Parent Handbook

Welcome to Discovery Corner Preschool

Discovery Corner

Preschool

Discovery Corner Preschool 2019-2020

PARENT HANDBOOK

Discovery Corner
Preschool

Contents

Our school and philosophy 3

Program Information 5

The Administrative Structure 6

- **Program Director:** 6
- **Early Childhood Educator (Teachers)** 6
- **Teacher's Assistant / Volunteer / Practicum students / Substitute teacher** 6

Policies and Procedures 7

- **Inclusion/Diversity policy** 7
- **Registration/Enrollment Intake Policy** 8
  - **Waiting list:** 9
- **Changing schedule and make up classes' policy:** 9
- **Transitions to the next age group policy:** 10
- **Toilet training Policy** 10
- **Children Dress code Policy** 10
- **Classroom routine and programming policy** 11
- **Use of Technology Policy** 13
- **Social Media Policy** 13
- **Photography and videography policy** 13
  - **Public Events** 13
  - **Private (In-Class) Events** 14
- **Physical and Wellness Policy** 14
- **Drop off and Pick up Policy** 14
  - **Drop Off Policy:** 14
  - **Pick up policy:** 15
- **Late pick-up Procedure** 15
- **Bathroom Breaks** 16
- **Celebrating Birthdays** 16
- **Parental Involvement Policy** 16
- **Volunteering Policy** 16
- **Field Trips and Special Events Policy** 17
- **School Closures policy** 17
  - **No Electricity Procedure:** 17

Water-break Procedure: 18
Parents Communication Policy 18
Safety Policy 19
Emergency Evacuation Procedure: 19
Fire Procedure: 19
Lock down Procedure: 20
Bomb Threat Procedure: 20
Natural disasters Procedure: 20
Missing Child Procedure: 21
Suspected Child abuse Policy 22
Child discipline policy 22
Children Behaviour Code Policy 23
Health-Accident procedure Policy 24
Potential Health Risk 24
Administration of Medication Policy 25
Anaphylactic Policy 25
Health Care Policy 25
Serious Incidents Policy 25
Smoking Policy 27
Nutrition Policy 27
Family Support Policy 27
Complaint and grievances policy 28
Confidentiality Policy 28
Student placement Policy 28
Withdrawal/Cancelation Policy 29
School Year Calendar coming soon… 30

Discovery Corner
Preschool

Our school and philosophy

Discovery Corner preschool **(DCP)** offers morning and afternoon programs for 2.5 to 5-year-old children. Our goal is to provide a comfortable, safe and stimulating classroom environment which will stimulate children's individual learning and development, while at the same time they learn skills, rules, routines and structures they will find in kindergarten.

We look forward to working closely with parents to ensure this first school experience is the best possible for their children. For this reason, our approach is applied in a nurturing, stimulating and inclusive environment where children's diversity and individual differences are recognized and respected.

Our staff members are diverse, well-trained, and strive to offer the best care in a fun-loving atmosphere.

The child's educational and social experience will include circle time, playtime, learning centers, science, and arts and crafts. Additional activities involve playball, field trips and special guests to further enrich and diversify the program's offerings.

The philosophy of Discovery Corner Preschool is based on the balance of three essential aspects: structured learning activities, play based activities, and the learning of a second language (Spanish). This combination will provide the cognitive, social, physical, and emotional growth in all children.

Our curriculum is designed under our own methodology (Integrating ideas from Montessori, Reggio, and High Scope) and with specific objectives for each age level and child. Teacher-guided activities and the child-directed exploration will be integrated in the daily activities. This means, free play is balanced with structured learning activities where the child learns to listen and follow teacher instructions, but also has opportunities for self-directed play time.

DCP firmly believes that:

- Children are unique and learn according to their individual interest, capabilities and at their own pace.
- Self-directed play is valuable and an integral part in every aspect of a child's development.
- Children learn through observation, imitation and exploration (Through their senses).
- Learning a second language in early stages enhances learning in all areas.

Spanish as Second Language at DCP

We will provide 30 minute Spanish classes every day, where the child will learn a second language while paying, making crafts, singing songs and having fun.

Recent studies indicate that the best time for a child to learn another language is in the first three to four years of life. "During this period and especially the first three years of life, the foundations for thinking, language, vision, attitudes, aptitudes, and other characteristics are laid down," says Ronald Kotulak, author of *Inside the Brain*.[1] Consequently, it would be a waste not to use a child's natural ability to learn during his or her most vital years, when learning a second language is as easy as learning the first. Since 50 percent of the ability to learn is developed in the first years of life and another 30 percent by age eight, early childhood development programs have the opportunity to encourage early learning and development.

Some benefits from learning a second language:

- Exposure to a second language clearly benefits children's reading abilities.[2]
- Children who learn a second language typically have better problem-solving abilities, better reasoning skills, and are more creative.[3]
- Bilingual children have better cognitive skills than children who have not been exposed to a second language.[4]

According to the *Calgary Board of education* learning Spanish[5]*:*

- Expands the intellect
- Teaches responsible citizenship
- Develops enhanced feelings of self-esteem and pride in having acquired an additional language
- Strengthens English literacy skills
- Encourages the joy of lifelong learning
- Promotes exploration, understanding and appreciation of the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world and contributes to multilingualism and multiculturalism
- Allows students to compete internationally
- Provides students with more choices for advanced education and career options

[1] Kotulak, R. (1996). *Inside the Brain*. Andrews and McMeel
[2] *American Psychological Association May 1997*
[3] *Education Resources Information Center, ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages & Linguistics*
[4] *National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL)*
[5] http://www.cbe.ab.ca/programs/languages/spanish.asp

Discovery Corner
Preschool

Program Information

We offer 2.5 to 5-year-old programs with the following schedule:

Half day program
9:00 am to 12:00 pm
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Before and After Care Program

Enhanced Kindergarten Program
11:30 am to 5:30 pm

Full day program
8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Extended Day Care Program
From 7:30 am to 5:30 pm

Discovery Corner Preschool requires at moment of registration:

- Non-refundable registration fee:100.00
- Void cheque
- Registration Form

Registration will not be completed until these items are submitted

Cheques will be payable at *Discovery Corner Preschool*

Remember that the bank charges for N.S.F. cheques. A $50.00 charge will apply to any N.S.F. cheques.

Program Costs are calculated on a "per school year basis", and then divided by the 10 months in the school year. Although some months are longer than others, or holidays fall within the month, there is no prorating of fees. Fees are calculated by the cost to run the program per child for the full school year.

We advise parents that we cannot prorate or reduce fees for absences due to illness or vacations. Your monthly fee guarantees your space.

The Administrative Structure

Our staff are trained and certified as Early Childhood Educators, they maintain valid First Aid Certificates and have worked in the childcare field for many years. Staff continuously upgrade their education through workshops, conferences, independent study, and researching topics of interest.

Program Director:

- Administrative Director (Miss Renée)

Oversees the operation of the preschool facility, ensuring children have a safe, happy and educational environment. Supervises staff, manages parental communication and involvement in the program; also responsible for the financial management of the center.

- Academic Director (Miss Ana)

Helps the Administrative Director with the operation of the preschool facility; develops program and curriculum. Responsible of the accreditation process of the facility. Training and working closely with staff to ensure they adhere to all protocols and requirements.

Both directors work closely to ensure program complies with provincial and federal laws regarding safety requirements and inspection and certification procedures.

Early Childhood Educator (Teachers)

Working as a teacher in the classroom. Lesson planning, assessing children's program and providing complete supervision at all times for the health and safety of the children.

Teacher's Assistant / Volunteer / Practicum students / Substitute teacher

Helping teacher in classroom, helping children and assisting them about personal habits such as eating, working and toilet habits, hand washing, etc. Supervising children at all times.

Other information

- Children are requested to bring a backpack (**labeled with their name**) for the crafts, notices, newsletters, etc. that are sent home daily.

- Children are required to **leave a pair of non-marking shoes** at the school. Both indoor and outdoor footwear should be done up with **velcro or zippers** rather than shoe laces.

- Parents are asked to keep a **change of clothes** and a plastic bag in their child's backpack, in case of spills or other accidents during the school day. (Underwear, clothes, socks, diapers/pull ups and wipes for the Toddler program)

- Each child is required to bring their own **healthy**, **nut-free** snack to class. Please, send to your child snacks or meals that are easy to eat in about 15 minutes. **Do not send gums, candies, yogurt tubes, juice boxes, fruit cups or any other container that is difficult for them to open or use.**

- **Toys from home will not be allowed in the classroom.** The Preschool is not responsible for lost or broken items. The exception to this rule is if a child has a security item that he/she would like to hold onto during class time. Please let the teacher know if this is the case for your child. Also, **school toys are not allowed to be taken home.**

- **Separation**: It is very natural for some young children to feel apprehensive about new situations. Every child will be treated with gentleness and respect and given the time that he/she needs to adjust to preschool.

- We strongly encourage all students to use **re-usable food and beverage containers.** Our goal is to have **a litter-less snack**. All Zip-lock bags and recycle containers will be returned in your child's backpack for recycling at home.

***If your child suffers from any allergies, please inform the teacher**.

Policies and Procedures

Inclusion/Diversity policy

According to The Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, "All individuals must be treated equally, regardless of their race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability".

The Canadian Human Rights Act states, "Employers and service providers are required to accommodate special needs, including those of people with disabilities, short of undue hardship".

Inclusion comes from the meaning of "to include", to hold, embrace, involve, to count among, while the concept of *diversity* encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique and recognizing their individual differences.

Special needs are defined as: Children who, due to emotional, familial, physical, behavioural, developmental, cognitive, communicative or emotional factors, are at risk of not maximizing their potential. Special needs encompass children who require support and assistance with daily living, whether formally diagnosed or not, and whether a diagnosis is short- or long-term in nature.
DCP approach is applied in a nurturing, stimulating and inclusive environment where children's diversity and individual differences are recognized and respected. As an inclusive early learning center, we strive to find ways to include all children and remove barriers that prevent children from actively participating. In addition, we are committed

to working with community partners to enhance our ability to support children with special needs through training and consultation.

Our staff members are diverse, well-trained, and strive to offer the best care in a fun-loving atmosphere. All staff:

- understand and agree to support inclusive practices as outlined in our inclusion policy
- attend special needs-focused training opportunities whenever possible
- adapt the environment and routines as necessary to meet the needs of the children enrolled
- The staff develops flexible programming that can be adapted as needed
- Have signed confidentiality agreements upon hiring. Staff are aware that they will receive and have access to confidential information about children and families and they agree to keep this information in strict confidence.

DC Preschool will work collaboratively with parents and outside service providers to ensure that the needs of the children are met. We will, with the consent of the parents, refer children to outside service providers when we feel, or the parents feel, that a child may require additional support.

Admission/Registration: All families interested in registering their child are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner.

Transitions: Children with special needs may require extra support when transitioning to a new age group. It is preferred that children move to the next age group as their same-age peers. When children are not able to progress with their peer group, a collaborative plan will be developed by the program staff, the parents and support agencies.

Withdrawal:

If the Centre is having difficulties meeting the child's needs, we will ensure that:

- All families asked to withdraw are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner.
- The notice of withdrawal is consistent with the Withdrawal Policy of the Centre and is the same for all families.
- Reasonable care has been taken in assessing the child's needs and the program's ability to support those needs.
- Special needs resources and outside agency support have been exhausted prior to the Notice of Withdrawal.

Registration/Enrollment Intake Policy

Registration at DC Preschool is granted to any child regardless to sex, race, color, religion, national origin, cultural heritage, political belief, or disability.

For the 2.5-year-old program, children must be 2.5 years of age prior or by September of the year they are entering the preschool program.

For the 3-year-old program children must be 3 years old prior or by October 31st of the year they are attending the program.

To be eligible for the 4-year-old class, children must be 4 years old prior or by October 31st of the school year in which they are registered.

Prior to enrollment, parents will be invited to meet with the director to visit the school and observe the classrooms. Parents will be encouraged to bring their child to meet with educators and visit the school. Parents will be provided with information about our approach, the program curriculum and given a tour throughout our facilities. Upon request, parents will be provided with written materials regarding Registration form, policies and procedures.
A child will be enrolled only when parents have submitted Registration form, Non-refundable Registration fee and an avoid cheque.

Upon enrollment, children and parents will be invited and encouraged to attend an orientation meeting to the program. Parents will be required to complete information about their enrolled child. All information will be kept strictly confidential.
Once the parents have chosen the program for their child, they can change program or program days before the school year starts (September 1), if there is space available and there is not a waiting list. Otherwise a fee may be applied.

Waiting list:

The number of children in the preschool is governed by the Alberta Licensing Regulations.
Children are accepted into the preschool on a first come basis. However, parents requesting full time preschool have the priority over part time preschool.
The child's name is entered on the waiting list according to the date of the initial phone call.
When an opening for the preschool occurs, the director will contact the parents or guardians of the first child on the waiting list by telephone.

Changing schedule and make up classes' policy:

We will work with you to provide the best program that suits your schedule. However, once you pick your days and times, we can not switch programs unless it is before the school year starts (September 1) there is availability and it is a permanent change. Otherwise, a fee may be applied.
We don't provide make up classes. If your school day falls on a PD day or statutory day, we can't make up your class due to the ratio we have to maintain for the government licencing.

Transitions to the next age group policy:

Our programs run from September to June, and your child must remain in that program for the duration of it. We can make some changes only if we notice that you child is not doing well in the program, he/she is registered and there is availability in the other program. Before making a change, we will talk to you and let you know our concerns and the way we will help your child to improve. As soon as we notice your child is ready to return to the program, he/she was registered at the beginning of the school year, again we will talk to you to recommend this change.
Remember, if your child turns 3 or 4 while he is in any of our programs, it doesn't mean they are ready for the next program. We will assess your child around November, and if we notice your child is ready or asks for more, we will work with them at their own pace, but within the same program.

Toilet training Policy

Children must be **fully toilet-trained** and be able to independently perform their bathroom hygiene such as the use of toilet paper and hand washing. **NO EXCEPTIONS**.

Alberta Licensing Regulations to not allow children to wear diapers and/or "pull-ups" to preschool, except for the 2.5-year-old program.

In the 2.5-year-old program, staff work closely with the parents on the training of the child. When the child shows some readiness, the staff encourages the child to sit on the toilet at routine times. It is important that the child receive positive reinforcement when deserved and acceptance when an accident occurs. Toilet training takes time and we feel that the toilet training process should be a happy time for the child and parents.

Children Dress code Policy

Children attending DCP are actively engaged in learning experiences, they spend time using paint, markers, clay and a variety of other materials that can get messy. Please dress your child for:

- **Mess:** It is recommended to dress your child in an outfit they can play and have fun in. Please do not put them in anything you would be upset to have paint on.

- **Weather**: We recommend that your child dress in layers as even on cold winter days the classrooms might become very warm. In addition, we go outside everyday unless there is an inclement weather. Children should be prepared with the appropriate pieces for the weather.

- **Comfort**: Children will be climbing, jumping, crawling, and running as well as sitting on the floor. Make sure they will be able to move freely in their clothing and footwear choices and, it covers the bare necessities. We recommend for the girls to wear tights or shorts under dress/skirt. For the boys, we recommend

pants with elastics on the waist to prevent pants from falling down when they move.

- **Safety**: Children must wear shoes in the classroom. Since all wet footwear must be left at the entrance, please send shoes along when your child wears boots. To avoid any accidents, please have your child wear nonslip shoes, preferably slip-ons or Velcro shoes.

  Sandals or flip flops are not recommended, footwear should ensure the safety of students during regular school activities. Closed shoes are to be worn at all times.

- **Independence:** Preschool time is all about independence including dressing and undressing. While teachers are available for snapping children get so much more pride from being able to use the washroom by themselves.

- **Please label everything your child brings to preschool including bags, shoes, jackets, etc.**

- Children are requested to bring their own sunscreen and/or bug spray.

- If your child is wearing sunscreen and/or bug spray, it is recommended to put them on to your child in the morning before coming to preschool.

  If your child attends full time, you can send sunscreen and bug spray in the backpack. Teacher will make sure to reapply sunscreen/bug spray before going outside in the afternoon.
  To prevent allergy reactions, **we don't share sunscreen and bug spray with any children**.
  Please, also send a hat, and appropriate clothing to protect your child from the sun.

Classroom routine and programming policy

Flexible daily schedules and program plans will be posted in each individual Program Room. Program is based in monthly themes that are interesting and capture the children attention and interest. These activities are also planned and guided based on the interests of the children and of the community.

The plans allow for indoor and outdoor, quiet and active play and teacher-directed and child-directed play to encourage the development of the entire child.
A typical preschool class includes:

- **Welcome** - Before entering the classroom, the students will hang up their belongings and put on their indoor shoes. They will be greeted by a teacher and move directly to the circle area where they can play for around 10 min to settle down.

- **Circle Time** – We do different activities like calendar, songs, games, show and share, and games to promote development in language, social interactions, number skills and theme of the day.

- **Workbook time**: This time will be used to help children to enhance fine motor skills like pencil grasp, coloring with crayons, tracing letters and numbers, etc.

- **Centers/Activities** - Children will rotate among the choice of centers and activities set out for them. They are encouraged to visit each learning center and are guided in cooperative work throughout this time. Geography, science and discovery, math, language, story corner are just few examples of our centers.

- **Snack** - Please ensure that your child has a nutritious snack each day. This is an important social time where quiet conversation, polite table manners and cleaning up after themselves are encouraged.

- **Craft** - We do a craft daily according to the theme of the day. Students will be given materials, and instructions on how to use those materials appropriately, but there will be very little emphasis on the finished product.

- **Spanish** –-We provide 30-minute Spanish classes every day, where the child will learn a second language while playing, making crafts, singing songs and having fun.

- **Outside time:** Children are taken outside to play everyday for minimum of 1 hour. This is the time of the day where they practice their gross motor skil

- **Playball** - We provide playball as a part of our physical activities. Playball is a unique and specialized, age appropriate sports coaching program, which teaches physical competence, life skills and school readiness skills to 2-8 years old. There will be scheduled days for this activity.

- **Yoga or Music and Movement:** Children registered full time or those who attend afternoon class have 20 min yoga class or Music and Movement class before starting their regular class.

- **Story time** – Before the dismissal time, we have our story time. It is now recognised that reading aloud to children is important in their early years and has an impact on their overall development and future learning. There will be sometimes where we will play a story book on the computer. We will never use the computer to watch cartoons.

- **Dismissal time** - Children will stay in the classroom or gym with the teacher until an adult arrives**. If you wish to speak with the teacher after class, please wait**

until all students are released. For student safety, staff members will not engage in conversations with parents during dismissal while there are still students in their care.

- **Rest time:** This is a rest period in the afternoon for those children in the toddler program or any other child in the rest of the programs who need to take a rest. Children use their individual cots and parents are asked to bring in the child's favourite blanket or soft toy to ensure that the child feels safe and secure during this time. Children who are unable to take a rest will be brought to a quiet area of the room for quiet activities until the end of rest time. The rest time duration depends on the child needs.

Use of Technology Policy

During daily activities technology is used to enhance the learning process provided to children. In some cases, we use computer, television or IPods to show educational videos, story books, or songs to our children. In any case we will use technology to watch cartoons or any other show that is not a learning resource.
There are some exceptions where we use technology to watch a movie that is not part of our curriculum such as Pajama Day or Movie Day. These activities are planed ahead of time, and parents are always notified with plenty of time via newsletter.

Social Media Policy

We are aware that parents/guardians may be familiar with staff outside the preschool; however, we ask that your refrain from using personal messaging and social media to contact employees with regards to your child so as to respect the professionalism and privacy of our employees. We also ask that you refrain from posting preschool pictures on social media unless it is a picture of only your child. Doing so otherwise may breach the privacy of our other families and we always strive to maintain the highest level of confidentiality and privacy.

DCP has a written social media policy that states that staff are not allowed to take and post pictures of our students on any social media. DCP only publishes information on social media that we have been given specific consent for.

Photography and videography policy

Public Events

The Preschool hosts a few public events throughout the year that are open to all family members: Holiday Celebrations, Graduation Day, etc. The Preschool welcomes families to record these special events, and as they are public events, no parental consent for recordings is required under the FOIP Act.

Private (In-Class) Events

Regular classroom days are not open to the public. The DC Preschool recognizes that parents may want to record their child's special day and the teachers will allow cameras in the classroom. However, the policy of the preschool is that parents may only photograph/videotape their own child and that no media recorded in the classroom may be published to a public forum including social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, etc.
DCP requires permission from parents to post pictures on our closed group on Facebook.

Physical and Wellness Policy

Even though parents provide snacks and lunches for their children, the program will make sure to remind parents to bring healthy choices for their children to eat and provide children with fun and active indoor and outdoor activities to keep their bodies moving.

- Children wash their hands before and after every meal and snack. Also, after using the washroom.
- Healthy foods and habits are promoted through posters and planned activities
- Staff remind children about healthy foods and habits during snack and lunch time.
- Celebrations are focused on activities rather than food and include healthy foods in addition to any special treats.
- We provide in our spacious gym a number of daily activities that promote not only a healthy body but a healthy mind. Through group games, dancing, yoga, playball, basic movement skills, and as well as plenty of outdoor exercise the children are exposed to a well-balanced and active lifestyle.
- Children are provided with a wide variety of outdoor portable play equipment (balls, racquets, jumping ropes, etc) to choose from at all times.
- Inactive time will be limited as much as possible, a balance of quiet and active activities are offered daily.

Drop off and Pick up Policy

Drop Off Policy:

During drop off their child, parents should be no sooner than **five (5) minutes before the child's drop off times**. Any parent arriving to drop off a student before their child's drop off times will be charged **an early drop off fee at a rate of $1.00 per minute, payable immediately upon arrival.**

If your child will be absent or if a different person will be picking him or her up after class, please notify the teacher.

Your child must be placed in the care of the teacher and picked up from the teacher by an authorized adult over the age of 18 as listed on your registration form.

Dropping children off upstairs without supervision is not permitted. Please take your time to walk your child downstairs and place him/her in the care of the teacher.

During drop off and pick up times, siblings are asked to remain with the parents at all times.

Morning classes start at 9:00 am. Please be respectful of the drop off time.

Doors will be locked at 9:15 am in the morning and will be opened again at 12:00 pm. In the afternoon doors will be locked and opened again at 3:00pm.
If your child is going to be late please wait until the doors are opened again. Doors will not be opened during class time.

Pick up policy:

It is important that parents pick up their child **on time.** In the event that unforeseen circumstances prevent a parent from arriving on time to pick up their child, they have to call and notify Miss Renee or Miss Ana. After all other students are dismissed the teachers will remain in your child's classroom with them until you arrive.

Morning classes are dismissed at 12:00 PM and afternoon classes at 3:00 PM. Please be respectful of these dismissal times for both the sake of your child as well as our preschool staff.

Children waiting for a parent running late often feel concerned as they see the other children being picked up, while they continue to wait. In addition, the preschool staff also needs adequate time to take a lunch break, clean up after class and make necessary preparations for the following class.

If you encounter an unforeseen circumstance and know you will be detained, please call the preschool as soon as possible so that the staff may work with you to make arrangements for your child's care.

The preschool has a 5-minute grace period for dismissal. Any parent arriving to pick up a student after their child's pick-up times will be charged a **late pickup fee at a rate of $1.00 per minute, payable immediately upon arrival. Same policy applies for 5:30 pm pick up times.**

Drop in class fee is 80.00 from 8:00am to 5:00pm or 10.00 hour. Payable in cash and immediately upon arrival. Drop off and pick up policy applies.

Late pick-up Procedure

- If a child is picked-up after their pick-up times or 5:30pm, the teacher in charge will make a note on the attendance binder and inform the Director the following day. Parents will be charged **a late pickup fee at a rate of $1.00 per minute, payable immediately upon arrival.**

- If parents do not arrive by their pick-up times to pick-up their child, the teacher will attempt to contact those at all available phone numbers.
- If the parents cannot be reached, the teacher will attempt to contact the authorized pick-up persons.
- If teachers are unable to reach the authorized pick-up persons, they will contact the Director.
- The Police Department will then be contacted. The director will file an Incident Report with the local Child and Family Services licensing office.

Bathroom Breaks

Children must be fully toilet trained in order to attend the Preschool. Let your child know that he/she will need to do the bathroom "routine" on his/her own. Adults are not permitted to wipe.
Your child may ask to go to the bathroom at any time and will be escorted by the teacher. Please dress your child in clothes that he/she can manage on his/her own.

Celebrating Birthdays

Your child's birthday is important to us and will be celebrated in the classroom with a song and special recognition such as a birthday crown or badge.

To spare the feelings of some of your child's classmates, please avoid distributing birthday party invitations at school unless the entire class is included.
Also, you are more than welcome to bring cupcakes or other treats for the class on the day of your child's birthday, but these treats must be **NUT FREE** as some children may have severe allergies.

Parental Involvement Policy

DCP encourages an open-door policy between parents, staff and the directors. Parents are welcome to visit our school at any time. Parents who would like to take an active part in the school activities are more than welcome to do so. Whether it is chaperoning on field trips or offering suggestions for crafts, snacks, reading, math, science, or whatever, your input is invaluable. It also shows your child that you want to be a part of their world.

At DCP communications with parents is very important. To do so, we let parents know what is happening at the school by posting newsletters, activity plans, and information of all sorts on the Bulletin Boards. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Volunteering Policy

DCP believes involving parents through classroom volunteering is an integral part of the program that gives your child the opportunity to share his/her school experience with you. Volunteer days are not mandatory, but it is your opportunity to see what a typical

school day looks like and share some special time with your preschooler. You can expect to spend some one-on-one time with your child, meet and assist other students, and lend a hand with classroom activities and cleanup.

If you would like to volunteer, please let the teachers know so they can arrange a volunteer day for you.

Remember that non-enrolled children (such as siblings) are not permitted in the classroom on your volunteer day.

Field Trips and Special Events Policy

Families are expected to provide transportation to and from field trips and remain on-site to assist with supervision. Ratio for fieldtrips are 1:1. Siblings are welcome to attend field trips as long as they are supervised by a parent. The school fees cover your child's entrance to the field trip, but parents need to cover their own fees, we usually get these at a discount.

If there is a situation when you are unable to accompany your child, please contact your classroom teacher ahead of time to make alternate arrangements. We would not want any child to miss out on these events.

Families may be asked to volunteer for special events throughout the year. This may include providing food, helping to set up or cleanup for an event.
The children may go for walks in the local community. These excursions are considered part of the daily program and will not include motor transportation. An authorization form, in the registration package, acknowledges parental permission for a child to leave the premises for neighbourhood walks and visits to local parks.

School Closures policy

School closures may happen due to inclement weather or any other unforeseen problems associated with the safe operation of the classroom (mechanical, plumbing, or water failures) or an unexpected church function, such as a funeral. The Preschool has the authority to cancel classes under these circumstances. In general, the Preschool follows the Elbow Valley School with respect to closures in the winter. In the event of any closure, parents will be contacted as soon as possible to let them know about the closure.

Should the teacher deem it necessary to cancel a class already in progress, the school will notify parents of the shortened class and parents/emergency contacts will be required to pick up their children. If the emergency contact cannot be reached, the teacher will stay with the child until the child can be picked up by the appropriate parent/caregiver.

No Electricity Procedure:

In the event that the center's power is cut off depending on the amount of time and the

weather we will take each classroom to. Each educator will have their sign-in binder with the emergency contact numbers, parents will be called to pick-up.

Water-break Procedure:

If it is known before children have arrived at the center that there will be no water for the day, the Centre will be shut down until the water is fixed. If the children are already in the center, the director along with emergency responders, will determine if the facility needs to be evacuated or if the children can remain in the building until parents can arrive to pick up their children. In the case of evacuation, we will follow the emergency evacuation procedures.

Parents Communication Policy

DCP maintains contact with the parents through: parents' attendance at meetings, bulletin board, weekly emails, Facebook page, and monthly newsletters from the teachers. We welcome your feedback and the opportunity to have open discussions about the program offerings.

About the meetings, we will organize parent teacher meetings one before the beginning of the school year (orientation meeting) and two more as midterm meeting to talk about their child's achievements (Teacher-Parent interviews). Dates and times will be posted on the bulletin board, Facebook page, website, and by email. In addition, we organize a student lead conference where parents are welcome to attend at any time between 9:00am -12:00 pm; or stay all day. Students will show parents what we do and their favorites activities in the classroom.

Also, parents are welcome to ask any time for a meeting with the teacher or program director to clarify any concerns they may have. Open communication will enable staff and parents to create a family environment for the children.

Newsletters will be emailed each month. If you would like to receive your newsletter, please provide your current email address in the registration form.

Parents are encouraged to evaluate the Centre and provide feedback accordingly. Constructive criticism is an effective tool to improve the service delivery provided by the Centre to children and families. There is a suggestion box at our Centre, and parents are encouraged to submit their feedback to us there. Parents are also welcoming to email discoverycorner@outlook.com at any time.

Once a year, parents/guardians will be invited to participate in a survey to provide feedback regarding the program, staff interaction, activities, field trips and suggestions for the future.

Safety Policy

The teachers and teaching assistants have current Red Cross First Aid Certificates which are posted in the classrooms.
The children will be instructed on our fire drill procedures on a regular basis. The parking lot of the church has been designated the meeting place if an emergency should occur. Please check the bulletin board for Fire Drill dates and dress your child accordingly.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure:

Causes for evacuation include but are not limited to: fire, bomb threat, explosion, flood, severe thunderstorm, severe winter storm, hurricane, tornado, toxic fumes, electrical, heat, water and structural failure.

If there is an emergency in the classroom requiring evacuation,

- Children will be safely escorted from the building
- Parents/emergency contacts will be notified by school staff immediately.
- Children will remain at the parking lot of the church until parents/emergency contacts are able to pick up their children.
- When the weather conditions are not favorable to wait at the parking lot, the children will be safely escorted to our second emergency location: Edge School, located at 33055 Township Road 250.

We rely on the emergency information on your registration form. If contact names change during the year, parents are responsible for notifying the teacher of these changes to keep our records up to date.

Remember, all children are required to wear indoor shoes at all times at the preschool, so in case of an emergency evacuation they are ready to go outside without losing valuable time.

Fire Procedure:

- The alarm will be sounded for fire or emergency.
- Call 911
- Toddler Room and the 3-year-Old program staff will lead the groups out to the closest exit (stairs) while the other staff will stay at the end of the group to ensure the rooms and washrooms are empty and everyone goes out the door.
- The 4-year-old program and Kindergartens will take the closest exit (exit to the play space area)
- On the way out, the last Staff will do the final sweep of the center to make sure everyone is out and take the Group Attendance Checklist and the children's emergency records and close the door behind her/him.
- Children will remain at the parking lot of the church until parents/emergency contacts are able to pick up their children.
- Take attendance of the children to ensure all children are present.

- When the weather conditions are not favorable to wait at the parking lot, the children will be safely escorted to our second emergency location: **Edge School, located at 33055 Township Road 250.**

Lock down Procedure:

In the event there is imminent danger to the Staff or children in DCP (whether Staff suspects threat or upon notification from local Authorities), the following procedures will be in effect:

- All doors will be locked.
- All children will be moved to the Toddler Room- away from the windows, where the children can be involved in quiet activities.
- Lights will be turned off.
- Authorities will be contacted - “911”
- This will remain in effect until notification from Police Department.

Bomb Threat Procedure:

- If there is a bomb threat the DCP staff and children will immediately evacuate the building. Staff will follow the Emergency Evacuation Procedure.
- If, within one hour, the fire department determines that the center is safe to enter, we will return to the center.
- If, after one hour, it is still unsafe to return to the center, parents will be called to pick up their child.
- If weather does not permit going outside during the hour, parents will be called immediately to pick up their child.
- Staff may call parents at any time to pick up their child if their ability to maintain the child’s safety is in question.

Natural disasters Procedure:

Winter storm:

Should a winter storm occur or be predicted while children are present, the director or staff-member-in-charge will determine if the facility can stay open or if it must close. If the facility must close, parents will be called to inform them that children need to be picked up and then call parents of children scheduled to arrive to inform them not to come.

Storm:

Approaching storm:

- Explain to the children what could happen and what to do.
- Turn off all unnecessary electrical appliances except the radio in order to listen for warnings

During Storm:

- Stay inside and shelter in the strongest part of the building (internal doorways, bathrooms)
- Place crosses on windows with masking tape to stop shattering (X)
- Keep clear of windows
- IF necessary, cover yourself with a mattress, blanket or tarpaulin
- Do not use the phone
- If outside, find emergency shelter

After Storm:

- The Director or Responsible Person is to check for damage to building
- Continue to listen to radio for further warnings
- Keep children inside until radio gives all clear
- Watch for Emergency Services into the area

Tornado:

- Director or staff member in charge: sound tornado alarm. Bring radio to designated location for weather monitoring.
- Caregiver: Take all children and the emergency backpack to the designated shelter location (classroom that is away from windows).
- Take roll to account for all children in attendance. Keep children calm and quiet.
- Check facility for children - bathrooms, closets, under desks, behind curtains, etc.
- Proceed to designated shelter location. Help keep children calm and quiet.
- Follow relocation procedures if it is determined that you need to go to your second Emergency Location once the tornado warning is over.
- If possible, Parents and Emergency Response will be notified.

Earthquake

In case of an earthquake, staff members will assist children in seeking shelter under tables or outdoors and away from buildings. The first aid kit, classroom emergency binder and classroom attendance binder should remain with the Lead Teacher at all times. When notified by the Director that the situation is safe, the Lead Teacher must use the classroom attendance to verify all children are accounted for. Parents will be notified as soon as possible

Missing Child Procedure:

When a child fails to arrive at your childcare facility by bus from an alternate location:

- Talk to the bus driver
- Call the school
- Call the parents and emergency contacts
- Call the police

- Call the Authority in Charge
- If the child is missing and depending on severity of the situation, file a Incident Report with your local Child and Family Services licensing office

When a child has gone out of the sight of staff (or parent, or volunteer) for longer than 10 seconds, except where staff know exactly where the child is (e.g. washroom):

- Inform the Supervisor and alert other staff immediately.
- Conduct a search of all areas of the facility, including closets, cabinets, etc. and the immediate surrounding area.
- Call the parent or emergency contact.
- Call the police.
- Continue searching.
- If the child is missing and depending on severity of the situation, file a Incident Report with your local Child and Family Services licensing office

Suspected Child abuse Policy

Neglect, Physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse are the areas covered under the term “child abuse”. These forms of abuse can be presented in an individual case, either one form or a combination of types of abuse.

Responsibility to report child abuse under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act is set out in law. The act requires every person including teachers, volunteers, support staff who has contact with the children in the child care centre and who has a reason to believe that a child has been, or there is substantial risk that he or she will be abused or neglected by a parent/guardian, or might need intervention, to promptly report the matter to a caseworker at the Child and Family Services Authority office.

Our program staff are required by law to report child abuse and neglect. Please be aware, we DO report suspicious/unexplainable marks we see on children. We only need to suspect child abuse or neglect to make a report, and Child and Family Services Authority will determine if it is serious or not.

Child discipline policy

The overall view of discipline in our program is to establish clear, consistent and simple limits the child can follow with straight forward explanations for these limits. These limits and rules will be set with the participation of the children during circle time during the first weeks of school. Every effort will be made to ensure children understand the rules, limits and consequences regarding the safety and rights for themselves, other children and the physical facilities. Each child will be encouraged through positive reinforcement and praise in response to acceptable behavior.

Knowing that every child responds to different strategies to help the child understand and follow the rules, we use different intervention strategies; it is at the discretion of the

teacher to determine which strategy may be the most effective, given the nature of the situation and the child or children involved.

- Establishing eye contact and speaking calmly to the child
- Redirecting the child with an alternate activity
- Moving closer to the child, acknowledging his/her feelings and telling him/her exactly what you want
- In situations where a child is extremely upset, one of the two teachers present will take the child aside, calm him/her down, talk about the child's feelings, and then attempt to return the child to the group
- The child will be encouraged at all times to be responsible for his or her own actions and feelings. If a child is having consistent difficulty with appropriate classroom behavior, the teacher will contact the parents to make them aware of the situation and to ask for their assistance in resolving the classroom problem.

At no time will permit the use of physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation or emotional deprivation. We will not deny or even threaten to deny any basic necessity. We also will not permit the use of any form of physical restraint, confinement, or isolation.

Any disciplinary action taken must be reasonable in the circumstances

Children Behaviour Code Policy

It is natural for a child to feel angry in response to restrictions or interference. However, the children need to know that they can assert themselves safely in our environment.

The following are the behavioural expectations of the children in our program:

- They are responsible for what they say and do.
- They are polite and respectful of other people.
- They listen to other people when they speak.
- They do not say or do any action that is hurtful or harmful to others.
- They care about other peoples' feelings.
- They tell the truth, even if there is a consequence to their behaviour.
- They try to problem solve for themselves
- They take good care of the program's toys, games and other supplies.

When the behavioural expectations are not meet after several discipline strategies apply to the child, we will set up a meeting with parents to work together in helping the child's to improve his/her behavi0our. If the child continues to behave in a way where his/her own and other children well-being are compromise, we will ask the parents to withdraw their child from the program and we might refuse the re-enter to our program the following school year.

Health-Accident procedure Policy

In case of an accident or illness the child's parents will be contacted immediately via phone; text or e-mail. They will be informed about the current condition of their child, and if it is necessary, they will be asked to come as soon as possible to pick up their child.

If the child's parents are unreachable, we will contact the emergency contact person. If the child is seriously ill the child will be kept under supervision in the class room as away from the other children as possible or taken to a separate class room if available at the time with extra staff member.

In case of serious illness or accident the child will receive immediate medical attention as, and when necessary by the means of first aid or ambulance.

Potential Health Risk

When a staff member knows or has a reason to believe that a child is exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness, our staff will call and ask the parent to arrange for immediate removal of the child from the premises.
In a case where the child has been removed for the program premises due to the illness will not be able to return until the parent shows acceptable evidence that **the child is symptom free for at least 24 hours or the child's physician gives a written letter that the child no longer possess risk to other person on the program premises.**

Signs and symptoms of illness exhibited by a child include the child:

- Vomiting.
- Having a fever (**99°F/37.5°C or higher**)
- Diarrhea
- New or unexplained rash
- Eyes/ears that have any kind of discharge
- A severe cough, runny nose and/or congestion
- Requiring greater care and attention that can be provided without compromising the care of the other children in the program or,
- Having or displaying any other illness or symptoms that the staff member knows or believes may indicate that the child possesses a health risk to persons on the program premises.

In an event where the parents fail to arrange for an immediate removal of a child the staff will keep the ill child comfortable and away from the other children where adequate supervision can be provided. Calling the ambulance if necessary or needed at the time.

If the Teacher feels your child is not well enough to attend class, you will be asked to take him/her home. If your child develops a communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox, whooping cough, impetigo, etc.) the parent is expected to inform the school and present a doctor's note stating the child no longer possess any risk to other person in the program.

If your child is ill and will be absent from school, please notify the classroom teacher.

Administration of Medication Policy

Medications **will not** be administered to children unless the appropriate medication form has been completed and signed by the parent and provided to the teacher.

Anaphylactic Policy

DCP realizes the importance of identification of all anaphylactic children. While it is impossible to create a risk-free environment, we take the following important steps to minimize potentially fatal anaphylactic reactions.

- Parents fill up the "Medical information" section of the registration form. If child has allergies this is the part where parents acknowledge program about it.
- Parents fill up "Authorization to Administer Medication" section with instructions on how to administer the medication to the child.
- Parents provide the program with one Epi-pen prior or the first day of school. Epi-Pen will be stored in the Medication Lock Box.
- A picture of the child and anaphylactic/allergy information will be posted on the allergy list and the classroom wall. This identification method is used for all children having a serious allergy or medical condition.
- If needed families in the program may be provided with information regarding specific allergies and what steps can be taken to support a safe program (i.e. nut free alternatives).
- Program room staff will take reasonable steps to create a safe program room.
    - monitor food brought into school
    - disinfecting of tables before & after eating
    - hand washing
    - not providing the allergic item
    - other measures as dictated by the allergy and the information provided by the parents
- Staff are trained on Epi-Pen usage and anaphylactic reactions during their First Aid, CPR and AED recertification.

Health Care Policy

The program and the staff members will only allow for provision of health care to a child only if:

- The written consent form is obtained from the child's parents.
- The health care provided is in the nature of first aid.

Serious Incidents Policy

DCP is required to immediately report any incident listed below that occurs while a child is attending the program or any other incident that occurs while a child is attending the program that may seriously affect the health or safety of the child.

- an emergency evacuation;
- unexpected program closure;
- an intruder on the program premises;
- an illness or injury to a child that requires the program to request emergency health care and/ or requires the child to remain in the hospital overnight;
- an error in the administration of medication by a program staff or volunteer resulting in the child becoming seriously injured or ill and requiring first aid, or the program requesting emergency health care and/or requires the child to remain in the hospital overnight;
- the death of a child;
- an unexpected absence of child from the program (i.e. lost child);
- a child removed from the program premises by a non-custodial parent or guardian;
- an allegation of physical, sexual, emotional abuse and/or neglect of a child by a program staff member volunteer;
- the commission by a child of an offence under an Act of Canada or Alberta; and/or
- a child left on the premises outside of the program's operating hours.

All Serious Incidents will be documented on an Incident report form, by the staff involved, and a copy will be given to the parent of the child involved.

In the event of a Serious Incident, the following steps will be taken:

- Immediate attention is to be provided as required. Provide First Aid or call 911.

- Staff will report the incident to the Supervisor or the person in charge immediately.

- This person(s) are responsible for:

  - contact the parents involved;
  - ensure all persons having knowledge of the incident remain at the site until excused;
  - An initial report may be made by telephone to the local Child and Family Services' licensing office.
  - Within two (2) days of the incident's occurrence, an Incident Report form must be completed and submitted to the local licensing office.

- Licensing staff will review the report and in response may conduct an investigation, which may include an inspection of the premises. A follow up is then to be conducted with parents, involved staff, and the program.

Smoking Policy

The program ensures that no person smokes on the program premises.
No staff member shall smoke at any time or place were the child care is being provided. This includes smoking, vaping and other forms of inhalants.
Employees are required to follow our employee code of conduct, which states that employees shall not be under the influence of, or provide others with alcohol, cannabis, cannabis-infused products or illegal drugs while on work premises or performing work related duties. Also, this regulation requires that employees report to work fit to conduct their duties. Volunteers must comply with DCP policies, regulations and any school rules, so must also follow the employee code of conduct when volunteering with the DCP.

Nutrition Policy

The program will ensure that snacks that are provided to the children are at an appropriate in accordance with the needs of each child, the snacks or meals will be provided by the parents and must be healthy and nut free. Please, send to your child snacks or meals that are easy to eat in about 15 minutes. **Do not send** gums, candies, yogurt tubes, juice boxes, fruit cups or any other container that is difficult for them to open or use.
We strongly encourage all students to use **re-usable food and beverage containers**.
Our goal is to have a **litter-less snack**. All Zip-lock bags will be returned in your child's backpack for recycling at home.
Please, ensure that the teacher is aware of any allergy your child may have. All allergies are posted in the classroom to help ensure the safety of every child.

Family Support Policy

DC Preschool is committed to support our families in any way possible. Our flexible programs provide parents with a variety of options to choose from to meet their schedule needs.

Also, we love to work with parents providing volunteers opportunities such as classroom supervision, supervision during field trips, cutting and preparing crafts, supervision during special guest presentations, etc.

At the same time, we work closely with parents who required economical help, providing information and assistance to fill up the subsidy forms.

Information about parenting tips, parenting/discipline workshops and seminars are post on our bulletin board for parents. As well as any other family-children activities happening around the city.

In addition, the program will work collaboratively with parents and outside service providers to ensure that the needs of the children are met. We will, with the consent of the parents, refer children to outside service providers when we feel, or the parents feel, that a child may require additional support.

Complaint and grievances policy

We always encourage an open-door communication between parents, staff, and the director. Our goal is to provide the best preschool experience for both children and parents, please feel free to ask us to explain or clarify any policies or procedures. We are open to hear and resolve any concerns you may have.

In the event of a grievance or complaint, both parts, the parents and the staff are encouraged to resolve the problem/situation in a respectful, informal and cooperative manner. The following are steps a complaint/grievance should follow:

- Arrange a time to speak to the staff(s) involved about the problem/situation
- Inform staff about the issue/situation verbally or in writing
- Allow a reasonable, mutually agreed time frame for the issues to be addressed
- If you feel the problem has not been address or resolved, arrange a time to speak to the director(s) Miss Renee or/and Miss Ana.

Confidentiality Policy

Staff must respect the confidentiality of each family, not sharing information among staff, children or other families in the center, except as required by law or where, in the judgment of the staff, to do so is in the best interest of the child.

Staff acknowledge that may be making use of, acquiring or adding to information which is confidential to the Employer, and the Confidential Information is the exclusive property of the Employer. The Confidential Information will include all data and information relating to the business and management of the Employer.

Staff agree to keep all Confidential Information absolutely confidential and protect its release from the public.

Staff agree that, upon request of the Employer or upon termination or expiration, as the case may be, of this employment, the Employee will turn over to the Employer all Confidential Information belonging to the Employer

Student placement Policy

Discovery Corner Preschool is very interested in being involved in the development of the students at local educational institutions (Bow Valley College). At times throughout each year, the program may approve the placement of students in any or all of the programs. The times for the placement is unknown until the students and program agree about the times and duration of it. However, as soon as the program knows the details will inform the parents about it. This is one of many ways that the student acquires new ideas and skills. Also, it is a great learning opportunity for the children, the students, and the staff.
At times, the student will be observing a child and recording his/her actions and reactions. The names of the children do not appear anywhere. The purpose is to help

the student learn the various observation techniques that they will use when they are in the field. The students are supervised at all times and are never to be left alone with a child at any time.

Withdrawal/Cancelation Policy

Cancelled registration at any time will result in forfeiture of the non-refundable registration fee.

After school begins, notification of withdrawal must be made in writing to the Discovery Corner Preschool no later than 30 days prior to withdrawal. **(NOTICE BEING GIVEN ON THE FIRST OF THE MONTH FOR THE MONTH FOLLOWING).**

Withdrawal must be made by October 31st, of the current school year, otherwise a 500.00 withdrawal fee will be applied.

THERE IS NO REFUND FOR PARTIAL MONTHS DUE TO VACATION OR ILLNESS.
If timing is an issue, a telephone call followed by a letter, or an email will be accepted.
Failure to provide sufficient notice will result in forfeiture of the next month's tuition.
If a child is withdrawn for any period of time (vacation or sickness) fees must be paid to maintain the child's place in the program.

Program Costs are calculated on a "per school year basis", and then divided by the 10 months in the school year. Although some months are longer than others, or holidays fall within the month, there is no prorating of fees. Fees are calculated by the cost to run the program per child for the full school year.

Discovery Corner
Preschool

School Year Calendar

Dates are subject to change

2019-2020	
September 3	First day of Classes
September 9	Fire/Lockdown drill
September 17	Meet the teacher night
September 23	PD Day
October 11-14	Thanksgiving long weekend
October 16	Fire Drill
November 11	Remembrance Day-No Classes
November 13	Parent-Teacher Interview
November 19	Fire Drill
December 2	PD Day
December 5	Fire Drill
December 19	PJ Movie Day
December 20	Christmas Concert
December 21	Christmas Vacation Begins
January 6	Classes Resume
January 10	Fire Drill-Lockdown
January 13	TELUS Spark Field Trip
January 31	PD Day
February 12	Teacher Parent Interview
February 14-21	Teacher's Convention week
February 25	Fire Drill
March 11	Fire Drill
March 16	PD Day
April 6	Fire Drill
April 7	Picture Day
April 10	Good Friday-No Classes
April 13-17	Easter vacation
April 20	Classes resume
April 24	Student Lead Conferences
May 15-18	Victoria Day long weekend
May 21	Fire Drill
June 5	Fire Drill
June 17	Last day of preschool and Kindergarten
June 18	Preschool Picnic
June 19	Preschool Graduation
June 22-26	Before and after school care only