



Parents Handbook

Of policies and procedures

Revision MRZ201506

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Welcome to the Discovery Zone Preschool

Discovery Zone Preschool Parent handbook serves as an important guide for both new and long-term registered families. As you read through this handbook, you will see that our program has been designed with you and your child in mind. We are all in need of a High-Quality Education system where our children can foster emotionally, physically, academically, and have a sense of accomplishment.

Keep this handbook handy, since it contains a wealth of information on the preschool operating policies, procedures and services which we believe are important to the smooth operation of our center. As an information source, the handbook has been designed to enhance our day-to-day learning environment for the children enrolled.

We are an outstanding Preschool because our passionate teachers and support staff work together to meet the intellectual, social, behavioral and emotional needs of each child in our program. We carefully screen and only recruit individuals who share our vision, values, love for children and dedication to high quality early childhood education.

Dear Parents,

It's an honor and privilege that you chose Discovery Zone Preschool as your child's early learning educators. As we partner together in these critical early years of education, my goal is to provide your child the strong fundamental skills necessary to blossom for many school years to come. Having you involved in your child's early learning, will make this experience long lasting for you and your child. As the founder of Discovery Zone Preschool – ©A Brighter Learning Preschools Company, I look forward to seeing your child develop physically, emotionally and academically. My mission is for your child's preschool experience to be memorable and that it inspires and nurtures through love, joy, and respect for one another and ultimately inspires a love of learning.

Sincerely,

Founders Miriam R. & Alex Zuluaga

Philosophy

“I believe that these early years are critical in a child’s learning development. Therefore, we encourage our students to Explore, Discover, Imagine, and Learn through a fun, safe, and developmentally appropriate environment. We provided a clean, healthy environment where every child can develop emotionally, physically, and socially. Our enriched curriculum will provide each child the opportunity to stretch their imagination, explore and discover their world. It is our goal to provide a variety of exciting, and age appropriate activities each day so every child can gain self-confidence, self-esteem, and be inspired to become confident learners”.

Vision

- Provide the most effective early education to facilitate optimum school readiness
- Offer content-rich, developmentally appropriate programs that support active learning and promote children’s progress in all developmental areas.
- Provide the right foundation for each Child to receive the fundamental skills necessary to foster greater self-esteem and a strong foundation for future success in academics and life.
- Provide a safe and secure environment by maintaining the highest safety standards and security.
- Maintain an environment that inspires and nurtures through love, joy, and respect for one another and ultimately inspires a love of learning.

Curriculum

As the field of early childhood education has evolved, so too has *The Creative Curriculum*,[®] incorporating the latest research and best practices and taking the needs of every type of learner into account.

“The Creative Curriculum for Preschool” is an award-winning curriculum for preschool success. Using exploration and discovery as a way of learning, The Creative Curriculum for preschool enables children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. This curriculum is fully aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and state early learning standards. We further enhance our curriculum, we implement STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) into our creative curriculum.

Registration Information

Registration is open to all children 6 week through 12 years of age at this time. A proper application and registration fee must be completed and submitted for guaranteed enrollment. All medical shot record and emergency contact information must be keep up to date.

Tuition

Tuition is based on ten hours of service. All payments/tuitions are due on Monday for the current week. A \$25.00 late fee will be added to your account if not received by Tuesday night. Tuition is continuous throughout the year and guarantee a spot for your child at the preschool. NO credits will be given for holidays, absences or illness. NO credits/refunds will be owed if the preschool must close because of emergency or inclement weather. Your child is entitled to a one week vacation every year. The vacation credit allows you not to pay tuition for your child during day's absence from the preschool. There will be a \$35.00 fee charged for checks returned by the bank. Returned Tuition checks will not be re-deposited. Parents will be responsible for re-issuing a second check. If at any future time the bank returns a parent's check, all future tuition payments must be made by cash, certified check, money order or credit card. There will be a late pick-up charge of \$5 +\$1 for each additional minute that you are late. We offer a multiple child discount for one or more siblings enrolled during the same school year. Tuition rates are discounted 10% for total tuition. A registration fee must be paid annually f there is a break in service. All supply fees are paid annually to cover the cost of curriculum and materials.

Drop-In Care

We provide Drop-In services to registered families from 7 am to 6:30pm and are based on availability. We ask that you call ahead to schedule your child's spot as soon as you need our services. These services may be used daily, weekly or even monthly. There is no limit on the amount of time you use for our services.

Meal

All meals must be pre-packed and provided by the parent. We ask that you supply healthy options.



Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Separation anxiety is very common for both parent and child. You play a critical role in helping your child to make this adjustment. Remember that your child looks to you for reassurance that he/she is safe and that you are confident about his ability to adjust to this new environment. We ask that you help us make this time less shocking by following this guideline.

Arrival Time: The preschool opens at 7:00am. Children are expected to arrive no later than 9:00am to ensure all children stay on schedule and benefit from instructional hours. No children are permitted to arrive at the center after 10:00 am.

Dismissal Time: If a child is not picked up by 6:30pm the parents will be called and the parent will be responsible for the late charge. If the parents can't be located the person as emergency contact will be located to pick up the child from the center. If none of the above contacts can be located the Department of Children and Families will be involved for further investigation. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that all the information on file is up to date and accurate.

Termination and Suspension Policy

SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF CHILD CARE SERVICES MAY OCCUR IF:

- A child has developmental or serious behavioral issues that cannot be adequately met by our staffing plan. Example: children who continually place themselves, other children or staff at risk of physical harm. (Information and referral sources are available to parents upon request.)
- Parents consistently arrive late to drop-off child at preschool or picking-up child late.
- Non-payment of tuition.

Verbal expression of concerns, written evaluation of issues, and Parent conferences will precede suspension.

Safety and Security

Your child's safety is of paramount importance at Discovery Zone Preschool. The front doors of the facility remain locked throughout the day. ONLY authorized personal, parents/guardians have access to the pass code. All children must be signed in and out upon arrival and departure. Children may be released only to those persons listed on the authorization and consent form. Identification will be required only when someone other than the parent/guardian picks up your child. Temporary authorization release of a child is not permitted over the phone.

Health Policy

These updated child care health policies are designed to work in concert with the guidelines set by the State of Florida. While helpful, these guidelines cannot replace the teachers' judgment of your child's ability to participate within the routine child care environment. For everyone's protection, parents are expected to pick up their child within 30 minutes of being notified of illness symptoms. Here at Discovery Zone Preschool we do not have the appropriate means to care for a sick child or administer medication of any sort. Except for EPIPEN which is provided by the parent. For this reason we ask that you have an alternate care available when these issues arise. Health symptoms that require alternate care:

Symptoms of Illness

Fever* For purposes of child care, a fever is • 100 degrees axillary (armpit) • 101 degrees orally

Reasons for taking a temperature

- Child exhibits outward signs of illness
- Child is flushed, has chills, or feels warmer than usual
- Child is irritable or lethargic for a length of time

Because a fever may indicate other health concerns a child must be fever-free, without the use of fever-reducing medicine, for 24 hours before returning to preschool. Upon return, child must be able to participate in all classroom activities including outdoor play. A 24-hour policy is based on fever as described above. *The Director will determine if a child has a fever and must leave preschool.

Vomiting

Child will be sent home if he vomits. Child may return to preschool the following morning if he has not vomited in the previous 8 hours. If there appears to be blood present in the vomited content, immediate medical attention is necessary.

Cough

Child should be referred for evaluation if he/she has a frequent cough which prevents eating, sleeping, playing or which is accompanied by other illness symptoms.

Rash

Child with an undiagnosed rash will be sent home for any of the following reasons:

- Rash is spreading over a period of time
- Rash is widespread
- Rash appears to cause discomfort and/or is accompanied by fever
- Rash persists for more than two days
- Rash contains or consists of blisters
- Rash looks like bleeding under the skin
- If symptoms do not

improve or worsen, re-valuation may be required. Child will be excluded from preschool until a note is received from his/her healthcare provider stating the diagnosis or that he/she is not contagious.

Hand, Foot and Mouth

A child unable to control his/her saliva or unable to eat or drink due to mouth sores may be excluded from preschool unless a healthcare provider states that the child does not have hand, foot, and mouth diseases or some other contagious illness.

Although there is debate surrounding this issue, a diagnosis of coxsackie virus by the child's healthcare provider requires exclusion from child care until mouth lesions are resolved, child can eat and drink, and has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. Lesions on the hands and feet are not reasons for exclusion, but lesions which are not dried up must be kept covered.

Contagious Illnesses Diarrhea

Child will be sent home for diarrhea that occurs two or more times per day for infants that is not contained by diapers and two or more times per day for toddlers and preschool children that is not contained by diapers or toilet use.

Child may return to preschool when diarrhea (as described above) has not occurred in the previous 8 hours. On the day the child returns, if one such stool occurs, he/she will be excluded from preschool.

If there appears to be blood present in the stool, immediate medical attention is necessary.

Diarrhea of two weeks' duration is an indication for medical evaluation, and a note from a healthcare provider will be required for continued attendance.

*All diarrhea is a health concern in the classroom.

Cold

Child may be sent home with any of the following symptoms or complaints:

- Nasal congestion/runny nose
- Chills
- Postnasal drip/sore throat
- Red, watery eyes
- Neck, head, muscle aches
- Sneezing
- Cough/hoarseness
- Breathing difficulty
- Listlessness/loss of appetite
- Fever
- Profuse or yellow-green nasal discharge
- Ear drainage

Pink Eye

(Conjunctivitis) Child will be sent home if either eye is draining cloudy or has colored discharge.

Child may return to preschool when:

- He/she has been on antibiotics for 24 hours, or
- He/she is accompanied by a doctor's note stating that the drainage is caused by a non-contagious condition (such as a blocked tear duct).

If the child returns to preschool and symptoms do not improve or should worsen, re-evaluation may be required.

Ringworm/Tinea

Child may return to preschool after one treatment as long as, lesions can be kept covered by clothing or bandage for one day.

Strep Throat

Child must be on an antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to child care. Child must feel well enough to eat, drink, and participate in all classroom activities.

Thrush

Child may return to preschool after one treatment, as long as the child is able to eat, drink, and participate in all classroom activities.

Chicken Pox

Child may return to preschool after 7 days from the onset of the rash or when all lesions are crusted over.

Lice

Child may return to preschool when nits (eggs) can no longer be found on the child by the child care staff.

Additional Information

"Out-of-Sorts"

Children Child will be sent home for a change in behavior that severely limits the attention that other children could and should be receiving, i.e., requires constant holding and attention, inconsolable crying for a long period, etc. Child should feel well enough to participate in all classroom activities, including outdoor play.

Administration of Medicine

- Fever-reducing and anti-diarrhea medicines will not be administered by parents or teachers

while children are in child care. • All over-the-counter medicines will be administered by parents ONLY

Family Involvement

Family Involvement encourages families to participate in the class activities and school events. Numerous studies document the academic benefits of children of a family-school-teacher partnership. When families are evolved, children do better. These findings hold true regardless of the educational background or income level of the parents. Family engagement in a child's early educational experience is important because it increases the parent's knowledge of their child's program and can demonstrate to the child the place on schooling.

Ways for families to be involved:

- **Making crafts for the program**
- **Sharing their culture**
- **Sharing a talent or a job**
- **Participating in the class activities**
- **Contributing to the curriculum**

Communication

Proper communication between our parents and the teachers of Discovery Zone Preschool is extremely important. Teachers will be sending home information on a regular basis. You are welcome to call to arrange a meeting with your child's teacher if have any concerns of your child's academic achievements.

Remember to communicate in writing any changes in your child's schedule.

We must be informed, in writing, regarding any changes in the person picking up your child. Our preschool director must be informed of any of the following changes:

- **address and/or phone numbers, or email address**
- **insurance coverage**
- **parent/guardian employment**
- **health/immunizations updates**
- **other pertinent information related to your child**

Discipline Policy

Children who are having difficulty for any reason will be re-directed to another activity with teacher assistance. In the event that a child's behavior is likely to result in harm to the child, others or property, or seriously disrupts group interaction, the child may be separated briefly from the group. The child will be taken up to the office to sit with an administrator where he/she can gain enough self-control to rejoin the group. The child will always be left in an area where he/she is in full view of, and can be supervised and supported by a staff member. Interaction between the child and a staff member will take place immediately following the separation to guide the child toward appropriate group behavior. Any method of discipline which frightens, demeans, or humiliates a child is strictly prohibited.

Hours of operations

The Center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The center is closed on the following national holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.



Acknowledgment of Policies and Procedures

I have reviewed and received a copy of the center's policies and procedures/handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print name: _____

Administrator Signature: _____ **Date:** _____