

## Snow Lion School

Snow Lion is a contemplative school. Contemplative education is experiential and happens from the inside out rather than being imposed from the outside in. The value is placed on self-discovery; on who we are as opposed to what we do. At Snow Lion we cultivate an environment that acknowledges and supports the process of self-discovery and friendliness towards oneself and others. The environment we strive to create is alive with a sense of compassion, wakefulness, self-reflection, generosity, and openness. Other qualities we value in ourselves as teachers, parents, and children are:

- honesty and straightforwardness with ourselves and others
- respect for all beings
- concentration and self-discipline
- a sense of resourcefulness and inspiration to work with our minds and emotions and the experiences and situations we encounter
- awareness of impermanence and the flexibility to respond skillfully to change
- awareness of interdependence and the opportunity to observe this interconnectedness between all beings
- awareness of cause and effect and the opportunity to experience the link between the two
- awareness of the joy and benefit in periods of stillness

In Tibetan culture, the qualities of perkiness, cheerfulness and exuberance are represented by the Snow Lion. Young and powerful, vibrant and without a trace of dull mind, the Snow Lion leaps over snowy mountain peaks. With senses and perceptions clear and wakeful, each thing the Snow Lion meets leads to a deeper curiosity and joy for life. The Snow Lion represents unconditional cheerfulness, a mind free of doubt, and a natural sense of delight.

Most children at our school come 2-4 days per week. Parents choose their children's schedules (days and whether 1/2 or full day) on an individual basis. We have a mixed-age group program, which offers each child a deeper sense of community and an opportunity to experience the passage from being the youngest in the school, looking up to the older children with awe, to the point of being a class elder, resonating with confidence and self-knowing. Mixed age groups resemble families and create a village quality to our classes with each child and developmental group filling a niche that benefits the group as a whole. Children's social skills, knowledge base, and abilities broaden as they interact with others whose knowledge and abilities are similar yet not identical. In a mixed age group, children are able to develop at their own pace and always have peers who are developing at their level, regardless of their age. In the final year of preschool prior to kindergarten, children attend between 2-5 full days/week in order to participate in kindergarten preparation activities.

Seasonal celebrations, home visits, and parent teacher conferences encourage the individual families at Snow Lion to come together as a delightful community. The genuine relationships that grow over time greatly enrich the children's experiences together. We encourage families to keep their children at Snow Lion for their entire preschool experience so they have the opportunity to experience the fruitional aspects of being a part of our school.

Although we have a non-academic program, our curriculum does prepare children for elementary school. We do not formally "teach" but simply provide an environment where children can naturally grow and expand their minds and skills as they play. Naturally, math, linguistic, fine and gross motor skills, practical life knowledge, and many other bases for learning are established when information is not imposed onto children's minds but instead is drawn out of their experiences and basic intelligence. We are often asked by parents of older Snow Lion children about how what we are doing will prepare their children for Kindergarten.

One of the most amazing strengths of these early years of life is that children have the ability to use their imaginations without limit. The greatest gift we can give children in these first five or six years of life is freedom to play and freedom to expand their minds through their own self-led exploration of the world. We know from experience that broad expansive play leads later to broad expansive cognitive skills and the ability to stretch one's mind. Letters and numbers and concepts will all be mastered swiftly when the time is right, but these few short years of magical play based learning can never be recaptured. We want children to leave their time at Snow Lion with a strong connection to their senses. We want them to leave our little nest with great confidence, relaxation with themselves and others, and an ability to communicate well. These are the qualities that will be a platform upon which they will build a meaningful education.

The teachers and program at Snow Lion actively encourage:

### Sensory Awareness, Curiosity, and Development of Natural Intelligence

Through our senses we learn about the world. For young children, the development of sensory awareness leads to a greater depth of relationship to and understanding of oneself and one's environment. When children are connected to their senses, their curiosity seems to thrive. When children are curious, their attention span and focus increases and stabilizes without effort. With increased focus, children become more perceptive and able to arrive at increasingly subtler levels of understanding. Greater perceptiveness leads to a greater manifestation of each child's natural intelligence. Sensory awareness is encouraged through use of natural materials, sensory play, movement, and time spent outdoors.

### Joyful Discipline

We want all children to be familiar with the freedom and confidence that come from a joyful sense of discipline, from being responsible for one's actions, from seeing activities through from beginning to end, and from having the ability to be self-contained. We want children to experience self-discipline not as tedious, but as a practice that provides opportunities for them to be independent and to make their own choices. An environment balanced by kindness and clear boundaries is maintained, so children's minds can relax

### Meaningful Experiences

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."

W.B. Yeats

Play is children's work. Children are natural learners and are intrinsically motivated toward discovery. Through play based curriculum, children can be lead towards experiences that will deepen and expand their sense of meaning in the world. We respect the value of and provide opportunities for real discovery in real life situations. Children are given the space to observe, wander, and take in the environment without being pressured to constantly engage in activities. We support each child as an individual who has his or her own way of being. This is true whether a child is active or idle, extroverted or introverted, a "watcher" or a "doer". We do not worry about children being productive but instead put our focus on children being authentic to who they are.

### Comfort with Diversity

Different people have different ways of thinking, different abilities, values, personalities, styles, preferences, choices, strengths and weaknesses. We want children to understand that there are many ways of being in the world, and to be comfortable with these differences. We welcome each other's qualities, including those that are difficult and encourage children to explore all they are.

## Compassion and Loving Kindness for All Beings

Children are naturally connected to their hearts and therefore able to connect deeply to others. We actively encourage this quality by allowing the children the opportunity to connect with each other in happy times and sad times, by being conscious of and kind towards the other creatures around us, and by maintaining an atmosphere of respect and dignity in the environment. We honor this sense of compassion as the diamond of all qualities and the heart of all we do.

## Snow Lion Teachers

As teachers, we always try to find a balance between seeing the deeper meaning in what we are doing while at the same time keeping a fresh, “beginner’s mind” that allows us to be in the moment with the children. We meet weekly to support each other’s growth, to encourage self-reflection, to integrate what we know with what we experience, and to get feedback in order to expand our awareness of personal edges and how our teaching can improve. At the same time, we are not striving to be perfect and in fact appreciate our imperfections in that they keep us humble and open. We think it is wonderful for children to see the adults in their life working with their rough edges, continuously growing and changing.

## Rhythm of the Day

For young children, rhythm, ritual, and repetition are extremely meaningful. The rhythm of our day at school gives the children a sense of security, relaxation and predictability. The schedule of the day is as follows:

### **8:30-9:00 a.m.           Arrival Time**

Each child arrives at school in his or her own way. Some enter with gusto, running into the class and quickly engaging in activity, hardly remembering to say good-bye. Others take their time adjusting each day, sitting and visiting while warming up slowly. The morning good-bye is a very valuable time for experiencing transition. We strongly encourage parents to make their morning transitions warm, yet brief. After a kiss and hug good-bye, the children are free to play, read books with a teacher, or engage in different activities until it is time to begin circle.

### *A note about transitions...*

All children at some point feel the discomfort of separating from parents and transitioning into being at school. For some children, this experience comes and goes quickly. For others, it lingers. If your child is having a difficult time saying goodbye, here are a few suggestions: First, prepare your mind so that energetically your child feels your confidence about him or her being at school. If you are feeling hesitant, your child will become hesitant as well. Second, make your morning goodbye quick and clear. The most difficult thing for a child who is having a difficult transition is for parents to lengthen the goodbye in an attempt to make it easier for the child. With transitions, the clearer and more positive and confident we are as parents, the easier it will be for our children. We know this is often easier said than done and teachers are always available to help!

### **9:00 a.m.               Morning Circle**

The heart of each day is Morning Circle. *It is very important that all children arrive in time to benefit from this time when we come together to welcome the day, to*

*acknowledge each other's presence, and to connect with what is happening in our world.* Circle is a time when the children are lead through a series of songs, verses, movements, and games that weave into a story. At circle, there is a sense of wonder, inspiration, and appreciation that is sparked and that carries the children through their day at school. What happens in circle tends to flavor much of the children's play, observations, and provides the ground for other class activities. Please make it a priority to arrive in time for circle every day. When children arrive in the middle of circle, it disrupts the entire rhythm, making it nearly impossible to re-group. Sequences, poems, songs, and silence are interrupted and the atmosphere changes dramatically. For children who are the ones interrupting, they distinctly feel the discomfort of this and we notice a significant difference in their sense of connection. For us as teachers, we spend great amounts of time preparing for circle and it is frustrating for us as well. Please make sure your child arrives by 9:00 a.m. If you are going to be late, please call and then wait until 9:45a.m. to arrive. At 9 o'clock, we will put a sign on the gate to let late-arriving families know that circle has already begun. We completely understand that sometimes you are running late in the morning and we really appreciate your understanding about our circle time, which we all hold so dear.

**9:30 a.m.                      Snack**

Morning snack consists of simple foods like grains, fruits and vegetables, crackers, nuts, and other foods that we may cook or bake in relationship to what we are doing at circle. We try to find a balance between serving a snack the children like, and making sure that they save room for lunch! If individual children have allergies, please let us know and we will be sure to accommodate their dietary needs.

**9:45-11:20 a.m.              Morning Activities**

During this time of our day, the Sun and Star classes mix and our time together consists of the following activities:

Creative Play

When children play, they learn about the world. Children's play is, by far, the most important aspect of their early education. Children learn more through play than through any projects we are able to provide. In play, the children communicate deeply with one another, sharing their thoughts and ideas, sorting out difficulties, experiencing their emotions and the emotions of others. When children are able to sink into their play, uninterrupted, they become exceptionally creative. If we can imagine the times in life when we feel completely relaxed and expansive, when our creativity flows, leaving us with confidence and a feeling of greater meaning and connection to our lives, we can begin to understand the depth and importance of children's play. Teachers provide support during these times by creating a cheerful and uplifted environment, nice playthings, and an unobtrusive yet warm presence, there to lend a hand if needed, and otherwise content to simply observe. The playthings available to the children are mostly made of natural materials - cotton and silk cloths, building blocks, log pieces, hollow blocks, dolls, stones, pits, and carved wooden figures, to mention a few. These open-ended types of toys encourage children to "create as they go" and to connect to the natural world through their play.

As adults, it is vital that we remember that sometimes we can't always see the most important things going on in a child's day at school. Playing is truly the magic of childhood, yet it leaves no trace that can be measured by us. As adults, we are necessarily more outcome oriented, but children are quite the opposite. Although much pleasure and confidence comes from making things, for young children, the real passion and meaning in life comes from play.

## Arts and Crafts

We make a distinction between art and crafts. Art is lead and created by the child. Crafts are lead by the teacher and created by the child with the teacher's help. In the older class, the shelf downstairs is always full of art supplies which the children may help themselves to at any time. In the Cubs, art supplies are offered on a daily basis as well. Arts and crafts relate to the seasons and to what we are doing at circle. Through the course of the year we paint, color, sew, weave, die cloth and wool, sculpt, dip candles, and do many, many other crafts and art activities.

## Sensory Play and Handwork

We have many play things which encourage the children to work with their hands. Locks and keys, pouring and scooping materials, beads, marbles and tracks, trains, magnets, puzzles, geo boards, matching games, tweezers, eyedroppers, Froebel's gifts, hammer boards, and many other materials are available. We tend to rotate materials and offer activities that relate to the other areas of curriculum, as well as those that accommodate each child's interests and needs. We also sew, weave, tie knots, work with beeswax, and woodwork. Handwork is important in a young children's development. Several educators have observed that manual dexterity increases mental dexterity. Other benefits of handwork are increased concentration, determination, patience, spatial awareness and self-confidence.

Whether building with blocks, sculpting sand, painting a picture, baking muffins or listening to a story, children naturally connect to their senses as a way of taking in the world around them. The youngest children in the school explore the world very much through their senses of touch and taste. The world is a tactile playground and the children's connection to these senses allows them to experiment and learn about cause and effect, and about how they stand in relationship to others. Young children are great scientists and seem to have an unquenchable thirst for studying how they can effect their surroundings! As children grow, sensory play becomes combined with imaginative play as well as intellectual discovery. By the time the children are ready to enter elementary school, we want them to feel very comfortable in their senses of hearing and seeing, as most educational environments will expect children to be able to focus on and absorb information through these two primary sense doors.

Sensory exploration is encouraged through specific activities which highlight individual or multiple senses. Children work with their senses of touch, smell, and taste with mud and sand, water and bubbles, play dough and clay, shaving cream and cornstarch, flour and birdseed, smelling and tasting jars, cooking projects, and being outdoors. Attention to the senses of hearing and seeing is encouraged through participation in circle and story rings, rhythm and repetition games, self-expression and language activities, as well as many of the handwork materials and projects mentioned above.

## Cooking

On average, we cook with the children once per week. Cooking projects offer one of the best scientific exploration opportunities for our class. The children are involved with each step. As you know, the children love to pour, mix, measure, knead, flip, crack, chop, and taste!! If you have favorite recipes, please pass them on to us.

## **11:20-11:30 a.m. Clean-Up Time**

We teach the children to relate thoroughly to the beginning, middle, and end of their activities. This is easier said than done! We always sing as we work and help each other

out. We don't force the children to clean up, but we strongly encourage them to participate, mostly through modeling this habit ourselves. When a child is consistently not relating to the ending of their projects, we use stories, games and group discussions about "wrapping up loose ends" and "relating to the beginning, middle and end" as our main tools for helping the children feel the importance of completing what they start.

**11:30 a.m. Story Ring**

The best stories open out some of life's secrets for the child,  
not in any intellectual way, but pictorially in images and symbols.  
John Thompson

If you want your children to be brilliant, tell them fairy tales.  
If you want them to be even more brilliant, tell them even more fairy tales.  
Albert Einstein

The story ring is a magical time of the day. A candle is lit, a song is sung and we can see the children bring the story to life in their minds. We tell many different kinds of stories- some with morals, some just for fun, some that are highly interactive. Each story is told daily for about a month to give the children the opportunity to absorb the story and make it their own.

**Noon Lunch**

The children take turns ringing the gong and leading us in a bow before we sing a song and begin lunch. Lunch is a very social time of the day. If you can imagine having a lunch date with your friends several times a week, you will have a good picture of your child's lunch time at school! Lots of chattering, conversation, voiced opinions and laughter prevail.

**12:30-1:00 p.m. ½ Day Children Goodbye; Candle Songs and Rest**

Story ring provides a smooth transition into candle songs and rest time. The candle songs are sung by the teachers to the children, with each teacher encircling the children with candle light and music. Some children fall asleep and others stay awake while resting. This is a deeply relaxing and nurturing time of the day as well as a time for the children to experience stillness in the midst of a day full of activity.

**1:00-2:45 p.m. Indoor & Outdoor Play and Activities**

In the afternoon, we play outdoors, continue the morning's projects and often bring out handwork toys for the children to work with.

**2:45 p.m. Closing Circle and Afternoon Snack**

We formally end our day by gathering together. Sometimes we sing and sometimes we play a short game. We always end our day by singing:

Thank you for this day,  
For rest and work and play.  
Thank you to every friend,  
Soon we'll meet again.

May the long time sun shine upon you, and all around you.

And the pure light within you, shine your way home.  
Blessings on our day and peace on earth!

Parents are welcome to join us for afternoon snack. Just let us know you will be coming!

**3:00-3:15 p.m.          Departure Time**

The children are free to play until their parent arrives. Then, they gather their things and say good-byes. This is a time for teachers and parents to touch base and for children to be with their parents in their school environment. If your child likes or needs a lot of transition time at the end of the day, you may want to come at 3:00 p.m. so you have time for a relaxed good-bye.

**3:30 p.m.                  Departure Complete**

*By 3:30 p.m., all of the children should be on their way out the gate, with all departure routines completed.* Once the children leave, the teachers have time to clean up from the day's activities, prepare for the next day, and touch base with each other. *We depend on your prompt arrival and departure at the end of the day so we can keep the class running smoothly.*

## Discipline

When discipline issues arise, we communicate directly, simply, and respectfully to the children, encouraging them to find the balance between acting out and internalizing their feelings and impulses. With all of the children, our intention is to give them as much space as possible to solve inner and outer conflicts on their own, while providing support so they feel heard and acknowledged. This includes giving the children space to resolve their own disagreements with friends, to experience the results of their verbal and physical actions, and to experience boredom. When conflicts or discontent emotions arise, we heighten our awareness of the situation and observe each child carefully, getting involved when it seems helpful and otherwise, simply witnessing the situation. Generally, the older the children get, the less assistance they need in settling inner and outer conflicts. With the youngest children, we maintain an atmosphere of gentleness and supportive guidance and naturally they learn how to relate to others in times of conflict as they observe teachers and the older children in action. We also encourage the younger children to approach the older ones for help and we encourage the older children to gently guide the younger ones. We provide the children with gentle, but firm boundaries. Usually, once children clearly understand what their limits are, they are able to relax with themselves and others. However, strong emotions and behaviors will arise, and in these cases, teachers do not hesitate to give the children firm feedback.

We have noticed that sometimes the children, when they get into conflicts with each other, will blurt out "sorry!" as a way of getting out of having to really acknowledge the other person's experience. Many of us were raised with encouragement to "say you're sorry" and so naturally, it is easy to pass this habit on to the children. As adults, when we see a child being disrespectful to another person, most of us have an instinct to ask them to apologize. However, what we have noticed is that when children are asked to apologize, or told to "say you're sorry", they do not relate genuinely to the situation at hand. They say what we want them to say in order to have the conflict finished quickly so they can get back to their play, or so they don't have to face the effects of their actions. This is only natural, because facing someone we have hurt or been disrespectful towards is painful. But in these times when conflicts arise, the children

have great opportunities to drop their guard, slow down, and really check in with their friends, and then to notice how it feels to acknowledge the other person's and their own experiences. Children have good hearts, and when they have the space to really feel the pain that comes when we cause harm to others, usually children feel a genuine sense of remorse. The process of working out conflicts familiarizes the children with a natural, internal sense of discipline and also shows them that facing pain isn't as bad as we sometimes make it out to be.

At school, if a child is disrespectful to another child, intentionally or accidentally, we usually respond in the exact same way, by asking that the children "check in" with each other. Basically, all we are wanting from the situation is for each child to have the space to communicate their experience and to hear the other child's feelings as well. Generally, even the most timid child will speak if gently encouraged in these situations. We really try not to "pity" one child and "blame" the other, even though this can be challenging, as one child usually appears to be the victim and the other the aggressor. We observe to see if either child needs help in expressing themselves, in coming to resolution, and make sure that if a child is hurt, they are cared for- but otherwise, we try to involve ourselves as little as possible, so that the children have space to communicate with each other.

### Television/Videos

“Whenever the child is given the notion that he needs to be entertained, learning comes almost to a halt.” Polly Berrien Berends

We would like to strongly request families to be very mindful about the amount and type of television and videos that your child watches. We have observed children's play and attention spans to be vastly more creative and centered when television and video consumption is limited. We have also noticed that children who watch a few well chosen videos over and over are much less likely to get overstimulated than those who watch a wide variety of video and television programs. The newer Disney productions, in particular, are very unsettling for young children. Here are a few things we have noticed:

- Children process everything they observe through play. As teachers, we can tell the difference between children who do and do not watch t.v. by watching their play. The children who are not exposed to a significant amount of t.v./videos are far more creative and grounded. Their play does not revolve around themes suggested in cartoons.
- Watching television is a passive activity, separating one from the world around us. Worse yet, some people have observed an immunity to emotion and violence develop from watching too much t.v.
- We have observed a definite difference in the attention spans and behavior of children who watch a significant amount of t.v., in comparison to those children that have little or no television exposure.

If you are feeling unclear about how to respond to this issue, please take some time to contemplate these questions:

1. What is the purpose of children watching television and videos?
2. What type of tv/videos do you feel are appropriate and inappropriate for young children? What type of tv/videos does your child watch? How often? How do you decide what your child will watch?
3. What do you experience as the benefits of tv/video consumption? What do you experience as the potential problems?

4. How does your child respond to tv/video watching? Does behavior change? What about style and themes in play and language?
5. Do you feel satisfied with the amount and quality of tv/videos your child watches? Would you like to change something? If so, what?

However you decide to approach this issue with your child, please do preview videos/movies before taking your child to see them so that you can be assured that the content is appropriate for your child as well as the school environment where your child will “play out” the images he or she sees on the screen.

### Visitors

After all of the children are adjusted to the rhythm of morning circle, we would love to have you occasionally spend time with our class. If you would like to stay for morning circle sometime, please arrange this *in advance* with one of the teachers. You are welcome to come for closing circle at the end of the day whenever you wish. A good time to come is at 3:00p.m.

### Parent Involvement

All of us, parents and teachers alike, are committed to creating a meaningful and centered place where children can learn and begin to fully manifest their inherent potential and goodness. We request parent's involvement because of the enriching quality it brings to the children's lives. In this busy world we live in, a sense of community is precious. When children see their parents involved in the school, they feel a greater sense of the value of their place in this community. Practically speaking, we rely on parent help in accomplishing things that would otherwise be difficult or impossible to do. However, what is of far more importance to us than tasks being accomplished is the sense of community created when everyone gets involved in the relationships, work, and play that are a part of the children's, and all of our, lives. This gives the children a vivid experience of how many individuals with all sorts of differences can come together to make a whole. *When members of the community are not present with the group, they do not, and more importantly, their children do not, benefit from the community aspect of this school.*

We require the participation of each family in the following ways:

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1. By attending and participating in the school celebrations.
2. By attending two parent-teacher conferences each year.
3. By attending two parent-teacher community meetings each year.
4. By participating in several parent environment projects each year. These projects will be posted on the bulletin board as they arise. Please plan to donate one full day of your time each year. This could be broken into several smaller or one large project.
5. By helping clean the school 2 times per year.
6. By reading bulletin boards and newsletters and staying connected with what is happening at school.

## Things To Do When Bringing Your Child to and from School:

- \*Check bulletin boards for new information
- \*Check your child's folder
- \*Check your child's cubby for dirty clothes, etc.
- \*Please touch base with teachers if any changes/unusual occurrences/important things have happened in your child's life or if someone other than you is picking your child up from school.

## Clothing and Items from Home

Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather each day. We like to be outside in the sun, rain, and snow! We are mindful of limiting the amount of time the children spend outside in excessively hot or cold weather and encourage children to drink plenty of water throughout the day. ***Please do not send your child to school in clothes that need to be protected from grass stains, paint, mud, etc.***

## Please bring the following things to school labeled with a permanent marker:

2-3 Extra Sets of Clothes and Appropriate Shoes  
Full Snow Gear on Wintry Days  
Bathing Suit, Sunscreen, Water Bottle, and Towel on Summer Days  
Diapers, Wipes, etc. (if needed)

*Please do not bring any toys from home, except dolls or stuffed animals for rest time.*

## Authorization from Parents

Please sign in and out daily. We need written authorization from parents in the following situations:

- If anyone other than parents will be picking your child up from school. Please prepare whomever is picking up your child that we will need to check his or her identification if they are not on your emergency card or if we have not met them before.
- Parents will be notified when field trips are planned. When we travel by car, all children under 4 years/ 40 lbs. must have a carseat. All drivers are fully insured. Children do not share seat belts or ride in a front seat with an airbag.
- If your child will need to take any medications during the school day, we will need written authorization. Please give all medications/vitamins to one of the teachers.

## Sick Child Policy/ Medical Emergencies

Please help us keep our school environment healthy and err on the side of caution when it comes to exposing the rest of the class to colds, etc. Children who are under the weather never have a good time at school. If your child has a cold and "is not himself", even if there is no fever present, please do not send him to school. If your child has a

mild cold and is feeling energetic, it is fine for her to attend. *Children should remain out of school for 24 hours after having a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea.* If your child becomes ill during the day, we will call you to come pick him or her up. If you cannot be reached, we will contact those listed on your child's emergency card. In the event of a medical emergency, we will call 911 and notify you immediately. All teachers are trained and certified in C.P.R. and First Aid.

## **Meals and Snacks**

Children should bring their own hearty lunches to school each day. **Please do not send sugary food and drinks, chocolate or candy of any kind to school.** We provide two snacks each day. If your child has food allergies/intolerances, please let us know so we can accommodate him or her. We are unable to heat your child's food so please bring an insulated container if you prefer your child to have a warm meal.

## **Birthdays**

Around the time of your child's birthday, we will have a Birthday Circle. The point of the Birthday Circle is to mark the passing of each year of your child's life and to give your child an opportunity to acknowledge his or her precious human life. Both parents should plan on attending, if possible. On the day of the Birthday Circle, please plan to arrive at school at 9:00 p.m. Please prepare a few vignettes, short stories, thoughts, or songs about your child's life thus far. **Please do not bring any photographs or anything small that would need to be passed around the group.** Your words and memories are very meaningful on their own. Also, please bring a simple treat to share with the class. Please check in with your child's teachers regarding any allergies in the group.

## **Policies and Procedures**

Following is a list of policies and procedures dictated/required by the Department of Human Services.

1. Children may not use bottles at school after their first 30 days in the program.
2. Each child has a cubby where they may keep their personal belongings. We cannot be responsible for lost objects or money that children bring to school.
3. Television viewing is not a part of our curriculum.
4. We do not force children to potty train, but instead use gentle encouragement.
5. If your child needs to be given medicine during the day, we will need a written authorization from his or her physician to do so. All medicines should be given directly to your child's teacher so they can be stored away for the day. Medicines are stored in the refrigerator in the container marked "children's medicine". All medicines and prescriptions must come in their original labeled containers. *This includes all herbal and homeopathic remedies.* Parents are responsible for remembering to pick up medicines at the end of the day.
6. We strive to meet the needs of all children, including those with disabilities, to the best of our ability.
7. All visitors who are unknown to the teachers must sign-in in the office and show personal identification.

8. We must have authorization to release your child to anyone but you. If possible, this authorization should be written and given to teachers in the morning. You may give a verbal authorization if necessary. *Children will not be released to anyone who is not authorized under any circumstances.* If child is not picked up by 3:30 p.m., parents, then emergency contacts will be called. If you or emergency contacts cannot be reached, "Emergency Pick Up List" will be called. *We highly recommend that you put Snow Lion teachers and fellow Snow Lion parents on this list.* At 4:00 p.m., if teachers cannot stay later, and if none of your contacts can be reached, we will call the Boulder Police Department to come and pick your child up. Messages will be left on your home answering machine and on the front door of your child's class to inform you of where your child is being cared for. *Again, we highly recommend that you put Snow Lion teachers and fellow Snow Lion parents on this list so that in the event of a serious emergency, your child is able to go home with someone they know.*

9. Snow Lion's admission process includes: 1) pre-admission interview 2) explanation of policies and signature of both parents stating their agreement to policies and guidelines as outlined in the Parent Handbook 3) completion of enrollment forms

10. At 3:25 p.m., all children who have not yet been picked up will wait together with a teacher in the Cub's classroom until their parents arrive.

11. The sign-in sheets are checked daily so as to establish the number of children present on each given day. Teachers "head count" frequently to assure that all children are present. Before teachers leave for the day, the sign-in sheets are checked to insure that all children have gone home for the day.

12. Licenses and Certificates of inspection from the Health Department and the Fire Department are accessible to parents. Please speak with Kristin if you would like to see these reports.

13. If you would like to file a complaint against Snow Lion, you may contact the Department of Human Services, Division of Childcare at (303) 866-5958.

14. We are required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services.

15. On field trips, parent drivers are given emergency information for each child in their vehicle. The lead teacher carries a cell phone and all drivers have this number. If a child arrives late when his or her class is on a field trip, child may not be dropped off at school until his or her class returns.

16. Emergency Procedures:

Fire: We conduct fire drills 4 times per year. In the event of a fire, children will be taken to the south east corner of the front yard, per the City of Boulder Fire Department's instructions.

Tornado: Children will be taken to the basement during all tornado warnings.

Reports of communicable illness: Parents will be informed within 24 hours via note on bulletin board or by phone if illness is severe. All communicable illnesses will be reported to the Health Department.

Lost Child: In the event that a child cannot be found, we quickly gather all children who are present to one safe place. One teacher looks for child/ren who are missing while the other teacher stays with the group. If child/ren who are missing are not found immediately, the police department and parents are called immediately.

17. Each child must have a file that contains the following information:

1. Enrollment Form
2. 2 Emergency Cards
3. Health Report/ Immunization History signed by child's Physician
4. Injury Records, if applicable
5. Observations of Child's Development
6. Record of dates and those present at conferences

18. We are happy to work with highly energetic and spirited children, children with learning differences, and children with temporary or ongoing behavioral issues. However, in cases of violent or significantly disruptive behavioral issues, where other children or teachers are threatened or where class cannot thrive because of the actions of any one particular child, we will require parents to seek professional evaluation and services to help child become able to be with the group and remain at Snow Lion. If parents are unwilling to work actively and openly with teachers, to seek professional help or if therapy does not help the child, we may need to request that the child is withdrawn from Snow Lion. Enrollment may also be terminated if parents are consistently unwilling to comply with Snow Lion Parent Handbook guidelines. Meetings will be scheduled between parents, teachers, and director should any issues come up in this area. In the event that an unfortunate situation such as this arises, the child's tuition payments will still be due until another child is found to take his or her position.

19. To file a complaint against Snow Lion School, please contact the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Childcare at 1575 Sherman St Denver, CO 80203 or 303.866.5700.

20. Some of the children at Snow Lion have not been fully vaccinated.

### **Tuition and Fees**

Please see the contract for specific information on tuition and fees.

### **Late fees**

We depend on your prompt arrival when picking up your child at the end of the day and in paying your monthly tuition. *Pick up time is between 3-3:15pm.* Late fees will be charged at the rate of \$1 per minute. Late tuition will be assessed \$10 for each day tuition is not received. The purpose of charging late fees is not to collect extra money for the school. We would much rather have you arrive/deposit tuition checks on time than collect extra money! Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need to work out alternative financial arrangements. We will do our best to accommodate all requests.

### **Absences**

Tuition is due even if your child is absent. We do not offer make-up days. If you know your child will be absent in advance, let us know and we will try to fill your space, *providing enrollment is full.* If any of your spaces are filled, your tuition statement will be credited the following month at the rate of \$50 per day. *If more than one child is absent and only one space is filled, the credit will be split equally.*

