

# **Discovery Preschool and Childcare Center, Inc.**

## **Parent Handbook**

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# Discovery Preschool & Childcare Center, Inc.

The Discovery Preschool and Childcare Center Inc. is a licensed center providing day care services and preschool program for children 1 through 6 years. We are open Monday to Friday, from 7 am to 6:00 pm. Please see infant/Toddler Program information for hours.

The goal of our Center is to provide an atmosphere that will enhance social, emotional, physical and intellectual skills for children within a safe and caring environment. 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.

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.

Our Senior and Junior Preschool rooms are arranged with "Discovery Areas", allowing free play while also exploring and experiencing the various themes in our curriculum.

**Multicultural Center (in Senior Preschool)** - This area provides children the opportunity to explore the world beyond our own. The area is designed to provide a stimulating experience with pictures and discussions about other cultures and people of our world. Each Friday we will pick a country to focus on. We will look at their language, customs, and way of life in an age appropriate and fun way.

**Circle Area**- A place to gather for calendar, stories, songs, and other learning activities that foster listening, language development, creativity and social development.

**Pretend/Dramatic Play (House Area)**- Provides a place for your child to act out events in their daily life or their imaginations, developing language and social skills.

**Library/Reading Area**- A quiet place to read or look at books encouraging early reading skills and language development.

**Arts Area**- Allows children to express themselves imaginatively, while developing fine motor and other skills using a variety of tools and materials.

**Block Area**- Exploring building and math concepts (ie. shape, balance) and dramatic play.

**Science/Sensory Center**- Here children explore basic science concepts such as weight and volume, they are provided with real objects to feel, observe, and explore. Your child will explore magnets, kaleidoscopes, prisms, discovery bottles, shells, rocks, plants, and more.

**Math/Manipulative Area**- From sorting, grouping and counting, creating patterns and shapes, constructing puzzles and lacing beads, this area promotes math concept development, while increasing fine motor development.

### **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 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 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.

### **Policies**

#### **Contracted Days**

Your contract is a binding agreement for the number of days you contract. 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**

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 parent cubby.**

**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.**

## Dress

Dress your child in play clothes. We encourage active play. 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

The following is our policy concerning illness as required by the STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT:

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.

If your child becomes ill while at the Center he will be separated from the other children and a parent will be contacted. (More information provided below)

## Medications, Medication Administration Form, and Medical Emergency Procedures

In the event your child will need to be given medicine, please ask for a medication form. This form must be filled out in order for us to administer 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 handout)

Parents must give written permission 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. ( More on this above, as well as in our illness exclusion policy) 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 we can provide.

## 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 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. After a few minutes we talk to the child about the reason he/she was removed, and allow the child to return to the group activities. 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. *Food Program Income Form (All families must complete)*
4. *Emergency Medical Release Form*

We suggest that you visit the program at least once 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-
- \* **\$28.50** (up to 10 hours a day) Children 2-6 years
  - \* \$ 32.00 (up to 9 hr. day) Children 12 to 24 months/ \$7.00 hr
  - \* \$5.00 per hr. (under 6 hrs a day)
  - \* Over 10 hours a \$5.00 per hour rate is charged  
(i.e. 10 1/2 hours add \$2.50 to rate= \$29.00 for that day. )
  - \* AM Only Preschool ( Junior / Senior Preschool) \$ 20.00 day from 9:00am-12:30 pm
  - \* Before/After school \$ 20.00

Payments are due weekly, unless otherwise arranged on your contract. Any accounts past due one week may jeopardize continuing care for your child. If problems occur where you need to change your payment schedule, please speak to the director. Payments are due no later than Wednesday of each week. 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. **Return Check Fee (NSF)- \$25.00**

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.

### Paid Holidays

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.

The following days are "paid provider" observed holidays and you will be charged your usual rate.

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| New Year's Day | Labor Day        |
| Memorial Day   | Thanksgiving Day |
| 4th of July    | Christmas Day    |

## 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, and so we can receive the appropriate amount from the State. **If you are not covered for 6 hours, you will be charged a 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 their 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. This is only fair.

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 the 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 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.**

**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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