

# **Dragonfly School Parent Manual**

Welcome to Dragonfly School! This handbook is provided to answer questions you may have about our program and family responsibilities. Please keep it to use as a reference throughout the year.

Quality education is one of the most important things we can offer our children. Our goal is to ensure that this program is the best that we can all make it and that families feel confident and comfortable here. You can be assured that your children will be well cared for, loved, and involved in an incredible adventure of learning.

Dragonfly School opened in 2007, as a preschool accepting students from ages 3-5 and elementary Kindergarten through 3rd grade classrooms. We have since added a toddler program and are growing into a full elementary school (K-6<sup>th</sup> grade) as our students progress.

The directors of our school is Stephanie Smith. She manages the day-to-day operation of the school. Oversight for the school is provided by a board of directors that meets monthly. Additional support for the school is provided by various committees (fundraising, finance, academic, etc.) made up of parents, board members, and members of the community. If you are interested in serving on the board or a committee, please contact any board member.

Dragonfly School strives to sustain an atmosphere in which children and adults relate to one another in a warm, personal way, developing relationships that will extend beyond the school into daily life. We want our school to be a supportive place where children can express their feelings and receive help and guidance when needed, as well as be a place where they can become self-reliant and independent. We want our families to experience a strong sense of community where respect and tolerance are honored.

Our school shares a space with the Children's Adventure Company (CAC) – an after school and summer camp program for elementary school aged children. While our school has no official affiliation with CAC, we enjoy them as neighbors and strive to make sure they enjoy us, too, by being mindful of our shared space and equipment. Our elementary students may stay for aftercare with CAC on a contract or drop in basis.

## **About the School**

### **Mission:**

It is our belief that the early school years are the time to imbue children with a love of learning to set a precedent for a lifetime of positive school experiences. We offer child-centered, developmentally appropriate education for preschool and elementary school aged children in a loving, supportive school community that serves the city of Santa Fe, NM and the surrounding areas.

Our goal is to create a community of learners who are intelligent, capable, and kind. We will model and teach respectful communication and problem solving using the language of non-violent communication. We will use constructivist methods and center-based classrooms, which we have found to be highly effective.

We will strive to educate our student body in awareness of limited natural resources and respect for the natural world by utilizing eco-friendly supplies, minimizing use of limited resources, recycling, and composting as practical applications of this belief. We believe our future depends upon our integration of culture, creativity, community, and ecology.

### **Philosophy:**

Our curriculum is child-centered. We believe children learn best when they are allowed to follow their own interests, and we see our job as enabling children to deepen their understanding of concepts by using clarification, repetition, and appropriate materials. We support their cognitive development by offering resources,

information, and encouragement to learn about areas of interest and importance to them.

Because self-esteem and positive social relationships are very important to young children, we focus strongly on emotional and social development. Children learn to communicate and resolve their issues and conflicts positively. We teach self-awareness leading to self-control, awareness of others' feelings and needs, self-reliance, and personal responsibility. We offer an environment in which children are loved and respected for their individual strengths and supported when they need help.

We believe in hands-on, concrete, sensorial learning. We will spend much time exploring our physical and natural world. To that end, the school provides considerable time outdoors. We will use our garden and other outdoor spaces as classrooms.

We strive to foster creativity, not only through activities in art, music, and movement but throughout the program. Physical development is a priority for us as well. We want the children to feel good about their bodies and confident about what they can do.

Finally, the school strives for a diverse population and for a multi-cultural and non-biased approach to its program. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, socio-economic, marital status, disability, national origin, political affiliation or sexual orientation. Valuing and celebrating diversity is a challenge. It requires attention to who we are as caregivers and teachers, who our children, families, and communities are, and what our program is like. It offers opportunities to learn about ourselves and to help children value themselves and others

## Schedule:

Dragonfly School consists of both a preschool program for students age 3-5 and an elementary school for students in grades kindergarten through first grade. In the next few years, we intend to expand our school to serve students through sixth grade. For elementary students, we offer a full five-day week program, and for students under age five, we offer a variety of scheduling choices.

For our preschool students, we utilize a play environment to welcome children to the idea of attending school and being a part of a community of learners. Dramatic storytelling, art and science projects, number and phonemic awareness, as well as listening and following directions and sharing space with others are our primary goals. As our preschool students grow as learners, we will introduce early academic activities including beginning reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. Napping is encouraged for preschool students.

We believe that preschool-aged children should be offered information as they show signs of readiness and interest. We will encourage a child's abilities in whatever area the child is prepared to explore. We will regularly spend time playing with numbers, words and sounds and integrating the written word into our classrooms in a way that makes this area of learning accessible but not mandatory or high-pressure.

The elementary school will offer a more structured academic environment. Beginning in kindergarten, traditional classroom subjects such as reading, handwriting, math, social studies, and science, as well as activities such as cooking, hiking, and organized playground games are used to engage students in a rich learning environment. Art, music, and movement will be integrated into the curriculum.

Field trips to explore our community and learn in the field occur with regularity for all of our class groups.

## Sample Preschool Schedule

(actual schedule posted in each class and subject to change based on needs of students)

**8:00-9:15**-Arrival. Open choice activities including art, science, sensory play, jobs and story dictation  
**9:30-10:00**-Clean-up/Morning Circle Time: May include singing, poetry, educational kinesiology, movement, wordplay, social skills and community games  
**10:00-10:30**-Snack: Children are encouraged to eat a variety of healthy foods  
**10:30-11:45**-Outdoor Time: Large motor play. Gardening, art, hands-on science and sensory play  
**11:45-12:00**-Storytelling Time: Children act out stories they have dictated  
**12:00-1:00**-Lunch, then focused choice time (limited selection of activities available)  
**1:00-1:30**-Literature Circle time  
**1:30-2:50**-Rest time. Quiet activities are offered for children who do not sleep  
**2:50-3:00**-Pick up time  
**3:00-5:15**-Aftercare (for an additional fee)

## Sample Elementary Schedule

(actual schedule posted in each class and subject to change based on needs of students)

**8:00 -8:30**- Arrival. Open choice activities including drawing, building, reading, board games and math manipulatives  
**8:45-9:15**-Morning Circle Time-Mathematics such as calendar work lead into math concepts of counting, patterns, measurement and math stories  
**9:15-10:00**-Math learning centers-Hands-on, multi-sensory math. Stations for individuals, pairs or alongside the teacher  
**10:00-10:30**-Snack –Eating outdoors when the weather cooperates  
**10:30-11:00**-Outdoor Time-Open-ended activities  
**11:00-11:30**-Language Arts Circle Time- Stories & poems related to themes. Includes listening for rhyme & sounds, describing characters, recounting plot  
**11:30-12:00**-Language Arts learning centers-Games, puppetry, paired reading and handwriting practice in rotation  
**12:00-1:00**-Lunch, then rest and relaxation  
**1:00-1:30**-Art extension linked to science, math, language arts and geography to reinforce concepts  
**1:30-2:30**-Outdoor Time-Sensory exploration, Santa Fe River visits, games, challenges and free play  
**2:30-3:00**-Closing Circle Time-Recap of the day, read-aloud  
**2:50-3:00**-Pick up Time

## **Curriculum:**

Dragonfly School is determined to provide a strong academic program using the best educational strategies available. We recognize that when students graduate and/or move on from Dragonfly, they will need to have mastery of basic skills to succeed as they continue with their educations.

To this end, we will:

### **Create a safe and supportive learning environment:**

Children learn best when they are relaxed and happy. We will make sure our school is addressing the emotional needs of our students, and that our students feel safe and welcome.

### **Make the learning process appealing to students:**

We will work to make education joyful and engaging for our students. We will utilize thematic education units, outdoor classrooms, hands-on learning, experiments, demonstrations, and long-term projects.

### **Recognize individual learning differences:**

We will keep the teacher to student ratio low. This gives us the flexibility to work with the individual learning styles of our students and adjust our curriculum accordingly. We will strive to find the place of “functional tension” for each student – where the student is neither bored nor frustrated by classroom expectations.

### **Build a coherent and consistent curriculum**

Our teachers will work together to make sure that our lessons follow a consistent path from year to year, building, scaffolding, integrating and to provide an opportunity for them to build on prior knowledge.

### **Utilize educational research and resources:**

We stay informed about current educational research and utilize resources available to educators to help us make good choices in our curriculum. Currently, we are utilizing information from the Educational Development Center ([www.edu.org](http://www.edu.org)), The University of Oregon’s “Reading in America” program (<http://reading.uoregon.edu>) and the Foundation for Comprehensive Early Literacy and Learning ([www.cell-exll.com](http://www.cell-exll.com))

### **Examine benchmarks and standards:**

We will be aware of the benchmarks and standards for education set forth by the State of New Mexico and strive to make sure our curriculum meets or exceeds those standards.

### **Maintain flexibility:**

If any of our methods are not working, we will change them according to the needs of our students.

## **No Child Left Inside**

Dragonfly School is proud to be part of “No Child Left Inside” – a national movement to connect children with the outdoors. This movement is in response to research that suggests that interactions with nature provide students with a wealth of benefits such as increased mental health, better concentration and higher levels of happiness. More information can be found at the Children and Nature Network at <http://www.cnaturenet.org/>.

## **Accreditation**

Dragonfly School will be seeking accreditation from a reputable educational organization. This process will take several

years to complete, but we believe that it will provide our school with quality teacher training, a supported curriculum and an enhanced reputation in the Santa Fe community.

## **Preparing for the School Day:**

Have your child finish breakfast before coming into the school. Unless your child needs a particular toy or other transitional object from home for show-and-tell or to help him or her during naptime, you should leave personal toys at home. Please label all items brought to school. These are hard to keep track of at school and can be mislaid.

### **Clothing**

Children should wear clothing that is appropriate to our active and sometimes messy style of learning. Do not send your child in outfits that can be "ruined" by paint, mud, dirt, or other materials.

Send your child in clothing that is appropriate for play, allowing your child the freedom to run, climb, jump, and wiggle. Do not send your child in clothing that restricts his or her movements. Make sure footwear is appropriate for outdoor activities.

Please remember that we will spend time outdoors each day with only very rare exceptions for extreme weather. Be sure your child is prepared for the changing seasons, including head and foot wear, raingear, winter coats, gloves, sun hat, etc, and sunscreen.

Please have at least **one complete extra set of clothing that should remain at school at all times.**

### **Standard Supplies**

**Reusable lunchbox or lunch kit;** We strongly recommend a no-waste lunch for the benefit of all. Please stock up on **simple**

**containers** of various sizes which are manageable by your child and fit inside the lunchbox. Lunches should be self-contained, requiring no heating or refrigeration and should include **utensils** as your child may need.

**Reusable water bottle;** Metal is best. Please no glass or single-use plastic water bottles; we have filtered water so your child may refill as necessary. (We do have spare water bottles in the event you forget.)

**Sunscreen;** a bottle for the classroom and on your child's body daily before drop-off

**Sun/winter hat**

**Complete extra set of clothing** at school at all times for all students (seasonally appropriate)

*Toddler & Preschool Students Only:* **Small blanket and/or small pillow** for naptime use

*Elementary Students Only:* **Backpack and Homework Folder** to hold daily work and personal items

Your donations of standard or creative, new or reusable classroom items are always appreciated!

**PLEASE LABEL ALL THESE ITEMS WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME IN PERMANENT MARKER.  
IF YOU LOVE IT, LABEL IT!**

### **Food**

Children should come to school each day with enough food for a complete morning snack and lunch which will not require refrigeration or heating. Children in our aftercare program will also need an afternoon snack. In addition, it is essential that your child have a reusable, non-glass water bottle at all times. Filtered water is available in each classroom. Our guidelines for food are as follows:

Each child's lunch brought from home

should be clearly labeled with the child's name. Lunch containers should be reusable, not disposable. Please do **not** send lunchables, squeeze yogurts, or disposable, single use anything to the best of your ability. We are working hard to be a sustainable, eco-friendly community.

The staff is not able to warm, microwave, or refrigerate any lunches at school.

Please provide a selection of healthy, minimally-processed fresh proteins, fruits, vegetables and complex carbohydrates. Nutritious items that you might include in your child's lunch: yogurt, (peeled) boiled egg, meat roll-ups or jerky, fresh or dried fruit, vegetable pieces, nuts and nut butters, casseroles, burritos, crackers and cheese.

Please **limit** salty items such as potato chips, pretzels, or corn chips.

Please do **not** send soda, candy, or sugary desserts, or any food that has sugar or corn syrup in the first 3 ingredients.

Please make sure that the meal is self-contained, providing utensils, napkin or other items your child will need.

Please ascertain that your child is able to open and close containers with minimal assistance.

Keep in mind that your child will be responsible for learning to clean up her own mealtime messes. If you believe a food item will involve a big mess, it is better to save it for home.

Dragonfly School does not provide meals for children but incorporates cooking projects into our curriculum. We will keep these projects healthy, using organic products when possible and utilizing a minimum of sugar. We will observe and make allowances for any dietary restrictions.

## Drop-off and Pick-up

All classrooms will have a sign-in/sign-out sheet. Please note the **time** of your arrival and **initial** the appropriate space on the

sheet when you drop your child off in the morning. You may use the provided communication tablet in the classroom sign-in area to communicate with your child's teachers.

In the afternoon, parents should pick up their children in the classrooms. Please note the time of your departure and initial the appropriate space on the sign-in/sign-out sheet.

Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children upon arrival for pick-up. Parents who are present but not supervising their children may be required to pay the \$17 fee for aftercare for that day.

Please help students and staff ease transitions by assisting your child to leave school in a timely way at the end of each day. We are very privileged to have a location in the vicinity of the Alto St. Park and encourage families to use this space for after school activities. It is important that we retain the Dragonfly facilities for students enrolled in the two aftercare programs running in this space.

Children must be accompanied by an adult in the parking lot at all times. Please hold your child's hand and walk along the fence in front of parked cars.

We maintain a file of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of persons authorized to pick up each child in our care. We only release a child to a person for whom we have written consent by the custodial parent.

In an emergency and at your request, we can make arrangements over the telephone to release your child to another responsible adult with your approval. We reserve the right to ask this person for identification.

Under no circumstances will we release a child to someone who appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

## Drop-In Days

When space is available, we offer drop-in days to families enrolled in our 4-day week

program in the preschool, for a fee of \$50 per day. If you are interested in using this service, please ask your classroom teacher.

### **Aftercare**

Dragonfly School provides aftercare for all of its preschool students from 3-5:15 pm on Monday through Fridays. If you require aftercare on a regular basis, you may pay for it as part of your monthly tuition by contracting for it on a yearly basis.

Drop-in care is also available. This can be arranged by signing up in the aftercare classroom for the day that aftercare is needed. For last-minute drop-ins, you may call and leave a message during the school day with our office at 995-9869. Our daily drop-in rate is \$17 per day payable through the use of a pre-paid punchcard good for 5 or 10 visits. Drop-in days must be pre-paid. Please be aware that we may not be able to accommodate you if the aftercare program is full. If you have one day's outstanding payment or late fee, payment will be required prior to another day of attendance.

Drop-in is also available for our half-day students to stay until 3:00 by utilizing the same punchcard system.

For older students (age 5 and above) aftercare is also available on the premises from 3-6 pm through the Children's Adventure Company. Please call 984-8870 for more information.

### **Late Pick-Up Policy**

Pick-up time is between 2:50 and 3:00. After a five-minute grace period, the full \$17 fee for aftercare will be due. No exceptions will be made. Parents will be responsible for making payment on the same day or will be billed accordingly.

If your child is in aftercare, he or she must be picked up by 5:10 pm. Anyone who arrives after 5:15 is late. You will be fined \$17 per child for each late pick-up. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be charged an additional \$1 per minute per child. Late payment is to be made directly to the teacher on duty at the time.

Please understand that timeliness is important to students and that teachers need to get home too.

Lateness is determined by an "atomic" clock that automatically sets itself to the official time of the United States as determined by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

## **Dragonfly Parking Lot Information:**

**Our parking lot agreement was made with the La Madera Neighborhood when the property was initially approved for zoning as a school. The school could lose its zoning if the agreements are not honored, and neighbors report the violations to the zoning board. Please help us be good neighbors.**

### **Do**

1. Drive 25 mph or less on Alto Street.
2. Enter on the entrance lane, nearest the Casita adobe wall and coyote fence.
3. Drop off and pick up ONLY in the bottom parking lot.
4. Turn off cell phones when on the school property.
5. Circle counter-clockwise ALL the way around the parking lot.
6. Always hold your child's hand in the parking lot.
7. Exit using the driveway on the right hand side.
8. Only turn right when exiting, and remain on Alto St. at least as far as La Madera (by Alameda Middle School) before turning left.

## Don't

1. Don't drive over the speed limit in our neighborhood.
2. Don't drive down the middle or to the left hand side of the driveway.
3. Don't park anywhere at the top at any time of day. The gate is locked. This includes the parking spaces in front of the gate and the dirt area near the storage shed on our neighbor's property.
4. Don't use a cell phone during pick up or drop off.
5. Don't back up or cut across to exit.
6. Don't leave any child unattended in your car or in the parking lot.
7. Don't exit from the entrance lane.
8. Don't turn left on any neighborhood street before La Madera when leaving the school .

## Non-Motorized Access

Access to the top gate on Alto St. will be granted to families arriving at school on foot or bicycle. A key to the top gate will be provided to those who sign our key agreement form for the current school year.

## Health and Hygiene:

### Immunizations

In accordance with state licensing regulations, your child must have a current immunization record or a public health division approved exemption on file with Dragonfly School prior to admission.

### Medications

We will administer over-the-counter or prescription medications provided by a

parent. Medications must be in the original container and be clearly marked with the child's name and instructions as to times and dosages to administer. Medications are stored in a lockbox with all instructions.

## Hygiene

We teach coughing and sneezing into the "elbow" (crook of the arm) - NOT INTO THE HAND.

We require children to wash hands before eating, after using the bathroom and as indicated by nose blowing, etc. Proper hand washing requires soap and water with a thorough scrubbing motion. 20 seconds is adequate. We provide a mild, non-anti-bacterial soap.

We let children know that putting toys in their mouths can spread disease and immediately wash any toy that has made its way into a child's mouth. We practice PRETEND biting, drinking, eating of play foods – hold away from mouth, use sound effects instead of putting things in mouth.

We instruct children in proper tissue use-use two hands, pinch the nose and blow, wipe and throw it in the garbage can. Wash hands afterwards.

When necessary, we will also instruct children in proper hygiene skills related to toileting.

## Illness

We require you to keep your child at home if he/she exhibits signs of contagion:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Impetigo (rash caused by strep or staph)
- Headache
- Sore throat or persistent cough
- Yellow/greenish nasal discharge
- Redness, drainage or discharge from eyes
- Elevated temperature
- Infectious rash (chicken pox, measles)
- Scabies, head lice or other infestation

When serious contagious illness has been



diagnosed in our community, we will inform families. If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness, please let us know so that we can inform other parents of symptoms to be aware of.

Your child should be able to return to school with your physician's approval 24 hours after symptoms have subsided, 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun or 24 hours after the child's temperature has returned to normal.

Please remember that individual hygiene practices can make or break it for us all. Thank you for your help.

### **If a Child Gets Sick at School**

When a child becomes ill at school, i.e., temperature of 100.5 degrees or more, headache or stomachache, etc. parents will be notified and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. We will make them comfortable and provide supervision until a parent can pick up. If we call you, please come as soon as possible, because your child needs to be at home. Parents are expected to support and respect **any** staff member's decision to send a child home for **any** reason.

### **Allergies**

Please alert staff in writing about your child's allergies (milk products, bee stings, peanuts, cats or dogs, etc.). Unless you state an objection, we will post a list of children affected by allergies for quick reference by staff.

### **Medical Emergencies**

Members of our staff have training in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Occasionally, the school offers a CPR and first aid training program for parents.

We will inform you if your child has an injury at school—a bumped head, skinned knee, splinter, etc. When it is notable, an incident report is completed by staff to be signed by a staff member and parent with one copy for

the child's file and one copy for the parent on the day of the incident

In the event of an emergency, children will be transported by ambulance to the hospital. The parents will be notified immediately. Health forms on file include parent information, emergency contacts, special medical conditions where applicable, and a medical release to seek treatment if the parents cannot be reached. **Please keep your records up to date at all times**, notifying us of changes as they occur. A staff member will accompany any child required to ride in the ambulance and stay until the parents arrive.

### **Snow Days and Snow Delays:**

On days when it snows, Dragonfly School will follow the policies determined by the Santa Fe Public Schools. If the public schools announce a delay, then we will also have a delay. Dragonfly opens at 10 AM in the event a two-hour delay is called. **We cancel school** if the Santa Fe Public Schools cancel. Please be sure to be available to pick up your child if conditions mandate that school close early.

Information about school delays and closures is available on local television, radio stations, and at the Santa Fe Public School website- [www.sfps.info](http://www.sfps.info). Whenever possible, snow day information will be available via the school's voice mail system (505-995-9869) and on the home page of our website, [www.dragonflyschool.com](http://www.dragonflyschool.com)

Although we realize that snow days can be an unexpected inconvenience for parents, our policy is designed to keep our families, staff, and fellow citizens safe.

### **Safety Policy:**

The safety of the children is our most basic responsibility. Without safety the rest of what we offer is irrelevant. We apply all the good sense rules about safe play that you would

at home – no climbing on tables and chairs, listening to the teachers, etc.

Staff and teachers will:

- Supervise children carefully
- Identify and remove hazards from classrooms and play areas
- Instruct students on how to be safe on the playground equipment
- Intervene when students are being unsafe

Children learn by testing their abilities. They should be allowed to participate in activities appropriate for their development even though these activities might result in some minor injuries, such as scrapes and bruises. However, children should be prevented from taking part in activities or using equipment that is beyond their abilities and that may result in major injuries such as broken bones.

### **Fantasy Play**

From an early age, children explore complex and unresolved themes through their play that are sometimes difficult for adults to support. These include death, violence, gender, power, and reality vs. fantasy.

At Dragonfly children are given the opportunity to make sense of these issues with adult supervision and support. Within this type of play, boundaries are set and rules are made, and all players give verbal consent. Children must ask others to participate and must accept a negative response. Teachers monitor and facilitate communication so all players feel safe, powerful and supported in their play.

Teachers may model reasons to choose not to participate – feeling unsafe, not liking guns, not wanting to die.

We believe that accepting children's curiosity and allowing expression through play teaches children to be open and honest in their learning.

## **Communication**

At Dragonfly School, we believe in the importance of helping children learn to evaluate their own safety. As teachers check in with children to gain their own insight into whether a certain type of play is safe or not, (physically or emotionally), we are attempting to raise their awareness and give them the responsibility for assessing their own practices. We ask many questions as teachers, as well: about feelings concerning various games, how to keep one's self or each other safe and about beliefs and boundaries within each child's family.

Dragonfly teachers are licensed pre-school and K-8 teachers who have a depth of experience with children. However, we are not educational specialists. When a child demonstrates ongoing problems, either socio-emotional or learning difficulties, parents are expected to find support outside the school to address the issue. The school maintains a list of therapists to share with families.

## **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are held once a month at various times throughout the day. Students practice how to exit the building to the play yard in a quiet, orderly fashion.

## **Disaster Plan**

In the event of an emergency that requires us to evacuate our campus, teachers and staff will lead students across the bridge to take shelter at Gonzales Elementary School at 851 West Alameda. Teachers will have a list of parent phone numbers, and parents will be notified to come pick their children up.

## **Behavioral Issues**

In the case of a serious breach of the emotional or physical safety of others by a child, a parent will be called immediately. The child will remain away from school until the parents and staff can meet to decide a

course of action. If appropriate or necessary, parents of other children will be notified as soon as possible. Parents are expected to support and respect **any** staff members decision to send a child home for **any** reason.

If an incident involves more than one student, all parents will be informed promptly, AND all students may be required to remain at home until the incident is resolved. Each student and their parents will meet with the appropriate director privately to share information and decide on appropriate actions. If the directors deem it appropriate, a facilitated group meeting may be held as part of the action plan.

It is the school's goal that students are allowed to learn from the consequences of making poor choices and are supported in regaining their place in the school community by demonstrating remorse, responsibility and accountability.

### **Incident Reports**

If a serious incident occurs at school, teachers will fill out an incident report. The report will be given to parents to sign and will be placed in the child's record. Parents will be provided with a copy of the report.

The name(s) of any other student(s) involved in the incident will be withheld from the report in the interest of confidentiality.

### **Suspicion of Abuse or Neglect**

If there is any suspicion of child abuse or neglect, a Dragonfly School staff member will notify a local law enforcement agency and/or the State of New Mexico's Children, Youth and Families Department, as required by law.

## **Guidance Policy**

Dragonfly School offers each child a respectful and safe learning environment where they may interact with other children.

We support children's positive behavior and remember to consider the emotional and behavioral health of children and their families. We take time to get to know children and families and build relationships that support positive behaviors. Clear and specific classroom and playground rules and expectations are taught to our students. The following steps are taken when behavior needs to be modified:

1. Remind the child of a particular rule or expectation.
2. Redirect the child by offering choices and encouraging the child to make positive personal choices.
3. Help the child resolve the conflict.
4. Stop the behavior if it becomes a matter of safety.
5. Teach appropriate behavior to help the child develop new, positive ways of resolving problems.
6. Teach the child to focus on feelings and use words instead of physical behaviors.

As we guide the child's behavior we remember that:

1. Each child develops at an individual rate.
2. Each child's behavioral needs are unique.
3. Each child and their family's culture and traditions must be respected.

We will not use physical punishment of any kind. We will use redirection, validation, and reinforcement of positive behavior

## **Parent Roles and Responsibilities:**

### **Parent Involvement**

Building a strong school community is an important goal for Dragonfly School. Dragonfly School has an open-door policy for families; parents are welcome whenever they choose to visit or participate. Many parents occasionally choose to stay for morning circle, spend part of the day with their child, help out in the classroom, or come in during special events.

Dragonfly School will also have school-wide events and celebrations to come together and get to know one another. We will have a school-wide get-together before the first day, back-to-school night, celebrations in the fall and spring as well as other events.

We encourage families to enhance our school by offering their personal expertise and interests within the classroom or for the benefit of the school at large. If you have a special skill or an idea for a special program, please speak to our director.

Because we are a small school, we understand that we function best with the support of our parent body. We require that each school family complete nine hours of service time towards the school each year. Opportunities for this service range from school board membership, planning and helping with special events to gardening with your child's class, doing laundry or driving on field trips. A list of service choices will be provided and your classroom teacher will track each family's hours.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips beyond walking distance may require parent drivers in personal vehicles; we will request volunteers when anticipating these events. Parent drivers will be required to provide proof of auto insurance prior to driving Dragonfly students in their vehicles. Dragonfly also has rental access to one 13-passenger van that belongs to Children's Adventure Company. When we are utilizing the van for field trips, parents will be required to securely fasten their child's car seat into the van prior to transportation.

### **Back to School Night**

Back to School Night will be held each year in early September. This is an opportunity for us to tell you about our plans for the school year. It is important that at least one family member attend. As our staff participates in this event, no childcare will be provided.

### **Conferences**

Formal conferences will be held in November and January between teachers and parents. These conferences are an opportunity for teachers to discuss student achievement, accomplishments, and areas of concern. Parents are encouraged to give information to teachers about their child as well. At any time during the year, a family may request a conference with their teacher.

### **Conveying Information**

Each classroom at Dragonfly School will have a system for communicating important information to parents. Mailboxes or homework folders are examples of these, and information for individual methods will be explained to you by your child's classroom teacher. As we attempt to reduce our use of paper, most of our communications will be electronic via email and reproduced on our website, [www.dragonflyschool.com](http://www.dragonflyschool.com). The school calendar will be frequently updated and accessible through the link on our website.

A mailbox will be available on the door of our school office for your comments and suggestions; in the interest of direct communication, please sign all correspondence directed towards staff.

Mailboxes for individual staff members and the school board are located in the main office. Our school directory will contain phone numbers and email addresses for our staff, as well as families of Dragonfly.

### **Absences**

Please call the office if your child will miss school due to illness, vacation, appointments, or other reasons. The number is (505) 995-9869. Please leave a message on the machine if no one is available to answer.

### **Birthdays**

Each child will have the opportunity to be honored for his or her birthday in rituals specific to each classroom. Often, this involves a special "birthday circle" that parents are encouraged to attend. If your child's birthday is during the summer, on a weekend, or during a holiday, please speak

to your teacher about having a special celebration day assigned for your child.

We also maintain a tradition in which the birthday child gives an inscribed copy of a favorite book to the school. We would love to have these books as a record of your child's time at Dragonfly.

A food treat or other non-food token (such as bubbles, balloons, playdough, or other small party favors) may be brought to share with the class on this day. We strongly encourage non-sugary treats, but we also allow for personal choice concerning your child's birthday. Please check with your child's teacher regarding any food sensitivities.

**If you choose to have a birthday party outside of school, please do not bring invitations to school unless you intend to invite the entire class. You may refer to the school directory for private contact information.**

## Holiday Celebrations

Instead of placing emphasis on specific holidays, we choose to focus on the passing of seasons in the natural world and to address pertinent topics which arise for children in response to seasons and holidays i.e. the fear of monsters near Halloween, the joy of giving in December, the emergence of tulips in the spring. We will recognize some non-religious holidays and integrate the customs of families into our curriculum.

## School Board

Dragonfly School is governed by a board of directors comprised of parents, academics, business people, and experienced non-profit professionals. Generally, the board meets monthly, and meetings are open to parents and the general public. The location of the meeting will be in the weekly update of the week preceding the meeting and listed on our school calendars.

## Committees

Our board includes several committees to ensure that Dragonfly thrives and provides the best educational opportunities to our students. We have fundraising, finance, marketing and publicity and events committees, and we will form other committees as necessary. Please contact a director or a board member if you are interested in serving on a committee.

## Fundraising

From time to time, we will ask our families to help us raise money to enhance the type of programs we can offer our students. We will also be seeking funds to provide financial assistance to families in need. We will have an annual giving campaign, host special events, and seek funding from foundations, corporations, and other sources.

We actively encourage parents to participate in fundraising efforts and to consider Dragonfly School when making charitable donations. We would also be thrilled to hear from anyone who has fundraising ideas.

Dragonfly School is a non-profit with 501(c)3 status. All gifts are tax-deductible. Our EIN # is 14-1984036.

## Code of Conduct

Teachers, staff, parents, volunteers and other adults at the school are expected to behave appropriately. We ask that all adults on campus treat each other and our students with respect, consideration, empathy, and kindness.

The following behaviors are strictly prohibited:

- corporal punishment
- emotional abuse
- humiliation
- abusive language
- harassment
- threatening behavior
- destruction of property
- lying
- stealing

Weapons are not allowed on the campus.

If an adult behaves inappropriately, they will be informed that the behavior is inappropriate, asked to stop, and/or asked to leave campus. If necessary, the school will notify the proper authorities.

### **Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policy**

The use of recreational/illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco are strictly prohibited at Dragonfly School. This rule applies to staff, students, parents, invited guests, visitors, and anyone else who comes to our campus. Students will not be released to parents or other adults who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If necessary, the school will notify the proper authorities.

### **Confidentiality**

Whereas we are a very close community, it is easy to share information regarding other families at the school. Please remember that every family is entitled to privacy.

Please do not discuss other people's personal information in the classroom areas or in the presence of the students.

Please do not share the school directory names and contact information for family and staff with anyone outside the school.

If you photograph children at the school, you must ask permission before reprinting photos anywhere except for school publications.

### **Required Forms**

Families must fill out several required forms at the beginning of September. If you have any questions about these forms, please contact one of our directors:

- Admissions Form
- Tuition Contract
- Release/Consent Form
- Proof of Immunization or a public health division approved exemption
- Parent Handbook Signature Page

## **Other Rules of the School:**

### **If a family has a problem with a staff member**

Should a problem arise with employees, parents should first try to resolve the problem directly with the involved staff person. If the resolution is unsatisfactory, the next step is to meet with the director. If the problem persists, parents should appeal to the Dragonfly School Board of Directors. The School Board will investigate and determine a resolution.

### **If a family has a problem with a director**

Should a problem arise with a director, parents should first try to resolve the problem directly with the involved director. If the resolution is unsatisfactory, the next step is to meet with the other director. If the problem persists, parents should appeal to the School Board. The School Board will investigate and determine a resolution.

### **If the school has a problem with a family**

Should an issue arise with a child or family, the director is authorized to notify them that there is a problem. S/he will meet with the family and the teacher/s to better understand the issue and to develop a corrective plan, specifying an acceptable time over which improvement is to take place. If improvement is not made and/or parents fail to participate in or cooperate with the corrective plan, the School Board may decide to intervene. After reviewing the case, their decision could be to either terminate the family's contract immediately or not to renew it for the following year.

Dragonfly School will avoid asking a family to leave, but reserves the right to terminate or not renew a family's membership in the

school. Grounds for termination include but are not limited to:

**Danger or substantial risk to the health and safety of child and/or others.**

Should a child or parent pose an immediate threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others, and/or need constant individual supervision, the directors shall have the authority to temporarily or permanently exclude the child or parent from the school.

**Consistent disruptions to the functioning of the school by the child or parent.**

Whenever a child or a parent's behavior substantially disrupts the program by taking additional time or resources of the staff or other families from regular school functions, the director is authorized to begin non-compliance proceedings.

**Failure to pay tuition.**

A late fee will be assessed on any payment more than 5 days overdue. Parents in arrears by two monthly installments or more must agree to an adjusted payment plan and adhere to it. Otherwise the family may be asked to withdraw their child from the school. **HARDSHIP EXCEPTIONS:** Parents can apply for a hardship exception to the tuition agreement by making a request in writing to the teaching staff and the School Board. If the budget allows for it, the request will be considered.

## **Tuition:**

**Tuition is due on the 25th of the month prior to the month of attendance,** beginning in August before the start of the school year . After the 1st of the month of attendance, tuition will be considered late and a late fee of \$25 will be due as well. Tuition for the school year is divided into nine equal payments.

Families are expected to sign up for automatic funds transfer to pay tuition directly from a financial institution.

Families must pay full monthly tuition regardless of the student's attendance. Absences due to illness or travel do not

change tuition responsibilities.

A full month of tuition is required as a deposit to secure a student's place at Dragonfly School. If a family chooses to leave the school prior to the end of the school year, the deposit will not be refunded. The family will be responsible for the entire tuition of the semester in which the student leaves.

The re-enrollment contract must be returned by March 1 regardless of whether a student is returning to Dragonfly School. Otherwise, the deposit will be forfeited.

If a student is not re-enrolling for the next school year, then the family may choose to apply the deposit to May tuition.

If a student is re-enrolling for the next school year, the family may use the deposit to secure a place for the new school year, with the understanding that they will pay tuition in May. Each family's 5-day tuition deposit (at the rate paid when entering Dragonfly School) will apply to the last month's 5-day tuition regardless of the current monthly tuition amount at that time.

For more information, please review Dragonfly School's Tuition Contract.

## **Tuition Assistance**

Dragonfly School is committed to education in its broadest definition, which includes diversity among the student body and education for all students. It is our belief that Dragonfly's education is extraordinary in its environmental curriculum, in the personal responsibility of its members, and in our commitment to building an inclusive community.

In order to make the Dragonfly School experience available to students from a broad range of backgrounds, Dragonfly has created a tuition assistance program. Applications are available at our website, and decisions regarding funding are made by our board of directors.

Thank you for being a  
part of our eclectic and  
caring community!