

PARENT HANDBOOK



Welcome

We understand the importance of finding the best care for your child and we are honored that you have chosen Discovery Point!

Since we opened our first center in 1988, we've been creating environments where children learn, play, and develop in an encouraging and supportive atmosphere. We focus our programs on helping children develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically at their own pace. We have always believed that children will thrive if they are guided in an environment rooted in caring and kindness.

Today, at Discovery Point, we continue that philosophy and are committed to providing every child with the best possible care and quality educational instruction. We hold ourselves to the highest standards in curriculum implementation, hiring and staff training, and adherence to health and safety practices.

This Parent Handbook outlines specific policies and procedures that are in place at the center to maintain compliance with state child care licensing and to provide an optimal environment for your child to learn and grow.

To complete the enrollment process, please sign the acknowledgment form or a copy of the acknowledgment (on the last page) and return it to the center owner or a member of the center management. This ensures that there is a record of your receiving the handbook and indicates that you agree to abide by all policies and procedures listed.

STANDARDS OF CARE

Each Discovery Point center is licensed by the state in which the center operates. Our centers meet or exceed all state standards pertaining to building, facilities, staff ratios, safety and health procedures, nutrition, curriculum, and playground areas. Important data, including the state license, state regulations, and management identification are displayed in the front reception area. A copy of the state child care standards manual is available for parents to review along with a copy of the latest licensing report.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES/PAPERWORK

Discovery Point offers quality child care services for children six weeks to 12 years of age. We provide individualized infant care and educational preschool programs. We also provide before and after school programs and summer camp for school-aged children. The center may also offer part time or drop-in programs. Please check with the center owner or director for details.

Discovery Point does not discriminate on the basis of a person's religion, color, race, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or other status when determining eligibility for enrollment or hiring.

Discovery Point requests all documentation at the time of enrollment to ensure we are in compliance with state licensing requirements.

Parents are required to notify the center about any changes in:

- Phone numbers and address
- Work location
- Emergency contacts
- Child's physician
- Child's health status
- Infant feeding schedules
- Immunization records
- Any other information related to the care of their child such as allergy or medical alerts.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Discovery Point is open Monday through Friday, 12 months a year, from 6:30am to 6:30pm. Some centers' hours may vary depending on location. The center is closed Saturday and Sunday.

Discovery Point observes seven holidays each year: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Should any of the holidays fall on a Saturday, the center will be closed the previous Friday. Should any holiday fall on a Sunday, then the center will be closed the following Monday. Some centers may observe additional holidays, please see the center director for a complete list. Full tuition rates will apply during holiday closings.

Severe weather may force the center to close for the safety and security of the staff and families. Please check with the owner or director of the center for the Inclement Weather Policies and Procedures.

TUITION AND OTHER FEES

Tuition is due in advance on Friday for the upcoming week. Late fees are charged if tuition is not paid on time. Please see the owner and tuition ratesheet for specific details regarding late fee charges. A registration fee is charged at the time of enrollment and then annually for the duration of your child's enrollment at the center. While we do our best to accommodate changes to schedules, tuition cannot be adjusted week to week based on actual attendance.

If your child attends at least one day out of the week, full tuition for the week will be due. If a child does not attend at all, half a week's tuition is due to hold the child's spot in the program. Should your payment be late, your child may be disenrolled from the center.

Other fees may be charged including, but not limited to, late pick-up fee, returned check fee, early release or closed school days fee. Please see the owner or director of the center for a rate sheet listing all detailed fees.

Tuition rates are subject to change. Families will be given at least a two-week notice of any changes to tuition.

Tax statements are available at the end of the calendar year. Please see the owner/director for more information.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Discovery Point asks that you please drive carefully during drop off and pick up times, paying special attention to families crossing and small children who may dart out unexpectedly. Park in a space or under portico and walk your children all the way into the building. Per state regulations, all parents must check their child in and out each day. Additional safety check in procedures, including health screenings, may be added as needed.

All parents are required to escort their child in and out of the center, making sure that parents or guardians leave children in the direct care of a staff member during drop off.

ATTENDANCE/WITHDRAWALS

If your family will be going on vacation, or if your child is ill, please contact center management. Discovery Point requires a two-week written notice for withdrawal. If proper notice is not given, you will be charged for the two weeks that your child did not attend. The family account must be current at the time of disenrollment.

Each child is allowed one week (five days) per year for vacation time with no tuition charged, provided that the child has been continuously enrolled at Discovery Point for at least one full year and that the account is current. Vacation time must be taken a full week at a time and on consecutive days.

LATE PICKUP

We ask that children be picked-up in a timely manner, by 6:30, each day. Please notify the center management immediately if you will be late picking up your child. You will be subject to late fees in accordance with the center's tuition policy.

DESIGNATED PICK-UPS

In addition to the legal parent or guardian, only those individuals listed on the Child Enrollment Form in the Emergency Contact Information are authorized to pick-up your child. All individuals sent to pick up your child (including the parent or guardian) must have a photo ID ready to present for verification at the front desk in order to be approved to pick up. If a valid ID is not presented and verified, your child will not be released and the enrolling parent will be notified immediately.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please dress your child in clothing that is comfortable, washable, and appropriate for the current weather conditions. Water activities, playtime, and occasional restroom accidents necessitate that an extra set of clothing be kept at the center at all times. Be sure that all articles of clothing are clearly marked with the child's first and last name to prevent loss.

If soiled clothing is sent home, please return a clean set of extra clothes the next morning for your child. Children are taken outside daily. Please dress your child accordingly, always bringing a coat when the weather turns cold. Remember, children are likely to get a little dirty when they are having fun. For the children's safety we do not allow open-toed shoes, sandals or crocs. Please do not to send them in their "best" clothes.

Discovery Point provides sleeping mats and mat sheets, but if your preschool child has a special blanket they would like to bring for rest time, they may do so. Please make sure it is labeled with first and last name and taken home each week for washing. Blankets in cribs for infants are prohibited in accordance with Safe Sleep Policies.

We do not allow toys, gum, pets, money, or food to be brought into the center. Special food items may be allowed with a special diet or allergy/medical plan. In accordance with state regulations, Discovery Point does not allow children to wear jewelry or hair barrettes/beads. These items can become a strangulation or choking hazard in an active play setting.

Discovery Point does not allow cell phone use in the classrooms. If your child has a cell phone, it must be turned off and given to management at the time of arrival at the school. The phone will be returned to the child when they leave the center for the day.

Some individual centers allow school age children electronics such as iPads or laptops to support online learning. Please review and sign the center's separate **Technology Usage Agreement** before sending devices to the center.

Discovery Point will not be responsible for lost or broken personal items brought into the center from home.

CURRICULUM

Since our founding in 1988, we've recognized the importance an effective curriculum plays in your child's overall development. Discovery Point Connections® curriculum offers child-centered lessons and instruction with a literature and early language focus. Weekly theme units are grounded in educational standards and provide hands-on learning activities featuring current and classic children's literature. Each unit will include creative arts, discovery-based science, music and movement, math, and the building of social skills.

Discovery Point Centers may vary in their approach to curriculum implementation, so check with your local center for more details on theme studies, lesson planning, and learning activities for each stage of your child's development.

ASSESSMENTS/TRANSITIONS

Children are placed into classrooms based on the child's age and stage of development. Your child's teacher will continually observe your child throughout the year and track developmental progress. When a child is ready for transition to the next classroom, the parent will be informed and a schedule will be planned. The schedule allows the child to have multiple visits to the new classroom for short periods of time so that they can adjust easily to the new surroundings.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE

Discovery Point teachers and staff use a combination of effective methods to help guide and manage behavior. Our teachers implement developmentally appropriate lessons with active learning and structured routines to create an environment where all children can be engaged. Behavior is guided with a combination of re-direction and positive reinforcement. Frequent communication and cooperation between teachers and parents provide consistency as children develop problem solving skills and self-discipline. A copy of the detailed Discovery Point Discipline and Behavior Policy is included in the enrollment packet.

INCLUSION

Discovery Point is committed to providing care and instruction to children with all ability levels, including those with special needs. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual needs and capabilities. Our management and staff are prepared to work with you to provide or locate the services that are necessary for you and your child. All documentation and records are kept strictly confidential.

MULTICULTURALISM

A multicultural learning environment is vital for children to adapt socially and promote respect for all people. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities to teach the children about diverse cultures and the world around them. Discovery Point encourages parental involvement and invite you to share your family culture with the children and staff at the center.

CHILD ABUSE AND MANDATED REPORTING

All staff and administrators of Discovery Point are mandated by law to report any suspected case of child abuse, neglect, exploitation, or deprivation of any child in our care to local authorities. All center staff receives initial training on preventing and identifying abuse and neglect during new hire orientation and are required to receive ongoing training each year.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES

In an emergency medical situation, the care and well-being of your child is our first priority. Once we determine the severity of the situation, the center will contact the parent, then the emergency contact, and / or 911 if needed. If we are unable to contact the parent immediately, we will ensure that the child is transported to an appropriate medical resource and will secure medical attention and care for the child as necessary. Authorization for emergency transport is part of the Child Enrollment Form and must be completed at the time of enrollment. The parent will assume responsibility for payment for such services and emergency treatment.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

At Discovery Point, the protection of the children and staff is of the utmost concern, so every effort is made to be thoroughly prepared should an emergency arise at the center. Emergency exit plans are posted in every classroom as well as in the front lobby. Tornado, fire, and emergency situation drills are conducted regularly so the children and staff are ready to follow emergency procedures with confidence. A complete copy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan is available for review at the front desk.

If the building were to become unsafe and require evacuation, the children will be transported to the emergency evacuation location determined by the center management team. The name of the location can be found in the Emergency Preparedness Plan and posted in the lobby of the center. Parents will be notified in the case of an emergency to be given details of the situation and to be provided with pick-up procedures. Please contact the owner or director of the center for specific details on communication.

ACCIDENTS REPORTS

Discovery Point follows safety rules and regulations to provide a secure environment for children. Whether in our care or yours, scratches, skinned knees, bumps and bruises are a natural part of growing up. If an accident or injury occurs, first aid is administered immediately. We will notify parents or guardians and the Accident Report will be ready for the parent to sign at the front desk at the time of pick up.

OUTSIDE TIME/PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

State regulations require that outdoor activities be provided daily, weather-permitting. Discovery Point adheres to all state requirements regarding outdoor play. A child may be excused from outdoor activities for a limited period of time with a note or medical form from their pediatrician.

ALLERGIES and MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Parents are required to notify the center regarding any allergies or medical conditions their child might have. This would include food, medication, and any other environmental allergies. Parents must provide the center with the following regarding any medical conditions and/or allergies:

- Child Medical Report completed by the child's physician
- Allergies and medical conditions must be listed on the Child Enrollment Form
- The appropriate Action Plan related to the child's allergy or medical condition completed by the child's physician and returned to the center before attendance can begin.

MEALS AND SNACKS

Discovery Point provides breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack to all children enrolled in the center. Some centers vary in the meals provided. Please contact the owner/director of your center for more information. All meals meet Federal Nutrition Guidelines and are prepared on-site. Updated menus are posted in the center. Substitutions are noted on the lobby menu when necessary.

Discovery Point Centers take all allergies, especially nut allergies, very seriously. Because exposure to nuts or other food items can be life threatening, outside food may or may not be permitted in the center. Please check with the owner or director for a detailed policy regarding outside food. This would include meals as well as birthday treats. Even with any medical exceptions or special occasions, Discovery Point is always a NUT FREE FACILITY.

BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

We will be happy to help your child celebrate his or her birthday. You may bring nutritious, store-purchased refreshments for your child's class. Please check with the center director or owner ahead of time before planning the event.

Please be aware of potential allergies in the classroom and that Discovery Point does not allow nuts or nut products in the center. Due to state regulations, balloons or lit candles are not permitted in the center.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Discovery Point traditionally offers extra-curricular activities for the children. This may include special events that are built into the program as well as activities or classes that are offered to families from outside resources that would take place during their child's day at the center. Please see the owner/director for details.

INFANTS, BEGINNERS and TODDLERS

Because Infants and Toddlers have unique needs and schedules, certain special requirements are needed for these age groups. Parents are required to complete an Infant Information and Feeding Schedule for all children one year of age and younger prior to enrollment. This form is to be updated every 2 months or as needed based on any changes in the child's diet or feeding schedule. We ask that this feeding schedule is followed until the child is 12 months of age, or is on regular milk and food provided by the center.

Parents are to provide all pre-mixed formula/breast milk and baby food/cereal for children ages six months to twelve months. Please check with the owner/director of the center for more information.

Enough individual (prepared) bottles should be brought in each day. No glass bottles are allowed in the center and all bottles must be taken home at the end of each day. All bottles and pacifiers must be labeled with the child's first and last name and the current date.

An Infant Daily Report will be filed in each day by your child's teacher including rest/nap times, diaper changes, meal consumptions, and activities during the day.

Parents are to provide diapers, diapering supplies, and several changes of clothes for infants and toddlers. Please remember that infants go through several diapers a day, so please be sure to supply the center with enough diapers for the week. Children's diapers are changed approximately every 2 hours, or as needed. This will be recorded on the Infant Daily Report.

BITING

It is developmentally common for young children to bite as a means of communication or out of frustration. While our staff has been trained and will do their best to provide an environment where biting does not occur, there will be times in which this is unavoidable. If your child is bitten, or has bitten another child, you will be notified of the incident. If a child bites frequently, the staff will observe the child and track activity patterns that may contribute to the behavior. A meeting will be held with the parent to develop a strategy to help correct the biting behavior.

REST TIME

It is important for all children to have an opportunity to rest each day. Infants will rest according to their individual schedules. Children in the toddler and older classrooms will rest according to the schedule posted in their classroom.

TOILET TRAINING

At Discovery Point, we believe that a strong family-teacher partnership is essential as a child begins to show potty training readiness. This will make the experience successful and less stressful. It is recommended that toilet training begin when a child shows an interest and signs of physical control (or awareness) of their bodily functions.

Patience and positive support will be given to children and their parents as they go through this learning experience. Because the process will be a collective effort at home and at school, the classroom teacher, as well as the center management, will be available to discuss ideas and techniques that can be used when the child is in both places. Your center director or owner can provide additional information regarding potty training and what to expect.

PRESCHOOL

Every day is a learning adventure in our preschool classroom. Children are encouraged and taught to become independent thinkers. The Preschool classrooms address state learning standards through a combination of teacher directed instruction and child centered discovery and play. Educational lesson plans include activities for small and large group instruction, as well as free choice learning activities, where children have an opportunity to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills as create, play, and learn.

SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM

Our School-Age Program provides care for children before and after their normal elementary school day. Safe, state-approved and inspected buses transport children to and from local public schools.

The Discovery Point After School Program is tailored to meet the interests and needs of school-age students. Children can play with friends outside, work on homework, enjoy learning games on computers or tablets, or just relax with a book.

Care is also available on days when school is not in session, including teacher work days, holidays, and vacations. Please consult your director or owner for program specifics for both after school and summer camp options.

TRANSPORTATION

Discovery Point may provide transportation to and from elementary school and on scheduled field trips as a part of the school-age program. All state-mandated transportation guidelines are enforced consistently to ensure that every child is safe and well-cared for while traveling to and from school or on a field trip.

A Transportation Agreement/Authorization and Vehicle Emergency Medical Information Form must be completed and signed by the parent at the time of enrollment and annually.

Discovery Point buses must follow a prompt schedule in order to transport children to and from school on time each day. We ask that you have your child at the school on time when enrolled in the "before school" program. Additionally, we request that you inform the center immediately each time your child will not be riding the bus to or from school.

BABYSITTING BY CENTER STAFF PROHIBITED

Employees of Discovery Point have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit conflicts of interest. This includes, but is not limited to, providing any type of extra childcare service, paid or voluntary and/or transportation of children before or after work hours for customers of Discovery Point.

ILLNESS POLICY

Discovery Point utilizes every safeguard to prevent illness. Nevertheless, most children, infant through preschool-age, experience normal infections and illnesses.

Children with contagious illnesses will not be allowed to stay in the center. Symptoms of such illnesses include: fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, diarrhea, vomiting, mouth sores, rash with fever, discharge from the eye (pink eye), severe colds, chicken pox, mumps, measles, or ring worm.

If your child has a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher and/or is experiencing symptoms that prevent them from participating comfortably in program activities, you will be notified immediately and asked to take the child home. We require the child be free of the elevated temperature for at least 24 hours (without medication) and show no signs of illness upon arrival back to the center. A doctor's statement may be necessary in some cases for your child to return to care. The illness policy is subject to change during a pandemic, changes are based on CDC guidelines.

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease while in the center, a note/ letter will be sent home and/or a notification will be posted on the classroom door. Likewise, we ask that you let the center know if your child has been exposed to, or has contracted an infectious disease outside of the center, as we are required to notify the local health department.

MEDICATION POLICY

The management team at Discovery Point will administer any medication prescribed for your child by their pediatrician. However, we request that all efforts be made by families to administer the medicine at home. Prescription medications will be administered only if the Medication Authorization Form is filled out in its entirety, dated, and signed by the parent every two weeks, or as state licensing regulations dictate. Medication must be in its original container and labeled with the prescription name, prescription number, the child's full name, and prescription dosage. Medication must be stored and secured by management at all times. No medication can be left in the classroom or in diaper or book bag including topical medication, sunscreen, or bug repellent. Any adverse reactions to medications will be reported to the parent immediately.

Topical ointments such as diaper cream, lip balm, and sunscreen may be administered by management or staff, but appropriate authorization forms must be completed and kept on file.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Under normal circumstances, parents are permitted access to the building. However, under special health and safety directives from the state or local health department, visitation to classrooms may be temporarily suspended.

When access is allowed, we request that special attention be paid to the classroom schedule, so as not to disrupt learning or nap times.

Parent/teacher conferences may be scheduled twice a year to discuss your child's progress, but conferences are not limited to only those times. We encourage families to exchange thoughts and information on their child whenever they feel it is necessary. We encourage you to discuss any classroom issues with your child's teacher and bring any concerns or questions about the program to the attention of the center owner or director as soon as possible. If a member of management is not available to address your concerns immediately, an appointment will be made as soon as possible.

Effective communication between the parent, teacher, director, and owner is an extremely important part of the overall success of your child's experience at the center. We have various methods of communication to keep families informed of center events, policy updates, upcoming activities, classroom news, etc. Please check with the center owner or director regarding the center's specific communication methods.

CUSTODY ORDERS

Please inform the center immediately if there are any custody orders concerning your child/children. The center must abide by any standing court order documentation that is in the child's file. We are unable to withhold a child from any parent having custody or joint custody. The center staff or management are unable to become involved in custody disputes or mediate any visitation or pick-up details between the child's parents.

PHOTO RELEASE

Discovery Point maintains a website and social media page for parents and the community. There are times where we would like to use photographs, images, videos, and audios of the children in their learning environment in the various media. A Photo Release Form will be included with your enrollment materials and must be completed by the parent. If you do not wish for your child's photo to be taken or their image used, it must be indicated on the form.

MEDIA

In accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics, screen time, including television or any type of computer device, is not recommended for infants through 24 months. Screen time for 24 months and older is limited to 30 minutes per day. Due to this, our normal daily routine does not include television watching.

NO SMOKING

Discovery Point is a Smoke Free Environment. The building, outdoor playground, parking lot and surrounding walk areas are entirely smoke-free. Smoking is not permitted on the premises by personnel, parents, or visitors.

PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received the Discovery Point Parent Handbook and applicable information specific to center and state policies. I understand and agree that it's my responsibility to read and familiarize myself with the policies and procedures of the Discovery Point Parent Handbook. In addition, I understand that this handbook reflects company-wide policies and that supplemental center and state specific policies may apply. By signing below, I acknowledge receipt of these materials and agree to abide by them.

I understand that it's my responsibility to address any questions I may have regarding the information contained in the Discovery Point Parent Handbook directly to the owner or other member of center management.

Information contained in this handbook is subject to change.

I have read, understand and accept the conditions noted above.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

WE WELCOME YOU TO OUR DISCOVERY POINT FAMILY!

We look forward to serving you, your family, and friends.

Each Discovery Point Child Development Center is independently owned and operated using the Discovery Point proven method of successful child care center operation. Discovery Point owners are on-site and actively involved in the daily operation of the center and are available to families at any time.

If you are interested in learning more regarding the Discovery Point Franchise program, please contact us or visit our website at:

discoverypoint.com/franchising



Discovery Point Franchising, Inc.

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