



HOLDING THE HANDS THAT HOLD THE FUTURE.

# ENROLLMENT HANDBOOK

Updated February 12, 2018

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## **PHILOSOPHY**

Discovery Days Preschool is an outreach ministry of University Heights Baptist Church. Our goal is to help each family develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and feel connected to the body of believers at University Heights. Our program is designed to serve households that are seeking part-time care. Families have the option of choosing to enroll 1 to 5 days. We partner with families to teach Bible truths & prepare children for kindergarten, using age appropriate curriculum in meeting their physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual needs.

## **ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING**

Discovery Days Preschool is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Our facility is inspected regularly to ensure we meet or exceed the minimum standards for child-care licensing regarding child development, early childhood education, fire safety, health, and sanitation. Parents may review a copy of the most recent licensing inspection report in our office or request a copy from the local licensing office at 936-756-1551 or online at [www.tdfps.state.tx.us](http://www.tdfps.state.tx.us).

## **REPORTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services  
1-800-252-5400 (confidential reports) / [www.tdfps.state.tx.us](http://www.tdfps.state.tx.us)

Parents of a child who is a victim of abuse or neglect should contact DFPS immediately.

Teachers are required to obtain one hour of training each year on abuse and neglect. Warning signs of abuse and neglect are: sudden change in behavior, received no help for physical or medical problems, learning problems that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes, appears withdrawn, avoids physical or eye contact, and prefers to be alone.

## **RECALLED ITEMS**

US Consumer Product Safety Commission  
CPSC Recall Hotline: 1-800-638-2772 / [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

## **GANG-FREE ZONES**

A gang-free zone is a designated area around a location where certain gang related activity is prohibited and is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. Specific locations where certain gang related criminal activity is now prohibited include, but are not limited to, public schools, playgrounds, video arcade facilities, and day care centers. The area that falls within a gang-free zone can vary depending on the type of location. For example, certain gang-related criminal activity that occurs within 300 feet of a video arcade facility is a violation of the new law, whereas certain gang-related criminal activity that occurs within 1000 feet of a school or daycare center is a violation of the law. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of a child care program. Maps may be produced for the purposes of prosecution and may be updated by the local municipal or county engineer. Parents may contact their local municipality to attempt to obtain a copy of the map if they choose to do so. Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the goal of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

## **TEACHER:CHILD RATIOS**

Our current ratio enrollment plan is as follows:

Infants: 1: 4      Toddlers: 2 teachers: 8 children      2 yrs: 1:7      3 yrs: 1:10      Pre-K: 1:11

We meet or surpass the minimum standards for child care centers in the state of Texas.

Infants: 1: 4      Toddlers: 1:5      2 yrs: 1:11      3 yrs: 1:15      Pre-K: 1:18

We also strive to meet or surpass the recommendations of NAEYC regarding classroom ratios. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has set 10 standards for early childhood programs. Based on research on the development and education of young children, the standards were created with input from experts and educators from around the country. The standards define what NAEYC, the world's largest

organization of early childhood professionals believes all early childhood programs should provide. Appropriate group sizes and ratios of teaching staff to children are maintained (for example, infants—no more than 8 children in a group, with 2 teaching staff; toddlers—no more than 12 children in a group, with 2 teaching staff; and 4-year-olds—no more than 20 children in a group, with 2 teaching staff).

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

Teachers will supply parents with a lesson plan each week. Copies may be viewed at any time in the office. Infant and toddler teachers will also provide parents with a daily information sheet regarding the sleeping, diapering, eating, and mood of the child for the day.

A Discovery Days calendar is provided each month by the office with a listing of events, birthdays, news, weekly themes, and our memory verse.

Parents may also receive information from the University Heights website ([uhbc.net](http://uhbc.net)) or the Discovery Days page ([uhbc.net/discoverydays](http://uhbc.net/discoverydays)). Parents with questions or concerns may contact the director or assistant director at 936.295.4673 during the school day (Mon - Fri; 8am-3pm) or email at [discoverydays@uhbc.net](mailto:discoverydays@uhbc.net).

## **CURRICULUM**

All of our teachers use the same curriculum provided to them by Discovery Days Preschool. These include: Pinnacle, A Beka, and Handwriting Without Tears. Our goal is to provide an excellent Christ-centered education for your child while caring for their needs. You can review the scope and pace of each curriculum below.

### **PINNACLE**

The Pinnacle curriculum provides opportunities for learning through the use of centers, small and large groups, and individual instruction with the teacher. All children from infants to Pre-K will have experiences in language, creative arts, math/manipulative, dramatic play, science sensory, and blocks/constructing. A new theme is introduced each week to provide a new learning experience. Here's a look at the schedule of themes, colors, shapes, and letters:

#### **August and September**

I am Special, My Family, My Friends, My School,  
My Neighborhood, Good Manners  
Blue / Circle / m, d, f, a

#### **October**

Harvest Happenings, Fall on the Farm, Fall in the  
City, Fire Prevention, Community Helpers,  
Pumpkins and Harvest  
Orange / Square / t, h, n

#### **November**

Early Explorers, Pilgrims, Mayflower,  
Thanksgiving  
Brown and Black / Triangle / p, b, g

#### **December**

Christmas Around The World, Smell, Taste,  
Sound, and Sights of Christmas  
Red / Rectangle / s, e and Review

#### **January**

Wonders of Winter, Animals that Live in the Cold,  
Eskimos  
White / Star / w, j, r, i

#### **February**

Famous Americans, Dental and Heart Health,  
Valentine's Day, Post Office  
Pink / Heart / l, v, c

#### **March**

March Winds, Wonders of Spring, Dr. Seuss's  
Birthday  
Green / Octagon / k, o, q, y

#### **April**

Spring, Easter, Baby Animals, Gardens and  
Picnics  
Yellow / Oval / u, z, x

#### **May**

May Day, Zoo Animals, Mother's Day, Ladybugs,  
How Things Grow  
Purple / Review Shapes and Letters

## A BEKA

The A Beka Bible curriculum is used by the teachers of all ages during class time devoted to spiritual growth by learning bible stories and activities in the classroom. Three- and four-year-old children will attend chapel conducted by the assistant director that employs A Beka to lead worship and Bible devotions while teaching appropriate musical concepts. Here's a look at the memory verse and Bible stories for each month:

### August and September

Verse: I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Ps. 139:14

Bible Stories: Creation, Adam and Eve, Noah Obeys God, Abraham and Lot, Isaac the Promised Son, A Bride for Isaac, Joseph, Baby Moses

### October

Verse: Psalm 23  
Bible Stories: Hannah Prays, Samuel Listens to God, David the Shepherd, David and Goliath, King David is Kind, Elisha Helps a Widow, Elisha Raises a Son, Naaman and the Servant Girl

### November

Verse: O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good. Ps. 106:1  
Bible Stories: Naaman and the Servant Girl, The First Thanksgiving, Queen Esther

### December

Verse: Love one another. 1 John 3:23  
Bible Stories: Jonah,, Jesus is Born

Verse: What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee. Ps 56:3  
Bible Stories: Kings Worship Jesus, Jesus' Boyhood, Follow Me, Beside the Pool, The Woman at the Well, The Nobleman's Son, Fishing with Jesus, Heaven

### February

Verse: We love Him because He first loved us. 1 Jn. 4:19  
Bible Stories: Review, Jesus Stills the Storm, Jesus Raises Jarius' Daughter, Feeding the 5000, Peter Walks on Water, Tax From a Fish's Mouth, Peter is Freed

### March

Verse: Be kind one to another. Eph. 4:32  
Bible Stories: Jesus Heals Ten Lepers, Rich Young Ruler, Jesus Loves the Children, The Lost Lamb, Review, The Good Samaritan, The Younger Brother, The Prodigal Son

### April

Verse: Cast all your cares upon Him; for he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7  
Bible Stories: Jesus Heals the Paralyzed Man, Blind Barimaeus, Zacchaeus, Friends at Bethany, Resurrection Week Review

### May and June

Verse: The Lord is good to all. Ps 145:9  
Bible Stories: Review

## January

### HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS

Handwriting Without Tears is an award-winning curriculum that follows a natural developmental progress from the easy to advanced handwriting skills. Preschoolers will use hands-on learning tools and exercises that follow a sequence of imitation, copying, and independent writing. The curriculum is designed to reach a variety of students through the use of music, games, stamp and screen, letter dough, wood pieces for letter construction, and slate boards. Shapes, colors, letters, and numbers will be introduced and explored in the daily activities. Four-year-olds will receive a workbook to track progress as they prepare for kindergarten.

### WHAT TO BRING

All items sent with your child must be clearly labeled with the child's first name and last initial. Items without a label cannot be given to a child. This includes diaper bags, backpacks, jackets, blankets, pacifiers, bottles, lunches, cups, etc. Please do not send toys from home. Make sure your child dresses appropriately for outside play, including appropriate footwear. Children staying for the full day (8am-3pm) will need to bring a roll-up nap mat. Nap mats will go home daily with each child. We are unable to store them overnight. Children who attend every day of the week may send a package of diapers, changes of clothes, wipes, etc. to be kept in the classroom. Nursing mothers have the right to breastfeed in the designated nursing room or provide breastmilk for their child while in our care.

## **BOTTLES**

Parents need to provide a clean bottle for each feeding. Bottles cannot be used for more than one feeding. Bottles are sent home daily. Bottles are warmed in a bottle warmer before feeding. Infants may not sleep with bottles.

## **SNACKS**

Children 12 mo+ will be provided a mid-morning snack each day. Copies of the snack schedule can be found in your enrollment packet or picked up in the office. Parents of children less than one year old must send a light snack each day (ex: a small amount of crackers and a few ounces of juice). Sending too much snack spoils lunch and takes up valuable play time. Please send snacks in a sealed plastic container labeled with your child's first name and last initial. If the curriculum requires a teacher-prepared snack, you will be notified by an allergy alert sign posted outside the classroom door on the day of the activity. Please inform teachers if your child is restricted from eating the snack.

## **LUNCH**

At lunchtime, your child will be taught to pray and thank the Lord for their food before eating. Lunch is an important time for your child to learn manners and discuss their day with the teacher. Therefore, we want teachers to be able to quickly serve lunch and sit down to converse with your child. In order to do that, we've provided a few lunchtime options below.

### **ORDER A HOT LUNCH**

Parents of children 12 mo+ can order hot lunches to be delivered by the Senior Center. The lunches are convenient, healthy, and hot. They include a main dish, sides, and milk or juice. A schedule of menus are included in your Enrollment Packet. Additional copies are available at our office. Please note that lunches served on a day your child is absent will not be refunded because lunch reservations are made at the beginning of each month and paid for in advance.

### **PACK YOUR OWN LUNCH**

You are invited to send "ready to eat" lunches with your child that requires no preparation and that your child can eat on their own. Each lunch item should be placed in a clear container with a lid and clearly labeled with your child's first name and last initial. Teachers are not permitted to handle your child's food beyond opening it for them, so please do not send items that need draining, mixing, or heating. Commercial items (ex: Lunchables) are permitted if they do not require the teacher to heat or prepare any items.

Parents of children in the infant class may give special instructions to the teacher on preparing, heating, and serving baby food and bottles. Please leave specific instructions for the teacher regarding bottles and baby food on the monthly information sheet provided by Discovery Days.

## **WATER PLAY ACTIVITIES**

Parents will be notified in advance of any outside water activities. These typically occur on the last day of school and during our Summer Splash session. All water activities take place on our playground. On these days, please ensure that your child arrives in their swimsuit with sunscreen applied. If your child wears diapers, please include a swim diaper on water days. Additionally, please pack a change of clothes and a plastic bag for wet clothes.

## **NAPTIME**

At naptime, infants will rest quietly in the classroom cribs. Sleeping in swings is not permitted. Swaddling during sleep is not permitted. Pacifiers with a stuffed animal attached are not allowed for 12 months and younger.

Children 12 mo+ will rest quietly on a personal nap mat in a designated space in their nap room after a diaper change or restroom break. They will not be forced to sleep but will be required to rest quietly in a dimly lit room with soft music playing. Bottles or training cups are not allowed during naptime. Please send labeled nap mats that roll-up and have a handle for hanging or a duffel bag that includes all labeled nap items. Nap mats will be

sent home each day. After 1 hour of rest-time, teachers will allow each child who is awake to participate in an alternative activity until the naptime is over for the other children.

Children in the Pre-K class may choose to bring a beach towel or nap mat labeled with the child’s name every day for rest time.

**SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Discovery Days Preschool meets Monday thru Friday with half-day (8am-1pm) and full-day (8am-3pm) options for Birth-Three Years Old. Our Pre-K class meets full day (8am-3pm) only.

The Summer Splash (June-August) session meets Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday with half-day (8am-1pm) and full-day (8am-3pm) options for Birth-Pre-K, but the final Summer Splash schedule is based on enrollment and is subject to change.

Discovery Days Preschool follows the Huntsville ISD school calendar regarding major holidays. We will have school on teacher workdays, in-service days, and early release days for HISD. In the event of bad weather, Discovery Days will follow the HISD schedule for late openings, cancellations, etc.

**TUITION AND FEES**

Tuition rates are based on the collective average number of days our program operates. Rates are not based on a daily rate. Registration and tuition are non-refundable and will not be refunded or rescheduled based on absences.

**CHART OF TUITION AND FEES**

Item	Description	Amount
Child Registration Fee	The registration fee for the school year is \$100 per child and is non-refundable. The registration fee is due with each application. The registration period for current families begins in March. After 2 weeks, registration will be open to the public to enroll.	\$100
Family Supply Fee	This fee is due each semester and covers semester supplies for a whole family.	\$35
Tuition	Tuition is calculated based on the Tuition Schedule included in your Enrollment Packet and is due on the first day of each month. Families with more than one child in the program, will pay 100% tuition for one child and receive a 10% discount for additional children.	Varies
Drop-In Fee	Enrolled children may drop-in for an unscheduled day of school provided there is room in the class. Parents may schedule drop-ins through the office and must pay on the day of the drop-in.	Half-Day: \$25 Full-Day: \$30 Extended: \$10

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES**

Discovery Days Preschool receives income solely from tuition and fees. Our budget requirements necessitate timely and complete payment of each family's tuition and fees. We create our annual budget and hiring plans based on the days of enrollment that each family requests. A description of our fees and policies follows:

### **Credit Card/Debit Card Fee**

Our preference is for families to pay fees and tuition using cash or checks. However, we understand that on occasion the option to use a credit or debit card is helpful. This convenience will include a service fee per transaction. Forms are available in the office.

### **Registration Fee**

The registration fee for the school year is \$100 per child and is non-refundable. The registration fee is due with each application. The registration period for current families begins in February. After 2 weeks, registration will be open to the public to enroll.

### **Family Supply Fee**

The \$35 supply fee is due the first day of each semester and covers semester supplies for a whole family. Families enrolled in Summer Splash will incur a \$35 supply fee.

### **Academic Year Tuition Deposit**

A tuition deposit is required to secure enrollment. The tuition deposit consists of a full tuition payment for the month of May of the following year. Your child's placement in DDP is secured once the registration fee and the tuition deposit are received. Unless alternate payment plans are made with the Director, the tuition deposit is due by May 15<sup>th</sup>. If payment is not received by the 15<sup>th</sup>, we will assume your child will not be attending and reserve the right to fill your child's space.

### **Academic Tuition Deposit Refund**

The tuition deposit is refundable in full with a written request received by the school on or before June 15<sup>th</sup>, 50% refundable upon written request received by the school on or before July 15<sup>th</sup>, with no refund available after July 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Summer Splash Tuition Deposit**

A tuition deposit is required to secure enrollment. The tuition deposit consists of a full tuition payment for the month of July. Your child's placement in Summer Splash is secured once the registration fee (new families only) and the tuition deposit are received. Unless alternate payment plans are made with the Director, the tuition deposit is due by March 15<sup>th</sup>. If payment is not received by March 15<sup>th</sup>, we will assume your child will not be attending and reserve the right to fill your child's space. Tuition deposits and registration fees are non-refundable.

### **Tuition Payments**

Annual tuition is based on the number of days enrolled. For the convenience of parents, the annual tuition is divided into 9 equal payments to cover Sept. - May. August is the only month with pro-rated tuition. Tuition is due on the first day of each month. There are no refunds for temporary absences due to illness, vacation, accidents, etc. Cancellations or delayed openings due to inclement weather will correspond with HISD cancellations and will not be made up, nor will there be a refund for such cancellations or delays.

### **Payment Delinquency**

A \$25 late fee will be applied to accounts with unpaid balances by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Children with a balance not paid in full by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month (and without a prior payment arrangement) will be suspended until payment has been made. If the balance is not paid by the last day of the month and no payment arrangement has been made, the child will lose their enrollment status and be placed on the waiting list. The child may re-enroll, if a spot is available, at a later date by paying the registration fee and balance due.

### **Schedule Changes**

Upon enrollment, any schedule changes will result in the following:

- A \$100 fee will apply for EACH day dropped.
- A \$50 fee will apply for EACH extended day dropped

### **Withdrawal of a Child**

After the beginning of the year, should unforeseen circumstances arise, and it becomes necessary to withdraw a child, parents must provide the director with 30 days written notice of withdrawal and shall be liable for tuition for a period of 30 days from the date the notice is given to the school. The last month's deposit payment is refundable, but only if the spot can be filled upon their discontinuance.



## **Termination Policy**

While, this rarely occurs, as outlined in the Parent Handbook, we reserve the right to terminate the enrollment of children in our program. In the event this happens, the last month's deposit payment is refundable, but only if the spot can be filled upon their disenrollment. In order to receive the refund, all current balances must be paid in full.

### **LATE CHARGES FOR PICKING UP**

A \$10 late fee will be assessed when parents are more than 5 minutes late. This applies for both 1:00PM & 3:00PM pick-up times. At 1:05, all children will be transferred to the extended day nap room. At 3:05, children remaining in our care will either remain with the extended care teacher or will be in the care of a member of our office staff until a parent arrives. In addition to the \$10 late fee, parents who are more than 5 minutes past their 3:05 pick-up time will incur a \$1 per minute fee. Late charges will be invoiced on the next month's tuition statements.

### **SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**

On occasion, the observance of holidays may occur on a day of your child's enrollment. Since tuition rates are not based on a daily rate, but rather on the collective average per year, tuition will not be refunded or adjusted in such a circumstance.

### **RETURNED CHECKS**

A family with two returned checks, must make subsequent payments in cash or by money order.

### **TERMINATION POLICY**

We reserve the right to terminate the enrollment of children for reasons not limited to:

- Violation of enrollment handbook
- Repeated returned checks or nonpayment of tuition
- Parent or guardian who threatens a staff member
- Irreconcilable differences between parent/guardian and provider
- Serious developmental or behavioral issues of a child that cannot be adequately met by our staffing plan (ie, behavior that causes risk to staff or other children)

Verbal expression of concerns, written evaluation of issues, and parent conferences will precede termination. We want you and your child's experience to be a positive one. Please feel free to share observations, questions, concerns, and suggestions. Positive communication and mutual respect will foster a trusting relationship as we partner together in the care of your child.

## **HEALTH REGULATIONS**

### **DOCTOR HEALTH STATEMENT**

We must have a hard copy of a doctor's statement of health on file for your child. No faxes, please. This statement is required upon admission to the program and must be updated each year. The doctor's statement should declare the child healthy and cleared for preschool attendance.

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**

Children who have a food allergy will need to complete a Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan. The completed form will need to be signed by both the parent and physician. Children with a food allergy will be placed on a list that is kept in the classroom and on the master list in the preschool kitchen. The list will state the child's name, name of food allergy to, symptoms if ingested, and medication or epipen if needed.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Upon admission to the program, a hard copy of your child's immunization record must be presented. No faxes, please. State Law requires each child present proof of immunization for DPT, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A, Chickenpox, Pneumococcal Conjugate and HIB.

Families choosing to follow a delayed immunization schedule need to provide a statement signed and dated from their child's pediatrician stating; child's name, DOB, and immunization schedule.

### **VISION AND HEARING SCREENING**

Programs licensed by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services are required by the Special Senses and Communications Act of the Texas Health and Safety Code to have a vision and hearing screening on file for Pre-K children. Parents who have a Pre-K child attending are responsible for providing a copy of the vision and hearing screening from their child's pediatrician. The screening test document needs to state clearly if the child passed or failed.

### **MEDICINE**

Parents must sign an authorization form for a teacher to administer medicine. The medicine must be prescribed by a doctor and in the original container with the child's name and date. The medicine will be kept in the preschool office and administered by the teacher in the directed amounts and times. Refrigeration is available in a labeled Ziploc bag.

### **CHOKING HAZARDS**

Children under the age of 3 years are not permitted to wear teething necklaces, jewelry, ribbon, etc. around the neck. Instead, children may wear these items around the waist or ankle if desired.

Children 12 months and younger are not permitted to use pacifiers that have a stuffed animal attached.

### **HEALTH CHECK**

A health check is a visual or physical assessment of a child to identify potential concerns about a child's health, including signs or symptoms of illness and injury, in response to changes in the child's behavior since the last date of attendance. Health checks are conducted by the teacher upon arrival at school during the time of greeting. You may be asked about your child's sleep, eating, drinking, toilet habits, mood and behavior at home. Health checks are documented by the teacher on the daily sign-in/sign-out sheet.

### **ILLNESS**

Children displaying the following symptoms within 24 hours of class may not attend Discovery Days Preschool:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash
- Red eyes with discharge
- Runny nose with colored discharge
- Headache that does not respond to ibuprofen or acetaminophen
- Injury or condition that would prevent participation in daily activities
- Lice: Children must be completely free of bugs and nits before returning to school

If your child develops any of these symptoms at school, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child immediately. In the event you cannot be reached within one hour, we will call one of your approved contacts. A doctor's written approval for returning to school may be required.

### **ANIMALS**

When animals will be visiting the preschool for observation, parents will be notified in writing. This notification will include the date, type of animal, and how the children will be interacting with the animal. Children who have an allergy to pet dander will not be exposed to the animal.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES**

### **PARKING LOT SAFETY**

Keeping children safe in the parking lot requires the cooperation of everyone - from school staff to parents to the children themselves. Safety is our first priority and we appreciate your help in following these guidelines during morning drop off and afternoon pick up.

- Drive slowly in parking lots and on surrounding streets. Do not exceed 10 mph.
- Remain patient and courteous. Being in a hurry can lead to an accident.
- Once you pull into the parking lot, refrain from cell phone use during drop-off and pick-up.
- Never leave the motor running and do not leave children in an unattended car. Please let us know if you need help in bringing a preschooler in or out.
- Always watch for children and be cautious. Children should be escorted by adults at all times. The parking lot is very busy during transitions. Young children should hold the hand of an adult or sibling.
- Avoid parking under the covered drive. The first two rows of the parking lot are designated for DDP parents during our hours of operation.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

The preschool doors will be unlocked and locked at the times listed below. Parents needing to enter the building outside of the times listed below will need to knock or call the office, 936-295-4673, to gain entry.

UNLOCKED	LOCKED
7:55 - 8:30 am	8:30 am - 12:30 pm
12:30 - 1:15 pm	1:15 - 2:30 pm
2:30 - 3:15 pm	

### **SIGN-IN AND SIGN-OUT**

Parents must sign children in and out at the classroom door each day. Children may not be signed in before 8am and must be supervised by a parent or guardian until school begins. This allows teachers ample time to prepare classrooms and activities. Teachers will open their doors to greet children at 8am.

Additionally, please sign your child out promptly at their designated pick-up time. Each teacher has cleaning to do at the end of the day that cannot be done in the presence of children. If you would like to discuss something with the teacher, please schedule a conference time.

### **SEPARATION ANXIETY**

Separation anxiety is normal at this age and should not be cause for concern. It may occur at school in ways you have not observed at home or church, but children settle in quickly and come to love their time at Discovery Days. To help us move through this time, please drop your child off and leave quickly. Children will not respond to the teacher's efforts at welcoming and engaging them if a parent stands at the door. Our staff is trained to help your child overcome their anxieties as quickly as possible. You will receive a call from the director or assistant director if your child does not calm down within a few minutes. We welcome you to give us a call anytime to check on your child.

### **RELEASING YOUR CHILD TO OTHERS**

Written authorization is required to release a child to someone other than the parent or legal guardian. You must provide a written statement to add or delete someone from the pick-up list. If someone requests to pick-up your child and is not on the approved list, they will be referred to the office staff. All persons on the pick-up list must provide proper photo identification.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **VISITS AND PARENT TEAMS**

Children and parents new to the program may take a pre-enrollment tour and visit in a classroom. Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom at any time and will be encouraged to participate by helping with

special events, school promotion, water days, and more. Additionally, you may inquire with the teacher about serving as a room parent.

### **PARENT ORIENTATION**

Parent orientation will be held at the beginning of the fall semester. All parents, even those with children previously or currently enrolled in the program, are encouraged to attend the fall orientation before beginning the school year. Those unable to attend will receive orientation information on their child's first day of school. At orientation, the director will present policies and procedures, introduce staff, review any policy changes, and review philosophy and purpose of this ministry with the parents. Parents will then meet their teacher in their child's classroom. Children are not permitted to attend orientation so that parents and teachers may discuss procedures and concerns freely.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled regularly to discuss student evaluations, development, accomplishments, curriculum, and home life. We hope these times serve to strengthen the partnership between Discovery Days and your family. Conferences will be held in October and May each year with notice provided by the office. Teachers will post a schedule with appointment availability outside the classroom. Please arrive a few minutes early on the day of your conference to help us stay on schedule and ensure ample time to discuss your child's development. Regular class time will continue for your child during the conference. A phone conference will take place in February of each year to discuss, developmental progress, accomplishments, discipline, and home life. Parents will also be asked to complete a survey of the program at the May conference.

### **PORTFOLIOS**

A portfolio of artwork, classwork, photos, drawings, writing samples, funny anecdotes, and evaluations is kept for each child throughout the year. At least one item per month will be saved for the child's portfolio and organized in a way to help you understand your child's progress. Parents will receive the portfolio (with the exception of evaluations and assessments) at the last conference in May. Future teachers will use the previous evaluations and assessments to ensure on-going and uninterrupted development.

### **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline will be individualized and consistent, appropriate to the child's level of understanding, and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control. Teachers may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance. Acceptable forms of discipline and guidance are as follows:

- Praising and encouraging of good behavior instead of focusing on unacceptable behavior
- Daily reminders of behavioral expectations expressed in clear, positive statements
- Redirection of unacceptable behavior using positive suggestion
- Time-out; limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

### **CLASS SCHEDULES**

Teachers will provide parents with a copy of the class schedule and display a copy in the classroom. Schedules will include time for outside play, nap, snack, lunch, class instruction, centers and activities, diaper changing, hand washing, etc.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

#### **DRILLS AND EVACUATIONS**

Discovery Days Preschool has an active emergency plan. The following steps listed below are implemented for transitioning children to safety and accounting for each of them:

- Infants are transported to safety by the teacher in a four-seater stroller
- Toddlers thru Twos are transported to safety by teachers using a rope with handles
- Threes thru Pre-K children walk in a line by the teacher to a safe location
- Children are accounted for by the director or assistant director before re-entering the building by checking the emergency notebook, which contains contact information for all enrolled students.

Fire drills are conducted monthly and are signaled with three long bells. Staff and children will meet on the sidewalk in front of the playground off Sycamore Avenue.

Severe weather drills are conducted 4 times in a calendar year and are signaled with long-short-long bell. Children in C100, C101, C102, and C103 will proceed to the nook of their room with the door closed in a severe weather position. Children in C104, C105, C106, and C107 will meet in hallway and assume a severe weather position. We will follow HISD's lead in closing early for bad weather. In the event of a hurricane, Huntsville may be without power. Discovery Days will reopen when power to the facility is restored. We will post such information on the UHBC website (uhbc.net) and the front door of the school. Teachers will attempt to communicate with you via phone. Please note that tuition and fees will not be refunded for bad weather days.

Emergency evacuations are signaled by three long bells. Staff and children will meet in the parking lot of the adjacent Sycamore Villas Apartments at 2401 Sycamore Avenue.

Lockdowns are conducted 4 times in a calendar year and are signaled by one ten-second bell. These may occur in the case of an escaped convict or threatening situation. Staff will close classroom doors to prevent any entrances or exits. Parents should not try to enter the facility during a lockdown and may be kept away from the preschool until authorities determine it is safe.

### **INJURY AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

When minor injuries occur at school, parents will be notified by an accident form at the end of the day. Parents will sign two copies. The original will be sent home with the parent, and a copy will be kept on file in the office. In the event of a medical emergency, we will notify both the parent and EMS.

## **PARTIES**

### **CLASS PARTIES**

Classroom parties may be scheduled by the teacher and hosted for major holidays. All children are welcome to attend class parties, regardless of scheduled enrollment, but must be accompanied by a parent or guardian on a day they are not enrolled.

### **BIRTHDAY PARTIES AND INVITATIONS**

Parents may provide a special snack or dessert to be served after lunch for a child's birthday, but licensing requires a 24-hour notice provided to the teacher in cases where a snack or dessert will be shared with the entire classroom.

Birthday invitations may be distributed in class as long as all children in class are invited. Discovery Days and our staff will not be responsible for printing or distribution of such invitations, and we cannot provide contact information for classmates. However, we are happy to provide a list of children's names to help you prepare invitations.

## TODDLER BITING

The most common reason for this kind of behavior is that a child is attempting to express feelings and language. While most toddlers will bite at one time or another, very few will do so regularly. When biting continues, it's a tip off that something else is wrong. The child is using socially inappropriate behavior to get attention, or perhaps it is a response to stress about change at home etc. A toddler's bite can sometimes be an immature way of trying to get a point across, to experiment with cause and effect or when play doesn't go as planned.

Once a child in our care begins to bite, our policy for teacher supervision is as follows:

- Operate from the understanding that your role is to protect ALL of the children in your care. The children who are bitten need protection from the biter and the child who bites needs support and understanding so that he learns how to interact positively with his peers. He needs your help, too.
- One way to offer protection is to shadow the child. Be near their side and ready to re-direct before anything happens.
- Place the child in a high chair or crib with an age appropriate activity when you are unavailable to shadow (Examples: diaper changing, clean up lunch, etc.).
- Calling for assistance when needed.

## TEACHER GUIDANCE FOR TODDLER BITING

1. **WATCH and INTERCEPT:** You may be able to see when she is getting frustrated or angry and step in to redirect her attention to something else. Give her words to describe what is happening, how she may be feeling, how the other child may be feeling, etc..
2. **TEACH:** Respond quickly, not in anger but with sternness. Immediately after biting/aggressiveness occurs, look him in the eye and say, "No! Biting hurts. Time Out (Take A Break)!" Direct him to a chair or on the floor in a designated area and have him sit for one minute. Comfort the injured child while next to the child in time out. The injured child should get much attention. Soothing the child who was bitten can show the other child that their actions caused another child fear or pain. Your response may even encourage the biting child to help soothe their friend. The teacher will say to the child who bit, "We don't bite people. We bite food, but we NEVER bite people." Make reference to the injured child to help make the connection: "Susie is crying because your teeth, hands, etc. hurt her. She is sad." Depending on the situation, you can continue teaching him, about the appropriate response. For example, if he bit out of frustration over a toy, you can say, "If you want a toy, you can ask for it or ask your teacher for help." Limit teaching to a few brief, specific comments, as a lecture will not be effective. Instead, reading toddler books on the topic, role playing, and demonstrating appropriate actions can help children learn. Board books are in room C101 and C102.
3. **FIRST AID:** Calm and reassure the injured child. Put on gloves. Wash the wound with antiseptic. Bandage if necessary. Apply a cold compress to reduce swelling and bruising.
4. **REPORT:** Once the situation is calm, complete an Incident Report (Found in your teacher notebook). Make a copy for yourself and the child's file. The original is given to the parent. The copies kept for yourself and the child's file need to be signed and dated by the parent. The name of the biting child may NEVER be listed on the Incident Report. When the parent comes to pick up explain what happened and be available to answer questions. Please inform Teri or Susie before pickup when a biting incident occurs.

### Teri or Susie will then follow this procedure:

- One or both will have a conversation with the parents of the child who was bitten and with the parents of the child who bit. Names of the children will not be disclosed to protect everyone's privacy.
  - A conference will be set up if needed when biting occurs two or more times.
  - Written strategies will be provided for both parents.
  - Teri will observe in the classroom to help the teacher with more strategies when biting occurs two or more times.
5. **CONSISTENCY:** It will be important for everyone involved to respond with consistency any time a preschooler is in our care.

**POLICY CHANGES**

Discovery Days Preschool reserves the right to change or update policies found in this handbook. If it becomes necessary to make such a change, parents will be notified in writing and, if necessary, invited to a parent meeting to communicate the policy changes.