

Discovery Preschool & Childcare Center, Inc.

Parent Handbook

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Discovery Preschool & Childcare Center, Inc.

Discovery Preschool and Childcare Center Inc. is a licensed center providing day care services to children 1 through 5 year, and full day preschool program to children 3-5 years old. We are open Monday to Friday, from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Our Mission at Discovery is to provide children with a safe and nurturing learning environment and varied age-appropriate experiences which help them develop socially, intellectually, physically and emotionally. We encourage respect toward others and our environment. We offer a variety of creative and educational activities to meet the individual needs of your child. There is a balance of quiet and active periods, structured play and activities, and individual and group play.

- *We believe children learn through play, hands-on activities, and exploring the world around them.*
- *We believe each child is unique and we help each to fulfill his/ her potential.*
- *We believe physical activity is essential for continued growth in both large and small motor development.*
- *We believe in the importance and value of the arts in children's learning and development.*

Our program offers experiences in visual and dramatic arts, creative movement, music, children's literature, early childhood physical education, as well as early exposure to Spanish, and cultural awareness. The curriculum is created with age appropriate themes each week. Projects and classroom play focuses on these themes. A complete list of our themes for the year is located on the Parent Information Board in the hallway.

Program goals and objectives are available to review on request. We post daily lesson plans and experiences throughout the day in each classroom. We also document children's experiences, play, and activities through photography. We encourage you to view the Digital Display provided at the Junior preschool entry door.

Daily Schedule (example of Junior & Senior Classrooms)

7:00-8:30	Arrival and Free Play
8:00-9:00	Breakfast
9:15-9:30	AM Circle/ Story
9:30-10:30	Discovery Area Free play and Arts Experience
10:30-11:00	Indoor or Outdoor Gross Motor Activity (P.E/Creative Movement/Creative Ballet/Music)
11:00- 11:30	Area Free play & Story
11:30-12:00	Lunch
12:00-1:00	Outdoor Free Play
1:00-3:00	Quiet Time
3:00- 3:30	Snack
3:30-4:00	Freeplay
4:00- 4:45	Outdoor Play
4:45-5:00	Story
5:00-6:00	Discovery Areas and Free play

Food Program

We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. We observe the State nutritional guidelines in planning our daily menus. Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack is served to all children. Please note serving times on our daily schedule. We encourage but do not force children to try new foods, helping them develop healthy attitudes toward a wide variety of foods. The menu is posted on the Parent Information Board. **Please do not send your child to the Center with CANDY, POP, or GUM.**

Field Trips

Occasionally the children will take field trips. Field trips to the park or walks around our preschool may occur during the day if weather permits. Any other destinations will be posted in advance. Please make sure you complete the Yellow Emergency Contact form and provide your consent for field trips as requested on the form. Children under 4 will only travel by foot. Children over 4 may travel on public transit. Children in our Toddler room will not leave the premises.

Policies

Contracted Days

Your contract is a binding agreement for the number of days you are contract for. If you are a University student and/or State Pay parent you are still responsible for payment of the days you are contracted for. University students, who are state pay, may not be covered during holidays, spring break, etc. Be aware, you are still contracted for those days and will be charged accordingly. More on State Paid Childcare on last page.

Drop off/Pick up Procedures

We will NOT allow anyone to pick up a child if they appear to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs. We will ask that person to call for an alternate person to pick up the child.

Please walk in with your child in the morning and come inside to pick up your child in the afternoon. Never leave or pick up your child without talking to a staff member. Inform us of any changes or special needs your child may have. We must have your permission to release your child to another person if you are unable to do so personally. Please inform us in advance either by phone, a note or in person in the morning. **Please sign your child in at the beginning of the day, and sign out when picking your child up. Please check your parent cubby each day for important notes, newsletters, or other communications.**

Please make sure your child is in a proper child restraint car seat when picking up your child.

Dress

Dress your child in play clothes. We encourage active play, and your child WILL most likely get dirty, etc. *Clothing should be clearly marked with your child's name.* Dresses are not appropriate for outdoor play. Please send proper clothing for the season changes. Also, PLEASE SEND AN EXTRA CHANGE OF CLOTHES to leave at the Center.

Illness

A complete Illness Exclusion Policy, as well as Discovery Preschool Health Policy, is available to review and is located in the hall entry way.

At Discovery Preschool and Child Care Center, Inc., we believe that ill children require special care that may require exclusion from the group setting. At Discovery Preschool and Child Care Center, Inc., the decision to exclude a child from care will be based on whether there are adequate facilities and staff available to meet the needs of both the ill child and the other children in the group. The child care provider, not the child's family, will make the final determination about whether the acutely ill child can receive care in our program. If your child becomes ill while at the Center he will be separated from the other children and a parent will be contacted. You are expected to pick up your child within one hour of this call.

The following is our policy concerning illness as *required* by the STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT and Child Care Licensing Rules:

The day care staff shall exclude from the facility any child showing signs or symptoms of illness (a runny nose without fever is permissible). If a child has any of the following conditions, he/she will be excluded:

- a) A temperature of **100.5 or greater.**
- b) A draining ear infection.
- c) Diarrhea and frequent runny stools with abdominal discomfort.
- d) Chicken pox (until the sores are dry).
- e) Thick mucous discharge from the nose which is green or yellow in color.
- f) Presence of ringworm, lice, scabies, impetigo, pink eye or other body parasites.

A child with fever, vomiting or diarrhea must be symptom FREE without medications for no less than 24 hours to return back to school. A child who is too ill to participate in the daily scheduled activities at Discovery Preschool should be kept home until they are able to participate. Children who are lethargic, unable to go outdoors, etc. are still in need of more medical attention that can be provided at Discovery preschool.

Medications, Medication Administration Form, and Medical Emergency Procedures

In the event your child will need to be given medicine, please ask for a medication administration form and medication log. These forms must be filled out in order for us to administer any medications. All medication should be brought in its original container. **Please give the medicine to a staff member.** (More information can be found in our Medication Administration Policy and in our Health Policy located in the hall entry way)

Parents must give written authorization to get necessary medical treatment in case of an emergency. This release is part of the emergency information sheet in your enrollment packet. In the event your child becomes ill you will be called immediately. (Complete policies available to review) If your child's illness is life threatening, or injury has occurred, we use the Emergency Medical Release Form. You will be contacted immediately as your child is being transported to the Emergency room. In the event of poisoning we first contact Poison Control 1-800-222-1222

Allergies

Parents need to inform the Center of any allergies their child has concerning foods, medications, etc. A written statement from a physician is needed. For food allergies, please provide a list of food substitutes.

Naps

Preschool children need naps or at least time to rest. A day care environment is very stimulating. We like to encourage all of the children to take naps or at least rest quietly for a while. Please provide a blanket and a small travel size pillow to be kept at the Center.

Discipline

We use behavioral guidance and redirection in the classroom. We use "calming time" **only** when other forms of redirecting behavior are not working. Occasionally problems arise that are more challenging and we may find it necessary to contact the parents in order to work together to help the child learn appropriate problem-solving behaviors.

Enrollment Procedures (Children ages 2-6)

In order to enroll your child, we need the following forms completed:

1. *Enrollment form & Childcare Contract*
2. *Immunization Record*
3. *CACFP Income Eligibility Form (All families must complete)*
4. *Emergency Medical Release Form*
5. *For Toddlers- Physicians Health Statement*

We suggest that you visit the program at least twice with your child, to better acquaint them to the environment and other children.

We accept State Paid Childcare. We need state forms and confirmation of status in order for your child to begin.

Rates & Fees

- Daily rate- * **\$29.50** (up to 10 hours a day) Children 2-6 years
* \$ 33.00 (up to 10 hr. day) Children 12 to 24 months
* Over 10 hours a \$7.00 per hour rate is charged

Payments are due weekly, unless otherwise arranged on your contract. Bills for the week are placed in parent cubbies on Friday, and your payments are due no later than Wednesday of the next week. Any accounts past due one week may jeopardize continuing care for your child. A fee of 10% of your total will be added to your bill on Thursday for any late payments, unless prior arrangements have been made.

If problems occur where you need to change your payment schedule, please speak to the director. **Return Check Fee (NSF)- \$30.00**

Parents are responsible for picking their child up on time! We close at 6:00 PM, please arrive prior to that to give time to get your child's items together. (Unless prior arrangements have been made for extended hour care.) A fee of **\$1.00 for every minute** that your child is late being picked up *after 6 pm* will be added to your bill. Occasionally weather will cause delays, please make every effort to leave work earlier to arrive safely to the center, but in the event severe weather causes delay we will not charge you a late pick up fee.

Attendance

Please call by 9 am if your child will not be coming for the day or will be late. This helps us in determining numbers for meal preparation and proper staffing.

Paid Provider Holidays

The following days are “paid provider” observed holidays when we will be closed. You will be charged your usual rate.

New Year's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day

Labor Day
Nov. 22 & 23 for Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve Day & Christmas Day

When a major Holiday falls on a Thursday we will be closed the following day.

Discovery Preschool Community

When your child enrolls at Discovery your family becomes an integral part of our community and your child’s learning experience. Each year we have a series of social (pot luck) and fundraising events. As with any community, it’s strength is only as great as it’s members commitment.

Birthdays Celebrations- Birthdays are celebrated at the Center whenever possible. Treats are welcome for the children in your child’s class. We encourage healthy treats.

Holidays- Several Holiday celebrations are held throughout the year. Halloween costume party, healthy treats, and games are played. Christmas is celebrated with songs and a pot luck afterwards, an evening program. We also hold a year end Preschool Graduation and pot luck.

Fundraisers/ Labels for Education- We participate in a few fundraisers throughout the year to aid in purchasing classroom supplies and learning materials.

Scholastic Book Club- We participate in Scholastic Book Club, and provide club order forms throughout the year. When you purchase books through the club you will find wonderful books for your child at a wonderful price. Your purchase also earns us points towards classroom books and learning materials.

State Paid Childcare

State pay scholarships cover \$27.50 per day for children 2 and older, and \$29.90 for toddlers. You will be responsible for paying the Co-Pay, as well as any difference not covered by the state. Please make sure your child is in attendance for the minimum of 6 hours per day to fulfill your contract, so that we can receive the appropriate amount from the State, otherwise you will be charged that difference. **If you are not covered for 6 hours, you will be charged the difference the state does not pay for the days you have contracted.**

Over 10 hours a day may not be covered by the state and you will be charged a fee of \$5.00 an hour when your child attends over 10 hours. We charge private pay parents accordingly as well. Even if a private pay child is only here 5 hours, they pay the daily contracted rate. If they stay over 10 hours they are subsequently charged the \$5.00 an hour over hours fee.

State Pay Childcare (Cont.')

If you are a Student at the University please remember you may not have state pay coverage during your Breaks. Please be aware you are contracted for childcare and will be responsible for childcare costs not covered by the state, whether your child is here or not. We still have staff and overhead costs.

You are responsible for all costs not covered by the State, in addition to a paid 2 week notice, if your state pay is discontinued. Payments towards overdue accounts are applied first to the difference and any balance on your account, before fulfilling your co-payment.

Termination of Contract

If a child is to be withdrawn from the program, a two week written notice and immediate 2 week payment must be given to the director. If no notice is given you will be charged 10 full days tuition. Any unpaid balance is due prior to your termination date. Unpaid balances after a final date of attendance are immediately placed into collections.

Costs incurred by Discovery Preschool in enforcing this contract, including collection agency and/or attorney's fees, may be sought through the court and paid by the parent(s) as a party to this contract.

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** To file a complaint of discrimination, write, USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*