

Parent Handbook

2023 - 2024



2660 Unaweep Ave

Grand Junction, CO 81503

970-254-1626

Website: eurekasciencemuseum.org/Nest

Email: Nest@eurekasciencemuseum.org

School Hours:

Monday-Thursday: 8:00AM-4:15PM

Purpose & Philosophy

Nest represents the nurturing environment for learners at an important stage in their life, as they prepare to spread their wings and fly into grade school. The vital year before kindergarten is an important learning time for students to gain and apply skills, knowledge, and develop peer relationships.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) Focus

Nest is powered by the EUREKA! McConnell Science Museum, so the incorporation of STEAM content within our curriculum is a priority. We believe STEAM is the future and promotes critical thinking in addition to awareness of our environment and planet. Each of our learners will also receive a free family membership to the EUREKA! McConnell Science Museum.

Learning Environment

Our local landscapes and outdoor recreation make Grand Junction one of the most unique and beautiful areas in the world. Our learning environment embraces these unique features, and utilizes the outdoors as a classroom. We are fortunate to have access to the tree-rich space of New Emerson's playground.

Students will use this space, not only to move and stay active, but to observe natural phenomena and ask questions. Nest will also coordinate and lead off-site field trips to learning experiences in our community.

Program

Nest serves 4-5 year olds in the year before they enter kindergarten. We are a full day program (8:00AM-4:15PM), Monday-Thursday, with a maximum of 15 learners. All learners must be 4 before August 14, 2023. Students will be unable to repeat the program at Nest for a second year, with the exception of students with learning delays, participating in the Child Find process.

Staff and Volunteers

The daily Nest staff includes a certified director, teacher, and assistant teacher. A staff to student ratio of 2:15 will be met at all times.

All volunteers for Nest will report directly to the Nest director, and will not count towards staff:student ratios. All volunteers will have completed background checks before interacting with students.

Admission and Enrollment

Interested applicants should submit an online form at eurekasciencemuseum.org/Nest. The 2023-2024 school year application will be open from February 3- February 24, 2023. To be considered, all applicants will also need to attend a virtual Meet and Greet to meet with our instructors and learn about Nest. If there is more interest than spots available, the open spots will be chosen through a lottery. If admitted, families will be provided an admission packet and checklist to complete before June 15, and first month's tuition is due in order to hold the student's spot.

Enrollment is for the entire school year, and cannot be prorated for select days.

Priority of spots are given to children of EUREKA! and New Emerson Elementary staff.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Nest does not discriminate based on any race, gender, national and/or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, national and/or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or scholarships.

Student Disabilities

Nest does not discriminate against any student based on a disability or special needs. We will work with individual families on a case-by-case basis. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to alert Nest when they submit their application. Nest will do our best to meet the needs of all students and their families in our program, while acknowledging we have limitations due to staff ratios and knowledge/experience for some student disabilities. If the student is admitted, the family and Nest staff will meet to identify what resources are available, and a student plan will be created to provide accommodations for the student. At this time, if the family accepts the plan, the admission process can move forward.

If Nest staff identifies a potential need for additional services for a student, they will be given paperwork and referred to do a student evaluation through the Child Find program. Refusal to participate if referred may result in removal of the student from Nest.

Immunizations

All accepted learners must submit immunization records prior to finalizing enrollment. Nest will consider medical exemptions upon review of physician (MD or DO) generated documentation. All non-medical exemptions will not be accepted.

All students of Nest are required to be immunized against COVID-19 and flu.

Tuition (Subject to change year to year)

Tuition will be based on a sliding scale, based on the most recent (2021 or 2022) 1040 tax documents. If unable to share tax information due to legal status, please provide a statement of need.

Household Size	Annual Income				
	Federal Poverty (22-23)	Tier 1 185%	Tier 2 285%	Tier 3 385%	Tier 4 385+%
2	\$18,310	\$33,874	\$52,184	\$70,494	
3	\$23,030	\$42,606	\$65,636	\$88,666	
4	\$27,750	\$51,338	\$79,088	\$106,838	
5	\$32,470	\$60,070	\$92,540	\$125,010	
6	\$37,190	\$68,802	\$105,992	\$143,182	
7	\$41,910	\$77,534	\$119,444	\$161,354	
8	\$46,630	\$86,266	\$132,896	\$179,526	
For each add'l member, add \$4,720					
Nest Monthly Tuition	\$79 or Free w/ CCAP	\$317	\$554	\$924	
Participation in Universal PreK (UPK) will grant a 20% tuition discount					
Nest Monthly Tuition (UPK Discount)	\$63 or Free w/ CCAP	\$253	\$444	\$739	

Nest is a Universal PreK (UPK) provider. Families that participate in this free program will be given a 20% discount in tuition. Applications to participate in [FREE UPK](#) can be found here.

Tuition will be waived for families participating in [CCAP](#).

Participants will be billed monthly via Square, with due dates on the 1st of each month, September-May. First month's payment is due at the time of acceptance to hold a spot, as a non-refundable deposit.

Withdrawal

If a family wishes to end their participation with Nest, a written notice must be submitted 14 days in advance to Nest@eurekasciencemuseum.org.

Nest reserves the right to suspend or expel any student from our program due to behavior, lack of guardian communication, and unpaid balances, at the discretion of Nest administrative staff.

Calendar

First Day: August 14

Last Day: May 16

Nest will be closed for the following holidays during the 2023-2024 year:

- September 4: Labor Day
- November 20-24: Thanksgiving
- December 22-January 5: Winter Break
- January 15: Martin Luther King Jr Day
- February 19: President's Day
- March 15-22: Spring Break

Nest will be closed for the following family conference days/teacher workdays during the 2023-2024 year:

- September 5 & 25
- **October 12: Fall Family Conferences**
- October 16
- January 8-9
- March 14
- April 11
- **May 9: Spring Family Conferences**

Daily Routine

While Nest wants to encourage free exploration in learning, we also acknowledge the importance of consistent and predictable structures throughout the learning day.

Student Arrival and Dismissal

Student morning drop-off will be between 8:00-8:15AM. Student pick-up will be between 4:00-4:15PM. Student attendance will be taken through ELV Core, and will be checked in when they arrive, and checked out when picked up. At the end of every day, staff will check all areas on the premises, including the rest rooms, to ensure no students remain, in addition to reviewing the attendance log to ensure all students have been signed out.

If a learner is not picked up by 4:20PM, the student's guardians will be called, followed by emergency contacts. If staff have been unable to communicate with guardians or an emergency contact by 4:50PM, staff will call the Mesa County Sheriff's Office. Nest staff will wait with the student at the preschool until an authorized adult or Mesa County Sheriff Department picks up.

Learners can only be dropped off and picked up by authorized adults. If an individual not authorized tries to pick up, Nest will not release the student to them until written or verbal permission is granted by the student's parents/guardians.

Attendance

Consistent, punctual attendance is vital for the success of your child's learning. Please notify Nest@eurekasciencemuseum.org if your learner will be absent or late. Frequent and sustained uncommunicated absences may result in removal from the program.

Snow Days and Inclement Weather

Nest will follow District 51's decision about weather-related closures and changes. Once issued, we will notify families via email and/or text, in addition to posting a notice on our website. In the event that schools need to close early, we will call the learner's parents/guardian, then emergency contacts if the guardians can't be reached.

Nest staff will use the following weather chart to determine when it is safe for students will go outside for Fresh Air or activities:

Understand the Weather

Wind-Chill



- 30° is *chilly* and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is *cold*
- 0° to 15° is *very cold*
- 32° to 0° is *bitter cold* with significant risk of *frostbite*
- -20° to -60° is *extreme cold* and *frostbite* is likely
- -60° is *frigid* and exposed *skin will freeze* in 1 minute

Heat Index



- 80° or below is considered *comfortable*
- 90° beginning to feel *uncomfortable*
- 100° *uncomfortable* and may be *hazardous*
- 110° considered *dangerous*

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

Child Care Weather Watch

Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)										
		Wind Speed in mph								
		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
Air Temperature	40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27
	30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13
	20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1
	10	10	-1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15
	0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29
	-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43
	-20	-20	-34	-41	-45	-48	-51	-53	-55	-57
-30	-30	-46	-53	-58	-61	-64	-67	-69	-71	

■ Comfortable for outdoor play
 ■ Caution
 ■ Danger

Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)														
		Relative Humidity (Percent)												
		40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
Temperature (F)	80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87
	84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103
	90	91	93	95	97	100	103	106	109	113	117	122	127	132
	94	97	100	102	106	110	114	119	124	129	135			
	100	109	114	118	124	129	136							
	104	119	124	131	137									
	110	136												

Child Care Weather Watch

Watching the weather is part of a child care provider's job. Planning for playtime, field trips, or weather safety is part of the daily routine. The changes in weather require the child care provider to monitor the health and safety of children. What clothing, beverages, and protections are appropriate? Clothe children to maintain a comfortable body temperature (warmer months - lightweight cotton, colder months - wear layers of clothing). Beverages help the body maintain a comfortable temperature. Water or fruit juices are best. Avoid high-sugar content beverages and soda pop. Sunscreen may be used year around. Use a sunscreen labeled as SPF-15 or higher. Read and follow all label instructions for the sunscreen product. Look for sunscreen with UVB and UVA ray protection. Shaded play areas protect children from the sun.

Condition GREEN - Children may play outdoors and be comfortable. Watch for signs of children becoming uncomfortable while playing. Use precautions regarding clothing, sunscreen, and beverages for all child age groups. INFANTS AND TODDLERS are unable to tell the child care provider if they are too hot or cold. Children become fussy when uncomfortable. Infants/toddlers will tolerate shorter periods of outdoor play. Dress infants/toddlers in lightweight cotton or cotton-like fabrics during the warmer months. In cooler or cold months dress infants in layers to keep them warm. Protect infants from the sun by limiting the amount of time outdoors and playing in shaded areas. Give beverages when playing outdoors. YOUNG CHILDREN remind children to stop playing, drink a beverage, and apply more sunscreen. OLDER CHILDREN need a firm approach to wearing proper clothing for the weather (they may want to play without coats, hats or mittens). They may resist applying sunscreen and drinking beverages while outdoors.

Condition YELLOW - use caution and closely observe the children for signs of being too hot or cold while outdoors. Clothing, sunscreen, and beverages are important. Shorten the length of outdoor time. INFANTS AND TODDLERS use precautions outlined in Condition Green. Clothing, sunscreen, and beverages are important. Shorten the length of time for outdoor play. YOUNG CHILDREN may insist they are not too hot or cold because they are enjoying playtime. Child care providers need to structure the length of time for outdoor play for the young child. OLDER CHILDREN need a firm approach to wearing proper clothing for the weather (they may want to play without coats, hats or mittens), applying sunscreen and drinking liquids while playing outdoors.

Condition RED - most children should not play outdoors due to the health risk. INFANTS/TODDLERS should play indoors and have ample space for large motor play. YOUNG CHILDREN may ask to play outside and do not understand the potential danger of weather conditions. OLDER CHILDREN may play outdoors for very short periods of time if they are properly dressed, have plenty of fluids. Child care providers must be vigilant about maximum protection of children.

Understand the Weather

The weather forecast may be confusing unless you know the meaning of the words.

Blizzard Warning: There will be snow and strong winds that produce a blinding snow, deep drifts, and life threatening wind chills. Seek shelter immediately.

Heat Index Warning: How hot it feels to the body when the air temperature (in Fahrenheit) and relative humidity are combined.

Relative Humidity: The percent of moisture in the air.

Temperature: The temperature of the air in degrees Fahrenheit.

Wind: The speed of the wind in miles per hour.

Wind Chill Warning: There will be sub-zero temperatures with moderate to strong winds expected which may cause hypothermia and great danger to people, pets and livestock.

Winter Weather Advisory: Weather conditions may cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. If caution is exercised, these situations should not become life threatening.

Winter Storm Warning: Severe winter conditions have begun in your area.

Winter Storm Watch: Severe winter conditions, like heavy snow and ice are possible within the next day or two.

In the event of severe weather, Nest staff will follow our Emergency Action Plan.

Student Schedule (Subject to change)

- Early Bird Reading/Table Activities with Guardians (optional)
- Yoga and Mindfulness
- Free Choice Center Time
- Small Group
- Circle Time/Music and Movement
- Morning Snack
- Fresh Air
- Lunch
- STEAM and Nature Exploration
- Quiet Time
- Afternoon Snack
- Music and Movement
- Free Choice Center Time
- Goodbye Circle

Discipline

Nest will use a positive reinforcement discipline approach, to meet the individual needs of each student. We will emphasize peer to peer conflict resolution, and embrace the importance of respect and safety in our learning environment.

If significant challenges of student behavior arise that impact the learning and safety of the classroom, the following steps will be taken:

1. Guardians will be notified of the behavior challenges, and will work with staff to brainstorm solutions to apply in the learning environment. The support and cooperation of the family with Nest is key to the success of our learners. During each meeting with the family, a conference log will be recorded for parents to sign.
2. Nest will implement the agreed upon solutions in a timely manner.

3. If challenges still continue, another family meeting will occur to revise and modify the plan, in a timely manner.
4. Staff will document all behavior challenges and solution plans, which parents will sign off on.
5. If student challenges continue and continuously affect the learning and safety of others, the student may be suspended or expelled from the program.

Visitors & Meetings

To schedule a visit or meeting with Nest instructors, please contact Nest@eurekasciencemuseum.org. All visitors to Nest must sign in on the visitor log including their name, address, and purpose of visit, and show identification to staff. Authorized visitors include guardians, people authorized to pick up, emergency contacts, county licensing consultants, and anyone authorized through the administration team.

Meals and Snack

There will be a morning snack time and an afternoon snack time, in addition to a midday lunch. Due to our participation with the county's Child and Adult Care Food Program, Nest will provide food during snack times. Families must send their students with a healthy packed lunch, this is subject to change depending on D51's Lunch Lizard's availability. More information will be shared with registered families.

Student Birthdays & Special Snacks

Nest encourages the celebration of student birthdays! If families would like to provide a special class treat on their student's birthday, please ensure to send a class set (15). We will distribute and celebrate during lunch or afternoon snack. All foods must be shelf-stable and pre-packaged.

If you wish your student to not be given special treats with sugar for birthday or holiday celebrations, please notify us, and provide a bag of alternative shelf-stable pre-packaged snacks as a replacement. We will notify families if these alternative snacks need to be replenished.

Student Personal Items

Please mark all student items and removable clothing clearly with their name. Our staff will do the best to organize and locate removable student items, but are not responsible for lost or stolen belongings.

Lost and Found

Unlabeled student items whose owner can't be identified will go into the classroom lost-and-found box. This box will be emptied at the end of each semester.

Student Toys

Please do not send your learners to school with personal toys. These items can be easily lost or broken. Nest will provide opportunities and supplies for play during Fresh Air.

Toilet Training and Student Clothing

All students are expected to be toilet trained, however in the case of an accident, please provide an extra set of clothes for your student in a labelled bag. This set of clothing will be kept in the student's cubby in case of spills or accidents. If the extra set needs to be used, a new set must be provided the following day. Nest is unable to care for students that require diapers.

Learners should arrive in school appropriate clothing, where they can learn outside and engage in hands-on crafts and activities. Please ensure the student is dressed weather-appropriately during the year.

Naps

Afternoons will include a time for students to nap. If a student does not fall asleep within 30 minutes, they may use the remaining time as quiet time and will be provided books, coloring pages, or other quiet activities. We will provide blankets, pillows, and mats or cots for each student to sleep on.

Money

Nest staff will not be able to hold student money for events such as book fairs or field trips.

Field Trips

During the school year, we will apply our learning by taking field trips within our community. We will inform families at least 2 weeks in advance, and will transport learners in a EUREKA! activity bus or van if too far to walk. If traveling in the van, all learners will be provided a booster seat.

Each field trip will need its own permission slip signed by the guardian before they are allowed to participate. Families can choose to have their student(s) opt out of a field trip, and stay home for that day.

If a learner is late for drop-off on a field trip day, it is the responsibility of the family to transport the child, or drop off after the class returns to school.

All chaperones must have a background check completed before the field trip.

Media Policy

Nest reserves the right to use publications of audio, video, and/or photographic images of our participating learners, without the payment of compensation or royalties.

Screen Time and Media Use

Learners will not receive more than 30 minutes a week of recorded media, such as videos or TV, and these will never be shown during snack or lunch time.

Learners will not receive more than 30 minutes a day of tablet and computer time, which will be split into increments under 15 minutes at a time.

Family Communication

Our website, eurekasciencemuseum.org/Nest, will be the main source of preschool information, in addition to email.

Nest will provide 2 opportunities for family conferences during the school year. Special meetings can be scheduled anytime during the school year by either Nest or the family in advance.

Health and Safety

Illness and Medications

For the health and safety of other learners and staff, please do not send your student to school when sick.

Students should stay home if experiencing the following:

- Fever of 100.4 °F or higher
- Severe stuffy or runny nose
- Fatigue and muscle aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours

If your student is out sick, please notify Nest and inform us of the symptoms and onset time. If they have been diagnosed with a contagious illness, please inform Nest immediately so we can take proper precautions to keep our learners and staff healthy. We are required by the State of Colorado to report any student with a communicable disease to the Colorado State Health Department.

In the event a student becomes sick at school, guardians listed on the emergency contact will be called to pick the student up. Students may return when they are free of fever and/or vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.

If your student needs to be administered medication, the following steps must be taken:

- Guardians must submit a written and signed request for both prescription and over-the-counter medications. All medication delivered during school hours will need a medication plan written out with our Medical Administrator staff that covers the necessary information required for that child's specific medical needs. Every medication will need a completed Medication Administration Permission form.
- Families must provide the medication in the original container with the student's printed name, dosage, and directions.
- A trained Medical Administrator staff will administer the medication at the assigned time.
- Guardians are allowed to come to the school to administer medication themselves, without written request.
- All emergency medication (epi-pens, albuterol, etc) will be kept in a Nest medication backpack, and will be carried by staff when the student is present.
- All authorized non-emergency medication will be stored in a locked medicine box on a shelf that's inaccessible to students.

Sunscreen

Families are expected to apply sunscreen to their students before school. Nest staff will reapply sunscreen every 2 hours, 80 minutes if swimming or playing in water. Nest will use Rocky Mountain Sunscreen with an SPF of 30.

If you prefer your student to use a specific sunscreen, please provide it to staff with your student's name clearly labelled. Nest staff will reapply based on the sunscreen's labelled directions.

Lotion and Chapstick

Families may provide and send their students with lotion and chapstick, clearly labeled with the student's name, in the original container. Staff is unable to apply these items for the students, but will oversee students while self-applying.

Emergencies

In the event of an accident or sudden onset of sickness, we will immediately seek proper care for a child, and alert emergency services if deemed appropriate. Our staff will reference any individual emergency instructions from the student's file, call guardians listed on the emergency contact, in addition to notifying our health care consultant.

It is the responsibility for families to keep updated emergency contacts and emergency plans.

Injuries

All of our staff are CPR and First Aid certified. In the event of a minor injury, first aid will be applied and parents will be informed during pick up. If the injury is significant, but does not require emergency services, guardians will be called and notified.

Safety and Supervision

Nest will follow the ratio of 1 staff to 10 students, at all times. Learners will be supervised and in the line of sight when indoors and outdoors. Headcounts will be performed at the start and end of all daily transitions.

Emergency Plans

Nest will follow our emergency preparedness plan, which is annually reviewed and updated. Since we are located on a District 51 campus, we will follow all lock down, fire evacuations, and emergency plans in partnership.

After an emergency event, it may not be possible to locate a student's parent/guardian or other authorized individuals. Nest will need to keep the child safe until reunified, or contact the local emergency

management agencies if no one has been located to release the child once Nest is no longer able to provide child care.

If the Nest facility is unusable following an emergency event, childcare will still be provided using a classroom at EUREKA! McConnell Science Museum, until repairs are made on the Nest Preschool building.

Fire Plan

In the event of a fire, all students will immediately evacuate from the building to the North grass area of New Emerson Elementary. Staff will do a sweep of the building to ensure no students are in the bathrooms, and will call 911.

Lost Child Plan

As soon as it is discovered or reported that a child is missing, all staff will be immediately notified of the following information:

- Name
- Age
- Approximate height and weight
- Skin and hair color
- Details of what the child was wearing (clothes including the type and color of the child's shoes and jewelry, identifying features like glasses or braces, and other accessories like a backpack)
- Where the child last seen, doing what, with whom
- What was the child's disposition before the disappearance: angry, happy, sad?

All available staff will conduct an immediate search of the building and area. If the child is not located within 10 minutes, 911 will be called, in addition to the child's guardians.

Transportation

Students will be transported on EUREKA! Activity buses or vans for field trips. When being transported, all students will be seated in a rear seat with a seatbelt fastened. Nest staff will visually check all students are buckled into their seats. If traveling in the EUREKA! Van, all students will be seated on a booster seat. All EUREKA! drivers have completed the D51 online and in-person driver course. Student to staff ratios will be met at all times, including when inside a vehicle.

Each vehicle will have the following items, and staff will check they are present before all trips:

- Proof of insurance and vehicle registration.
- Mileage log book.
- Window shade.
- Fire extinguisher.
- Hazard triangle.
- Tire pressure gauge.
- Jumper cables.
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Hand towels
- Trailer hitch
- Trailer electrical adapter
- Driving binder
- Flares
- Duct tape
- Water (1 liter)
- First aid kit
- Car sickness bags

In the event of an emergency (flat tire, car sickness, accident) during transport, the driver will stop at the next safe area to pull off. Students will be evacuated from the vehicle to a safe area, away from traffic, until the problem is resolved or a replacement vehicle is provided.

Mandated Reporters

All Nest staff are mandated reporters, and have completed training through Child Protective Services. If staff has any reason to suspect physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, child neglect or exploitation against a student, they will call the Mesa County Child Protection Hotline at 970-242-1211.

Nest staff will not inform families when a complaint has been reported.

Claims

If you have concerns about this child care facility and would like to file a complaint against the facility, you may contact:

Colorado Office of Early Childhood, Division of Early Care and Learning, Child Care Licensing and Administration at 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO, 80203-1714 or call 303-866-5958 or 1-800-799-5876