referral process is as follows: The teacher informs the director of their concern. The director observes the child and reads the portfolio/information given. A meeting is held with parents, teacher and director. The parent is given the contact information for the appropriate referral agency (Child Find). The parent makes contact with the agency and a screening is arranged. The outcomes are discussed with the teacher/director.

The staff and the parent discuss ways the program can assist in meeting the child’s needs. If a parent chooses to not accept the referral, and outside assistance is essential to the health, safety and well-being of the child or the other children or staff in the program, then our preschool program reserves the right to discontinue services.

**Acknowledgement**

By signing below I acknowledge that I have received, read, and agree with the policies of the Sangre de Cristo Preschool. The signed policy shall be kept in my child’s file and a copy shall be given to me.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student (Please print)

