

Mountain Valley ELC - Handbook

Program Operations

Mountain Valley ELC, 314 N. 16th St, Bozeman, MT 59715
mountainvalleyelc@gmail.com
(970) 590 - 5168

Mountain Valley ELC is owned and operated by Heather Dovenbarger. We are a family business, and you will frequently see our children floating around and helping with various chores. The kids come to know and love our children, but they are not responsible for our daycare. We are licensed by Child Care Licensing for the state of Montana and operate under a city business license, these are hung on our parent board.

Hours of Operation

We are open 7:30 am to 5:30 pm Monday through Friday. Each child will have his or her own scheduled drop off and pick up times within these times.

We are open an average of fifty weeks each year. Childcare is available for school age children on 'no school' days (PIR days) due to snow cancellations, workshops, or school vacations, unless otherwise indicated.

Our Philosophy

We believe that all children grow and develop at their own pace and while it is important to ensure children are ready for kindergarten and for life experiences, we also feel they should not be hurried through childhood. Our goal is to provide a safe learning environment where kids can simply be kids.

We feel play is an essential aspect of young children's lives. It is essential to their well-being and development. Our preschool program provides time for free play as children need these experiences. New concepts, new skills, and new understanding come to children through play. In play, children learn to formulate and organize ideas and to become more flexible in problem solving. Children's attention begins to lengthen when they play. Their imagination can take them anywhere they want to go. During play children learn to communicate their thoughts, feelings and needs to others. By arranging our childcare areas to offer challenging, interesting play and learning choices at a range of developmental levels, children will learn through their play. We balance play with many structured activities such as table time, circle time, open ended art activities, sensory activities, music, meals, clean up etc. We choose curriculum activities based

on the needs of the children enrolled and where we feel they need to be for kindergarten.

We feel it is important to help each child succeed at his or her own level and adjust projects to meet and challenge their current level of development. Teachable moments provide learning opportunities on any given day. Children learn counting, patterning, and one to one correspondence setting the table. Looking up a bug they may have seen on the playground teaches them not only the information about the bug (science), but that books, magazines, and computers are resources. We strongly feel that developing their love for learning and exploration is every bit as important as their care and safety!

We believe social skills and self-help skills are essential for each child to develop and we reinforce this through modeling responsibility, acceptance, caring, sharing and respect for all children and adults. We believe that truly listening and engaging in conversations with children provides numerous opportunities for the development of emotional, language and social skills as well as enhancement of self-esteem. We are sensitive to each child's social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs. We strive to meet their individual needs as well as the group's needs. We believe given these experiences and opportunities, children will develop a positive self-esteem and love of learning that will follow them throughout their lives.

Staff

Heather Dovenbarger (Facility Owner and Director) - attended school at Bethel College in North Newton Kansas and received her BA in Nursing. She has worked with special needs children for the last 5 years and has enjoyed growing a personal connection with pediatric patients and their families. Through experience as a nurse, she has learned to work with children, their doctors, and create a plan of care for each of them based on their needs. She will do the same with families who attend. As the director, she is all about a personal connection, that means she will strive to learn about your family and child as much as she can.

As a director she has completed various educational workshops. She continues to constantly read up on new teaching mechanisms, new research on childhood brain development and neural pathway formations within early childhood. She is also revamping the space for the children regularly so they get fresh displays, learning tools, toys, and everything we can to give the kids more opportunity to learn and grow.

Sarah Bloem - Lead Nursery Teacher

Hannah Blackwell - Assistant Nursery Teacher

Jaidyn Larson - Assistant Nursery Teacher

Ella Martin - Lead Toddler Teacher

Tiana Iron Horse - Assistant Toddler Teacher

Madison Dagleish - Lead Preschool Teacher

Kaitlen Zube - Assistant Preschool Teacher

Saylor Skinner - Facility Floater

Staff Requirements

All Staff must complete extensive background checks, four initial child care trainings along with Infant and Child CPR and Pediatric First Aid. Every year staff is also required to complete 16 annual training hours. All staff must also complete an agreement for shaken-baby syndrome (SIDS) and infant safe-sleep, regardless of if they work in the infant room. All of these must be completed to be left alone or work with children- although it is very rare that staff are left alone with children because of our set up and our staffing. We try to overstaff here so we can be prepared if someone must be gone for a bit or if someone must call out sick.

Our interviewing process is extensive, as we want to make sure that potential staff is a good fit within the Mountain Valley ELC community, including employees and your children. We strive to create an environment where our staff feels empowered to take responsibility in their work.

Enrollment Paperwork

ALL CHILDREN WILL NEED TO HAVE THE BRIGHTWHEEL ENROLLMENT FORM FILLED OUT. THIS IS FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE.

Paperwork includes:

For Infant enrollment, we need the following documents to start childcare:

- Vaccination records
- Emergency Contact Form
- Infant Feeding Schedule
- Pediatric Health Statement
- Non- Ingestible Over the Counter Medication Authorization Form
- BRIGHTWHEEL Enrollment Form
- Medication Authorization Form (if they need medication or if you want them to be able to take Tylenol, Ibuprofen, or other medications at daycare)

For toddler or preschooler, we need the following documents to start childcare:

- Vaccination records
- Emergency Contact Form
- Non- Ingestible Over the Counter Medication Authorization Form

- BRIGHTWHEEL Enrollment Form
- Medication Authorization Form (if they need medication or if you want them to be able to take Tylenol, Ibuprofen, or other medications at daycare)

Parent Communication

We use Brightwheel as a primary form of communication to communicate with you. I (the Director) send out weekly communications in messages and **it is of utmost importance that those messages are read.** Those messages include important information in them about happenings for that week and information specific to your child and your family. I may also need paperwork from you and will communicate that through this software. Please, please, please read these messages weekly. You can always communicate with us on Brightwheel or you can call or text me at (970) 590 - 5168.

We will also use parent pick up and drop off to communicate things to and from you to our staff. Please do not hesitate to talk to us in person. We can always make sure the messages make it wherever they need to go, whether it be to your child's teacher or Heather, the director. Communication is key with children, and we try our best to keep up with it.

Arrival and Departure Routine

Toddler/Preschool age children must be accompanied by a parent or other authorized adult. (Authorized adults must be listed on your child's Enrollment Form.) All children are encouraged to take care of their own belongings and to get their own shoes on/off as they are able.

ARRIVAL

- Sign your child in for the day in brightwheel
- Have your child put their things in the Entryway, take care of jacket, hats, etc.
- Remind your child to keep their shoes on or put on their inside shoes
- Share any valuable information with staff (schedule changes, how the child is feeling, etc.)
- Make sure to let staff know if your child will need breakfast that morning.

If you need to leave a check, try to give it to the director. We can provide you with a receipt. We accept card payments via Brightwheel or check. Sometimes, it may take up to a week to get your payment put into Brightwheel but if it has been a week and you are not seeing it reflected, please send the director a message to check in on it.

If your child is going to be arriving late or will be absent for the day, please message us by 9:30 am so we can plan our day accordingly. If you are going to be late by more than 5 minutes OR

after 5:35 pm, please notify us so we can reassure your child and plan for staff to stay with your child. (See parent contract for pricing)

DEPARTURE

- Encourage your child to get ready to go home themselves as much as possible. This teaches them responsibility and prepares them for school (and life.)
- If your child is outside, they will not be allowed to leave the play yard through the gate- THEY MUST GO THROUGH THE BACK DOOR.
- If someone other than the parent (guardian) will be picking them up, please notify us in advance. Verbal communication, text, or Brightwheel messages are acceptable. THEY MUST BE ON THE PICKUP LIST IN ADVANCE YOU CAN DO THIS THROUGH YOUR BRIGHTWHEEL BUT THEY HAVE TO BE ON THERE SO WE CAN CHECK THEIR ID WHEN THEY COME AND CHECK THEIR NAME.
- No child will be released to any person not listed on the child's enrollment form without prior approval from the child's parents. Approval can be given to the director in person or in text.

Orientation to our Program/Separation Anxiety

Starting in a new setting is an exciting experience for a young child, however it can also be a difficult one initially. Even children who are very excited about "starting school" may suddenly realize that you are not going to be there. The apprehension that accompanies that realization is a normal reaction. We would like to offer several suggestions to help your child with the adjustment process.

- Relax! Children will sense your apprehension; therefore, it is important that you feel comfortable with the routine. If you have questions or concerns, please ask us. ● Come and visit with your child before the first day of attendance.
- Learn the names of your child's future playmates and the teachers who will be caring for them.
- Go to their Brightwheel page, look at the pictures with your child. It will help your child become more familiar with the classroom before attending.
- In their first days, use Brightwheel pictures as a conversation starter with your child. What do you think you would like to do there? What did you play with today? Did you like the ____? etc.
- Actively listen to your child as (s)he talks about their day. This will give insight to help the next day. If you know they like the blocks, that might be a great direction to get them thinking about the next morning.
- Establish a "goodbye routine" and even practice it at home when leaving your child with a

grandparent or spouse who typically doesn't drop off. Try for example a special phrase like see you later alligator, one hug and two kisses. Try not to get trapped in the "one more hug, kiss etc." Kids are amazing at this game! Unfortunately, it usually just makes for a tough goodbye.

- Figure out what works best for your child. For most children a quick departure is best. It doesn't prolong what they are dreading (you are leaving). Usually by the time parents have pulled out of the driveway, a crying child has stopped and is involved in playing.
- If you are wondering how they are doing, please call or text to see how they are doing. We don't want you spending the day worrying about them and totally understand how difficult this transition is on parents as well as children.

Health, Medication and Safety

Your child's health is important to all of us. Please inform us of any special health precautions, medications or other concerns you may have about your child. In accordance with Montana state law Immunization records must be on file at the center within one month of enrollment for all children who are not yet in public school. Please update records after each immunization.

Authorization for medical treatment must be completed and signed by a parent and be kept on file for each child enrolled in our program. Our emergency medical facility is Bozeman Health unless another facility is dictated by your insurance carrier, you, or the severity of the emergency. In case of emergency, we will make every effort to contact the parent first. Children requiring emergency treatment may be transported by a teacher or EMS for minor injuries requiring immediate treatment.

Staff are trained in CPR, First Aid, and Basic Water Safety.

Sick Policy

Illness: Parental cooperation is necessary to promote a healthy environment for all the children attending our program. Please do not send your child to the center if they show signs of illness in the morning. Your child may attend if they have regular cold symptoms, mild coughing or runny nose if they are able to participate in ALL childcare activities including outside play. Parents need to have an alternative plan for childcare in case of illness. When we call to inform you that your child is sick and needs to be picked up or that the facility will be closed, we expect you to have arranged back up care or someone to pick up your child within 1 hour or a fee will apply (see parent contract.)

A child may not attend school if they have any one of the following:

- **Fever:** Children will be sent home if their temperature is 99.9 or higher and must stay

home the next day for observation. Children must be free of fever (any temperature above 98.6 degrees) for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. The same policy applies if your child develops a fever at home. They must be fever free (any temperature above 98.6 degrees) for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication before returning to childcare.

- **Rash:** Any rash other than a common diaper rash or skin irritation will require that child to be sent home for an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing of exactly what it is. They may return to school based on that written doctor's evaluation, and clearance that it is not contagious.
- **Conjunctivitis (pink eye):** Children will be sent home if there appears to be an unusual amount of discharge from or irritation to their eye(s) and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school they will need an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing of exactly what it is.
 - If the diagnosis is BACTERIAL CONJUNCTIVITIS children must have received at least 24 hours of treatment.
 - If the diagnosis is VIRAL CONJUNCTIVITIS your child may return AS LONG AS THERE IS NO DISCHARGE.
 - If in fact they do not have "pink eye" we need a doctor's note with a diagnosis and a clearance that it is not contagious.
- **Thick White, Green or Yellow Discharge:** Children will be sent home if they appear to have any thick white, green or yellow discharge. This is often indicative of an infection and they must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school they will need an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing and at least 24 hours of treatment. If in fact, they do not have an infection we need a doctor's note with a diagnosis of exactly what it is with a clearance that it is nothing contagious. The Department of Health and most doctors are of the opinion that once on antibiotics for 24 hours, the discharge is no longer contagious even though it may persist for up to two weeks.
- **Diarrhea:** Children will be sent home if they have three or more loose bowel movements in one day and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school (after the day of observation) children must be free from diarrhea for 24 hours with at least 1 regular bowel movement. If your child has one or more loose bowel movements on their first day back, they will again be sent home.
- **Vomiting:** Children will be sent home if they vomit and must stay home the next day for

observation. Children must be symptom free with no vomiting for at least 24 hours before they return to school.

- **Persistent Hacking Cough:** Children will be sent home if they have a persistent hacking cough and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school they will need an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing and at least 24 hours of treatment. If in fact, they do not require any treatment we need a doctor's note with a diagnosis of exactly what it is with a clearance that it is not contagious.
- **Lice:** Children will not be readmitted until 24 hours after treatment and must be nit free. The Director or a Lead Teacher will make an evaluation and determine if the child can be readmitted.

Common Cold Policy

Children suffering from a common cold will be assessed on an individual basis.

Factors of consideration include the developmental level of your child in congruence with our ability to limit the spread of germs.

The younger your child, the more difficult it is to keep the spread of germs down. For example: hand to face contact, mouthing of toys, uncontrolled nasal discharge, uncovered sneezing and coughing etc.

Children should not return to the program until a full 24 hours after a fever has ceased (without the use of a fever reducer) and diarrhea or vomiting has stopped. In addition, children must be on medication for any communicable disease for 24 hours before returning to the center. I understand this is a hardship for working parents, but I must think of all the other working parents and the other children's health.

CENTER POLICY—COVID-19

Exposure:

If, within the last 10 days, any member of your household has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, or any member of your household who is not immune (as defined below) has been in close contact with anyone who has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, then all members of your household who are not immune must remain out of the center. For example, should a member of your household become infected with COVID-19, your child needs to stay out for 10 days after the last exposure from that family member AND they must test on day 5 after that last exposure. If they are positive at that last exposure, you must notify us so we can quarantine the classroom appropriately. If it is negative, your child needs to then test again on day 10 after the last exposure to ensure they did not get it before they rejoin daycare. If it is negative, they may then return to daycare but if it is positive, they must quarantine for an

additional 7 days AND you must notify us.

Symptoms:

All symptomatic individuals (including any “immune” individuals) and any members of that symptomatic individual’s household who are not immune and who have been excluded under the Gallatin County Health Department and Illness Policy-COVID-19 must remain out of the center, unless cleared BY A DOCTOR’S NOTE to return or the 10 day waiting period has gone by and negative test results can be produced that were taken on day 10.

Individuals will be considered “immune” commencing:

- ***For vaccinated individual:*** Two weeks after completing the full course of vaccination.
- ***For previously positive individual within 90 days of coming down ill with it (with lab-confirmed case):*** ten (10) days after the onset of symptoms, or, in the case of an asymptomatic individual, ten (10) days after the date tested.

After the applicable exclusion period has passed, you/your household may return provided these three things have happened:

- At least 10 days have passed since anyone in your household first experienced symptoms; **and**
- Symptoms have improved for anyone in your household that experienced symptoms (for example, cough or shortness of breath has improved); **and** - Your household has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducers.
- YOUR CHILD MUST HAVE A DOCTOR NOTE OR A NEGATIVE TEST BEFORE RETURN

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS: means anyone living or present in the household on a regular basis (e.g. houseguests, nannies, caregivers, home health workers, contractors, etc.) and includes anyone with pick up or drop off privileges at the center.

CLOSE CONTACT: Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic individuals, 2 days prior to test date).

Factors to consider in determining close contact include proximity, duration of exposure, whether the infected individual was symptomatic and/or generating respiratory aerosols (e.g., was coughing, singing, shouting), and other environmental factors (crowding, adequacy of ventilation, whether exposure was indoors or outdoors). Masks are not a substitute for social distancing. Consequently, when determining close contact for members of the general public, the determination should be made irrespective of whether the contact was wearing respiratory PPE

or fabric face coverings.

Medication

Staff will dispense either prescription or non-prescription medication under the following conditions:

- Medication is in the original container which is labeled with the child's name.
- A **Medication Authorization Form** must be signed by the guardian and possibly the doctor- depending on the medication.

Please give all medications including cough drops to a staff member for storage and administration. You may choose to complete a form to authorize administration of non-prescription medication for minor occurrences (headaches, fevers, coughs, sore throats, etc.)

Safety

- The playground and classroom equipment are cleaned and inspected regularly.
- Children and staff use proper hand washing procedures before and after each meal, toileting, diapering, etc.
- Air purifiers with appropriate HEPA filtration and fast cycling are used in all the classrooms children are in.
- Child records are kept up to date and are located where staff members can quickly access in case of emergency.
- We are a family of non-smokers, and no smoking is permitted in any children's areas including the side yards and backyard.
- We may use masks for protection when we are sick and have a negative covid test. We may also require them for families indoors when illness is high.
- A first aid kit, children's emergency information and cell phone are brought on any field trips.
- 8 fire drills and 2 other emergency drills (Earthquake, Lock-down, bad weather, Ect) are held each year. We practice them at various times of the day using different exits. Fire extinguishers and battery fire alarms are installed and inspected regularly.
- Carbon Monoxide detector is in sleeping area.
- Staff are mandated reporters of suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program

This program is affiliated with the USDA Child Care Food Program and serves well balanced meals and snacks. All food preparation is handled in accordance with accepted safety practices. Meals are served on individual plates. Children learn to set the table and use good table

manners. We used mealtimes as a perfect opportunity to practice manners, such as please and thank you, not interrupting others when they are talking, chewing with mouths closed, not talking with food in their mouth and sitting at the table without getting up and down during the meal. We encourage each child to take a “no thank you bite” of each item served, although not required. Children learn about responsibility as they clean up their dishes and spills. Monthly Menus are posted on the parent board.

Each day children are served breakfast (9am), lunch and PM snack at no additional charge. Although the children may have special snacks, they are served in addition to the required foods. Due to recent USDA recommendations, we very rarely will serve fruit juices of any kind. Most, but not all fruits served are 100% juice.

Breakfast: Breakfast is served to all children arriving before 9 am. It consists of the following food group:

1. Milk
2. Fruit, vegetable, or juice
3. Enriched bread or equivalent – typically cereal, bagel, English muffins, French toast, pancakes, banana or other homemade breads/muffins.

Lunch: is served at approximately 11:15 am and has components of all food groups:

1. Milk
2. Two Fruits and/or vegetables
3. Enriched bread or equivalent – pasta, rice, bread, etc.
4. Meat, poultry, fish, cheese or egg.

Snacks: Snacks are served typically at 3:15 pm for everyone. Snacks are simple and nourishing and include food such as fruit, milk, crackers, homemade cookies, breads or muffins, etc.

Please do not send other foods with your child unless he/she is bringing enough for the class to share. Special Dietary Needs: If your child has any other dietary issues/sensitivities, please let me know and we will attempt to make reasonable accommodations.

***"Non-Discrimination Statement:** In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.*

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

*To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: How to File a Complaint, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;*

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: USDA Civil Rights.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and sex, you have a right to file a complaint:"

Or you can just put in this statement ""This institution is an equal opportunity provider.""

Social & Self-Help Goals

We feel social and self-help skills and life skills are as important as academics. Each program has different expectations for children, so we wanted to outline some of the goals and skills children in our program will be working on. We DO NOT expect your child to come into our program knowing how to meet these expectations. It is a growing and learning process. The goals we have for the children in our care are all in place for a reason. They may be for health and safety reasons or developing self-help skills they will need for kindergarten and beyond, or social skills they need to navigate through life.

General Manners and Expectations:

- Children will learn to say please and thank you regularly.
- Children will learn to say excuse me when appropriate.
- Children will learn to cough and sneeze into the bend of their elbow/arm. ● Children will learn to share and take turns as developmentally appropriate. (Preschoolers will not be able to always do this – this is a goal to work towards.)
- We do not allow children to exclude anyone who wants to play with them. (they can have alone time, but we try to eliminate the “I only want to play with _____”)
- Children are expected to help clean up the classroom at clean up times. We also encourage children to get in the habit of putting things away when they are done playing with it.
- Children are expected to use a gentle touch, we discourage rough play and pretend

guns/shooting.

- Children are expected to be respectful of their teachers and other children, and school belongings.
- Children are expected to take care of their own things. They put their things away in their cubbies, place papers or crafts in their go home folders and are expected to clean after themselves.

Table Manners:

- Children wash their hands before each meal.
- Children will also learn to pour their own drinks from small pitchers. We do not use sippy cups for children 3 years old or older.
- Children learn to use phrases such as “please pass the ____”. or ask for things they need like “Can you refill the milk pitcher, please?” “Thank you for ____”.
- Children are expected to remain seated during mealtimes. They are expected to say, “May I please be excused?” when they are done eating. (This helps children remember they are not to get up and down during a meal.)
- With children serving themselves, spills are to be expected, they are told “It’s ok, try to be more careful next time.” They are responsible for cleaning up their own spills – help is given as needed, but this is one way to teach them to become responsible. ● Children clean up their own plates, cups and utensils after eating.

Diapering and Toileting

We believe that potty learning is different for each child and each child will exhibit signs of readiness at different ages. Because of this, we do not require your child to be trained before starting preschool. We have experience and training in potty learning. We will be glad to assist in potty training with the understanding that it will only work if we work together. When your child is showing signs of readiness, you must work with your child at home, and we'll work with them here. Children should have some consistent success at home before we start with them at school/childcare. This typically means several days with only one accident and interest in staying dry. We prefer for children to wear underwear over using pull ups. We think pullups confuse them because they are too much like diapers and they have the same feel as diapers. Please bring 3 pairs of underwear and 3 pairs of pants every day when potty training so we can work through accidents. We will send poop accidents home on the rack outside and we will try our best to wash the potty accidents here.

Diapering Procedures: gathering supplies such as clean diapers, wipes, and diaper rash cream. The changing area should be prepared, ensuring cleanliness and safety. After washing hands and putting on gloves, the child is positioned securely on a changing surface. Gloves are applied, the soiled diaper is carefully removed, and the child's diaper area is cleaned thoroughly using wipes

or a damp cloth. If necessary, diaper rash cream is applied, and a clean diaper is put on snugly. Proper disposal of the soiled diaper and sanitization of the changing area are crucial. Handwashing concludes the procedure.

Toileting Procedures: Caregivers will ensure that the restroom is well-stocked with essential supplies like toilet paper, soap, and disposable wipes. Caregivers should encourage children to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water after using the toilet, emphasizing proper handwashing techniques. Regular checks of the restroom should be conducted to promptly address any cleanliness or maintenance issues. Additionally, caregivers should communicate with parents about their child's toileting routines, provide guidance and support for potty training, and ensure that children are comfortable and have a positive experience during toilet use.

Curriculum

Our preschool schedule is flexible to meet you and your child's needs. We teach formal preschool for up to 2 hours a day. We teach weekly and monthly themes. These are designed to meet curriculum needs or/and build on the children's interests. Activities are designed to have children learn and discover new things each day and more importantly develop a love of learning. We have a range of ages each day and adjust activities to make them developmentally appropriate for each child.

Infants and toddlers are included in our curriculum, they learn by exploring their world. This includes putting things in their mouth. Bev Bos said "if it hasn't been in the hand and body, then it can't be in the brain."

Curriculum Goals are based on the new Montana Early Learning Standards which aligns with the Montana State Kindergarten requirements.

Social Skills- (manners, kindness, playing cooperatively, taking turns, compassion, respect, handling emotions)

Self-help skills- (washing hands, brushing teeth, dressing self, handling bathroom needs, cleaning up toys, taking care of their possessions)

Gross Motors Skills- (climbing, running, hopping, jumping, balancing, catching and throwing balls)

Fine Motor skills- (puzzles, Lego's, blocks, manipulative toys, lacing beads, drawing, coloring, writing, cutting, play dough)

Math Skills (counting, patterns, simple addition, and subtraction, one to one correspondence)

We use a wide variety of manipulative activities and incorporate math during our daily activities and circle time.

Literature-based Activities (circle time, stories, charts, finger plays, songs, beginning reading and writing skills and dictating their own stories)

Letter and Number Explorations (activities including letter books, fun tactile activities, games, and a rich print environment)

Handwriting Without Tears (A handwriting program that teaches proper letter formation from the start, yet in fun, easy ways designed for preschoolers to develop good fine motor skills.)

Computers/Tablets (age-appropriate computer programs teach academic skills as well as basic technology skills)

Science (hands on explorations about our environment, animals, and nature)

Social studies (learning about our community)

Art Media Discovery (a variety of painting techniques, markers, glue, scissors, collage materials, beads, stencils, rubbing plates, play dough)

What to bring

Casual clothing is strongly recommended. Your child should be dressed for play; children do get dirty when they are actively involved in play. We feel letting them learn through explorations is much more important than keeping their clothes spotless. Please send your child in clothing that is easy to manage. Your child wants to learn to care for him/herself, and to be independent. Please do not send your child with belts, suspenders or overalls unless they can fasten and unfasten them by themselves.

Please provide a small drawstring or regular backpack with your child's first and last name (preschool and toddlers). This should include 1 complete change of clothes (more if potty training). Dirty clothes will be sent home each day, please be sure to replace any missing items DAILY. If your child has an accident we will wash the child's clothing at the center. It may be a good idea to label socks, because kids don't always get put in the right place and they are hard to tell apart, especially during summer months. Kids lose socks regularly and we cannot always keep track of them. We do have a lost and found bin- located at the front of the facility and you are welcome to check that regularly for items that may be missing. If you are missing a particular item, please let the director know and we look for it specifically.

The infant room is shoe free- please take your shoes off BEFORE you go into the infant room.

Please bring a good amount of extra clothing for you infant, diaper rash cream and any other child specific things they need.

All children (including school age children) should have the following items:

A complete change of clothing, including shorts, long pants, t-shirt, long sleeved shirts, socks, 3 pairs of underwear and sweatshirt or light jacket.

Remember your child's comfort for outdoor play.

Winter: Please dress your child properly for the winter weather. We typically go outside when the weather is above 10 degrees unless it is bad weather due to freezing rain, snow or windy.

Please label ALL winter clothing, particularly mittens, snow pants and boots as so many items look similar. When purchasing outdoor wear for your child please take into consideration that mittens, snow pants and boots must be waterproof otherwise they are wet. Please attempt to leave winter gear that is labeled and can stay at the facility for your child from the start of the first snow until the end of the last snow of the season.

Spring/Fall: Please bring shorts, pants, t-shirts, sweatshirts and jacket. Often a chilly day turns very warm, or a warm day turns cold.

Summer: Wear comfortable shorts, t-shirts and a jacket with comfortable sandals or tennis shoes. on designated days a swimsuit and beach towel with an easily recognizable character or design or labeled.

Older children (school aged) can bring goggles for underwater games, these will not be shared.

Toys and Personal Items

PRESCHOOLERS: No Toys Please!!! Toys brought to school cause added tension as toys could be easily lost or broken and special toys are difficult to share. All young children practice taking turns and sharing; however, it is much harder for your child to share his or her favorite toy. Therefore, I request that no toys be brought, unless you have been notified that it is a special day such as Bring a toy to school day. Phones and smart devices will not be allowed at Mountain Valley ELC.

Child Guidance Policy

Our child guidance policy is designed to help children become independent and caring by learning self-control, decision-making skills and responsibility for their own actions. We believe that children should be treated with the same respect that we, as adults, wish to be treated. Our goals are to help children develop positive self-esteem, respect for themselves and the rights of others and socially acceptable ways of expressing their needs and feelings. This is accomplished through positive guidance and loving discipline when necessary.

We use sticker charts to reinforce good behaviors. We also use popsicles and lollipops (rarely but occasionally) to really get them to understand that good behaviors get them rewards here. For 'offenses' where the child is not hurting another child, we tell them the behavior that they are doing and the behavior we want. We then redirect up to two times. If the behavior continues, we may move to a quick time out. Once the time out is complete, we then circle back with the child and let them know the behavior they did and the behavior we want them to do in the simplest terms we possibly can use. Then, we give them something else to do.

If the child is harming another child, we redirect them once, and if that does not work, we put them in a temporary time out and circle back with them and the other child once they are calm and ready to rejoin the group safely. We never keep children in time out for a specific length of time. Should a child continue to hurt other children over and over in a short period of time and time out is not working, We will let parents know what is happening.

Our staff uses other guidelines and techniques to help children develop self-discipline and reduce problems before they start:

- A learning environment that promotes consistent routines and well-defined expectations. - Plenty of opportunity to redirect.
- Use of praise through kind words and actions (hugs, smiles) to reinforce desirable behaviors.
- Redirection to another activity when a child displays undesirable behaviors. - If a child caused physical or emotional harm to others, the child will be removed from the situation for a brief time to calm down and will "take 5" in a calm down area. - Time is provided to talk with the teacher about how the child is feeling and alternative, appropriate behaviors at a time when the child has calmed down.

We believe the primary responsibility for raising young children rests with the parents; however, the staff strives to assist parents in the training and guidance of their children. We will provide parents with feedback about their children (both positive and negative). If you desire help in dealing with a specific behavior or issue, please discuss it with us. Parent support is expected for any guidance techniques used by staff to resolve unwanted behaviors. Staff are not allowed to discipline a child using prohibited methods (according to legal regulations) even at the request of a parent.

Tuition, Fees, Holding Spots, and Termination

Tuition: Tuition is based on enrollment (a reserved slot), not attendance and payment will be expected regardless of the child is in attendance.

Registration Fee: A one-time \$200.00 registration fee per child is required upon enrollment of a child. This fee covers preparations for your child's arrival, such as setting up a cubby, reviewing and entering records into computer files, and filing forms, as well as holding their spot until the time care is scheduled to begin. This fee is paid on BRIGHTWHEEL to enroll your child.

Annual registration fee due in January:

Termination of care:

- Non-payment of services
- tardiness of payments
- rudeness or impoliteness with anyone on the premises (staff, other parents, my neighbors, my family, etc.)
- disregarding safety precautions
- not informing Mountain Valley ELC in a timely manner (within 24 hours) when your child is ill.
You must notify us that your child is sick and what they are sick with (if it is anything other than a cold.
- If your child is constantly hurting other children and disregarding the safety of other children despite constant corrective attempts from staff, we have the right to terminate your contract as well. ● If we terminate your contract, we will not issue a refund of monthly payment, or a deposit if one was given.

Holding a spot

If we have a future spot open and you need to hold your spot, we charge \$200 per month until the month that you start. So, if it is January and you want to start in April, we would charge \$200 for January, February and March and then proceed with your regular daycare bill for April. If a spot is open currently but you don't want to start till a later date, we will need a full monthly tuition based on the days needed to save the spot. For example, if you want to hold a spot that's available in January but don't want to start until March, full tuition will be due in January, February and March.

Current rates are listed in the contract. You will receive a copy for your records after it has been signed by parents and childcare providers.

Rate Increase: Every August, Tuition will go up based on the cost-of-living index in Bozeman.

Tuition: Tuition payment is due on the **1st** of the month and considered late on the 5th. There will be a \$5 per day late fee for each day your tuition payment is late. If tuition payment becomes 2 weeks late, your child may not be allowed to return to childcare or preschool until tuition is current. I know there are sometimes exceptional circumstances and if you anticipate having a problem making a payment, please let me know as soon as possible. I will try to work with you. However, please keep in mind that this is a business and I do have payroll, food, and other expenses. You expect your paycheck when it is due, and I expect mine. Thank you for your understanding.

Holiday & Vacation Time

Mountain Valley ELC is available for no-school days for teacher workshops, snow days, and

most vacations to help provide care for your school-aged children. Usually, at least one parent has each holiday off. If a holiday falls on a day your child is scheduled to attend, you are required to pay your regular rate for that week.

We are closed for two paid in-service days each year which we use for cleaning or training days. Typically, one day is the Friday before Labor Day which is used to set up our classroom for the school year. These days are paid just as a holiday would be if they fall on your child's regular scheduled day. You will be notified at least one month in advance of in-service days.

Parents are responsible for payment for the following holidays if your child is contracted on the day that falls on them: The day before and New Years Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th and July 5th, the Friday before Labor Day and Labor Day, the day before Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve, Christmas day and the day after.

Director's Vacation: I typically take up to two weeks of paid vacation each year, you will be notified a minimum of one month in advance when childcare/preschool will be closed due to my vacation. I may or may not be closed during my vacation time based on availability of additional staff. Except in case of emergency, childcare will not be closed without considerable advance notice.

Your Vacation: Your child has a reserved space regardless of whether he or she is in attendance. These spaces are highly valuable and needed in Bozeman. You are responsible for your child's regular tuition fee for all additional time your child is absent from care.

Please be sure to view: thedaycareacademybozeman.com under the Information/ Forms Tab every 6 months for updated information. This information is in it and so much more.

By signing this document, I hereby agree to all information included in the contract, policies, handbook, and enrollment packet of Mountain Valley ELC.

Parent 1 Signature: _____

Parent 1 Print: _____

Date: _____

Parent 2 Signature: _____

Parent 2 Print: _____

Date: _____