

# *Parent Handbook*

2018



Main Office: #651-762-7884

[www.ladcfamilies.org](http://www.ladcfamilies.org)

# Information for Parents (Minnesota Rules 9503.0090 subpart 1)

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

The Lake Area Discovery Center admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the schools. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition assistance programs, and athletic or other school administered programs.

## **A. Program Description**

THE DISCOVERY CENTER at Location: St. Joseph Catholic School/Waconia  
(36 months-First Day of Kindergarten- 40)

License Capacity:40

- 3's/4's years: Discovery Classes; maximum class capacity of 20 students
- 4's/5's years: Kinderstart Classes; maximum class capacity of 20 students

(Lake Area Discovery Center-LADC is a non-profit, Christian-based early childhood program designed for children from 6 weeks to 5 years old. Families may choose to come to come for 1, 2, 3 or 4 years with a maximum of 2 years with one teacher. LADC admits students of any race, religion, color, national and ethnic origins.)

## **Staffing**

The Discovery Center is staffed by one licensed teacher, one teacher assistant and sometimes one parent assistant, per the licensing capacity of 20 children for 3-5 year old classes, 14 for 2 year old classes and 8 infants. In addition to meeting all the standards set forth by the State of Minnesota, The Discovery Center lead pre-k school-year teachers are all 4 year degreed Early Childhood Specialists and every staff member is CPR and First Aid certified.

We are a non-profit, Christian-based program. The key to establishing a Christian learning environment are teachers who have a strong relationship with God. Teachers will assist children in building strong relationships with God and others.

## **Enrollment**

Parents and children are always welcome to schedule a tour our center. Once a class has been confirmed, the following forms are to be completed and on file before the child's first day of class:

- Emergency Card
- Student Information/Authorization Form
- Permission Form (School ground walks; photos for marketing; use of baby wipes; student file open to health consultant; Parent Handbook; sunscreen; bathroom help)
- Health Care Summary (signed by a physician; 30 day grace period from child's 1st day)
- Immunization Record/Form
- Family Information Form

## **B. Daily Schedule**

These charts give an overview of a typical day, though teachers may choose to alter the times due to weather conditions or other factors:

- **Discovery & Kinderstart:** A hands-on classroom experience for 3, 4 and 5 year olds. Included in the weekly curriculum is both letter of the week based lessons and theme-based lessons, focusing on Kindergarten readiness skills, one-on-one time with teachers and social experiences.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
7:00am / 12:00pm	Children Arrive & Explore Learning Centers art; science; writing; books; dramatic play; housekeeping; fine-motor games
8:30am / 12:15pm	Circle Time (Calendar/Weather/Story)
8:45am / 12:30pm	Learning Centers / Library
9:35am / 1:25pm	Music & Movement / Transition Time
9:40/ 1:30pm	Group A: Snack / Individualized Cooking Group B: Concept Development
10:00am / 1:45pm	Group A: Concept Development Group B: Snack / Individualized Cooking
10:15am / 2:00pm	Large Muscle / Playground
10:45am / 2:30 pm	Children Dismissed

## **C. Licensure, Mission/Philosophy and Curriculum Model**

### **Licensure**

The Discovery Center will be licensed and will comply with the standards set forth by the Department of Human Service for the state of Minnesota. Our policy manual, which complies with state standards, is open for review by parents at any time.

**Mission:** We, the early childhood faith community of the Twin Cities Metro Area, seek to support parents and children through a creative environment that promotes and teaches Christian values, honors diversity, and fosters fellowship within the total community.

**Philosophy:** Children entering Discovery Center programs have already established foundations of their personalities. Future growth stems from these early years. Young children bring themselves, as well as part of their home, to the school as they begin this new experience. The teachers in the Discovery strive to give children the necessary help to build bridges between their home and school lives and provide them an environment which fosters the child's emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual, and physical development. Emphasis is placed on respect for ourselves, others and our school.

- Families are invited to share information about children's culture, religion, home language and family structure with program teachers through the "Family Information Sheet" in the student info packet. This information will be used to develop and maintain positive relationships between teachers and families.
- It is our goal to provide each child with an opportunity for growth in self-esteem, relationships with peers and adults, and to develop positive work habits in both individual and group situations.

## Components of The Discovery Center Model

The Discovery Center has created a unique blend of the following models that is the daily operating philosophy on how The Discovery Center interacts with children and families. The components are:

1. Bank Street: Curriculum is based on theme units which are carried out in interest areas such as music, art, reading and dramatic play. Teacher-made materials are widely used because they meet children's individual needs.

*Philosophy: The Discovery Center believes strongly in the Bank Street approach. All curriculum webs from a central focus so that children will have greater recall. Our environment is set up in centers so children may choose a wide variety of experiences each day. Our day includes: Art, Science, Dramatic Play, Blocks, Manipulatives, Music, Computer, Cooking, Cognitive Games, Stories, Math, and Large Muscle. In addition to basing the curriculum on theme-based units, The Discovery Center also incorporates a "Letter of the Week" into our daily schedule.*

2. High Scope: Curriculum is based on Key Experiences. Each day is centered on specific objectives, or "key experiences". To accomplish this goal, High Scope uses a Plan-Do-Review cycle to help children make deliberate, systematic choices in their day.

*Philosophy: The Discovery Center incorporates the High Scope Plan-Do-Review approach into the daily schedule. Opening Circle Time and Story is the "Plan", Center Time is the "Do", and the Question of the Day at snack is the "Review".*

3. Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE): Curriculum is based on the philosophy that the parent is the first and most important teacher. The classrooms are designed to facilitate parent-child interaction through sign-directed centers. The centers are usually theme-based and many of the cognitive games are homemade, which gives parents ideas of activities they can do at home.

*Philosophy: The Discovery Center believes very strongly that the parent is the first and most important teacher, so our classrooms are set up to invite parents and children to experience the centers together when they arrive at school. Each center contains a sign explaining the objective for parents. A detailed explanation of the activities called "A Peek at Our Week" is available when parents sign-in.*

4. Montessori: Curriculum is based on sound ideas of how children learn. There is a sense of order to their classrooms and children work independently at their own pace. All games are self-correcting for immediate feedback.

*Philosophy: The Discovery Center incorporates Montessori principles through the sense of order that is present in The Discovery Center classroom. All shelves and bins are labeled for children and each The Discovery Center classroom contains the same developmental areas. Teachers create cognitive games for each unit which are always self-correcting. This allows children the ability to work at their own pace.*

5. Christian Emphasis: Each week, children are immersed into the "Spiritual Emphasis" for the week through a wide variety of daily activities. The Discovery Center curriculum always contains daily Christian songs, prayer before meals, and a modeling of Christian values by the teacher. Once a month the children in Discovery & Kinderstart classes attend "Worship Time" which is a hands-on, Bible-based lesson written and taught by The Discovery Center Staff. Pastors and Christian Education Directors at each church are always welcome to be part of this Worship experience for children.

Birthdays are another wonderful opportunity for the program to celebrate each child as a special gift from God! This is done through a blessing that is sung while glitter is sprinkled on their head. It is to remind them that they are a child of God and sparkle in His love!

*Other opportunities for families to experience Christian programming are at our annual Christmas program, put on by our Discovery & Kinderstart classes, and the various Family Nights put on throughout the year.*

## Learning Centers

Centers are changed every week and are developed around a particular theme. The following centers are a part of the daily curriculum.

<b>Sensory:</b> Sand, water, beans, etc.	<b>Home Living/Dramatic Play:</b> The opportunity for creative, imaginary play.	<b>Writing Table:</b> Eye-hand coordination, pencil grasp, printing
<b>Art:</b> An opportunity for self-expression & creativity.	<b>Computer:</b> Learn more about shapes, colors, numbers and letters.	<b>Cognitive/Table Toys:</b> Fine motor skills, making patterns, number, letter, shape, and color concepts
<b>Blocks:</b> Block play promotes perceptual learning; the exploration of shapes, sizes, eye-hand coordination, balance and math.	<b>Large Motor:</b> Develop new skills, physical strength, coordination and balance.	<b>Snack/Individualized Cooking:</b> Children learn about nutrition, food groups, and math concepts of volume and measuring. They also learn about their own culture and other cultures of the world.
<b>Books/Language/Literature:</b> Fosters activities that relate to language development, such as letters, numbers, and words.	<b>Conversation Time (PreK):</b> Children learn to 1. Listen, sit quietly and understand spoken words 2. To wait their turn while others are talking 3. Recognize new vocabulary words 4. To cooperate and be considerate of others 5. To learn more about God and God's love for them and that 6. Their ideas have value	

**Additional Activities:** *Field Trips, Community Service Projects; Family Events; Library Check-Out; Annual Circus; Outdoor Play and Cooperative Large Muscle Games; Specialists in Music, Spanish, STEM (Science/Technology) and Art.*

## Curriculum

The Discovery Center uses **The Creative Curriculum®**, a leading scientifically based, comprehensive curriculum format for children birth to age 5. It is designed to create a high-quality learning environment which opens doors to successful learning by making learning exciting and relevant for every child in our classrooms.

Activities are designed around 50 Objectives for Development and Learning in 10 areas, including social/emotional and physical development, as well as learning in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social studies and the arts.

**Handwriting Without Tears®**, is used in our classes to help children prepare for Kindergarten. This award-winning curriculum uses fun, child-friendly activities to prepare children for writing. It expands their exposure to language, colors, shapes, movement, letters, numbers, counting, and how each relates to writing using music, writing and handwriting activities.

**STEM** is a curriculum enrichment that focuses on lessons, activities and experiences in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math throughout all areas of the classroom.

## Discovery Center Program Goals

- To provide a safe and stimulating environment that nurtures the natural wonder in each child.
- To create a setting that fosters the child’s physical, social, emotional, cultural, spiritual and intellectual development.
- To honor and respect the diversity within each child as well as all of God’s creation.
- To facilitate enjoyment of school and model a positive attitude toward learning which will allow them to face future experiences with skill and confidence.
- To acknowledge the parent(s) as the first and most important teacher and to support them on their parenting journey.

## Developmental Goals and Objectives

(Minnesota Rules, part 9503.0045, subpart 2)

<p><b>Physical Development:</b> To provide an environment that fosters growth in gross and fine motor development at developmentally age appropriate levels for each child.</p>	<p><b><u>Gross Motor</u></b>            -Develop balance/spatial relationship            -Develop coordination skills            -Develop confidence/skills with playground equipment            -Develop eye-hand coordination            -Complete cycle of activity</p> <p><b><u>Fine Motor</u></b>            -Develop skills using classroom tools            -Develop success with dressing skills            -Eye-hand coordination            -Concentration</p>	<p><b><u>Activities</u></b>            Running, jumping, climbing, hopping, ball play, balance beam, relays, obstacle course, exercises, creative movement, blocks /construction, riding toys, skipping, galloping, circle games, parachute.</p> <p>Cutting, pasting, painting, puzzles, stringing, pouring, play dough, dressing boards, coloring/markers, printing/pencil skills, peg work, sewing, manipulatives, scooping, sorting, spooning.</p>
<p><b>Intellectual Development:</b> to provide an environment that fosters growth in language, math, science, sensorial skills and geography at developmentally age appropriate levels for each individual child.</p>	<p><b><u>Math process skills, problem solving/creative thinking:</u></b>            -To develop math vocabulary, understand mathematical concepts and processes, recognition of symbols and quantities, exposure to geometry: concept and vocabulary.</p> <p>-To design an environment that develops opportunities for creative problem solving solutions.</p> <p><b><u>Language skills, pre-reading and reading skills:</u></b>            -To develop and expand vocabulary, exposure to language concepts and their application, application of pre-reading skills with exposures to phonics; develop the motor skills for writing.</p> <p><b><u>Sensorial skills:</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Activities</u></b>            Pegs, quantity to symbol 1-5, quantity to symbol 1-10, sandpaper numerals,</p> <p>Geometric solids, sets, processes (add, subtract, etc.), money, time measurement, thinking activities, symbol recognition.</p> <p>Storytelling, flannel boards, puppets, board games, classification, rhyming, matching activities, sequencing activities, phonics, letter recognition, reading printing.</p> <p>Shape activities, computer, board games, “what if” questions, “solve</p>

	-To develop understanding of size, shape, color, and texture, exposure to vocabulary to describe sensorial concepts, develop awareness of one's environment and materials in their surroundings.	the problem.”
<b>Objectives for social development:</b> To provide an opportunity for each child to develop positive growth in relationship with peers, adults and the environment, and to assist each child's progress through five stages of play:	<b>Five Stages of Play:</b> 1. Skills in cooperation, taking turns, listening and group skills. 2. Skills in problem solving in interrelationships. 3. Skills in effective communication. 4. Role playing / dramatic play 5. Develop skills in respect: for self, environment, and others.	Block/building area, dramatic play area, creative movement, free choice, large muscle time, group time, Home Living, sharing opportunities, service projects, music, sand and water play, snack time, stories, discussions.
<b>Objectives for emotional development:</b> To provide an environment that fosters an opportunity for growth in self-esteem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a safe, secure and predictable environment.</li> <li>- Provide a warm, nurturing atmosphere.</li> <li>- Provide opportunities for children to experience many successes.</li> <li>- Validate and respect feelings of others.</li> <li>- Develop an environment where a positive self-concept is nurtured.</li> </ul>	Group times, story time, free choice, sand/water play, outside play, creative movement, dramatic play, blocks, music, large muscle, sharing opportunities, thinking skills.

<b>Culturally Appropriate Activities to Promote Intellectual, Physical, Social and Emotional Development</b>	<b>Objectives for social/emotional development:</b> Demonstrate increasing competency in recognizing and describing own emotions.	<b>Activities</b> -Sing songs related to emotions -Play games matching happy, sad, angry, scared, etc. faces -Create self-portraits -Reading stories and Storytelling using “I was really (happy, sad, etc.) when...” -Paint to music evoking different emotions.
	<b>Objectives for Approaches to learning:</b> Demonstrate ability to complete a task or stay engaged in an experience.	-Put a puzzle together with children -Story time -Play a game that requires taking turns and has an end -Provide a craft project with up to 3 step instructions
	<b>Objectives for language/literacy development:</b> Communicate information using home language and/or English	
	<b>Objectives for creativity and the arts:</b> Participate in art and music experiences	-Rhyming activity -Sing songs -Guessing Games (“I spy...”)
		-Dictated stories to the teacher

	<p><b>Objectives for cognitive development:</b> Uses senses to explore materials and the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sing a story</li> <li>-Clap in rhythm</li> <li>-Move to music</li> <li>-Create art using variety of tools, techniques and materials</li>   <li>-Collect natural objects nature hike</li> <li>-Child directed manipulation of objects and materials sensory table</li> <li>-Experimentation with objects stimulating auditory, olfactory and tactile responses</li> <li>Listen and move to nature sounds (e.g. birds, ocean, wind) on CD</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activities that promote progress in 3/4/5 year olds in developmental domains</b> Activities are documented using principles of authentic assessment and will be provided for parents to review during conferences in the Fall and Spring via teacher Observation Notes and Work Samples and the Learning Continuum.</p>	<p><b>SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses words to handle emotions instead of actions</li> <li>• Shares and takes turns</li> <li>• Participates in group play</li> </ul> <p><b>APPROACHES TO LEARNING:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates problem solving ability</li> <li>• Seeks out new experiences</li> <li>• Stays on task</li> </ul> <p><b>LANGUAGE AND LITERACY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies rhyming words</li> <li>• Uses words and sentences</li> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of print concepts</li> <li>• Recognizes letters and writes name legibly</li> </ul> <p><b>CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expresses self in creative ways</li> <li>• Demonstrates an appreciation for art and creativity</li> </ul> <p><b>COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates ability to count in sequence</li> <li>• Counts objects</li> <li>• Recognizes/duplicates patterns</li> <li>• Sorts objects</li> <li>• Identifies shapes</li> <li>• Recognizes colors</li> <li>• Understands order/sequence of objects</li> <li>• Uses senses to understand the environment</li> <li>• Knows identifying information (full name/address/phone/parent names)</li> </ul> <p><b>PHYSICAL AND MOTOR DEVELOPMENT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to perform basic large muscle motor activities</li> <li>• Uses tools for writing, drawing and cutting</li> <li>• Follows basic health and safety rules</li> <li>• Can get dressed/ready independently</li> </ul>	

## **D. Conferences/Learning Assessments** (Discovery, Kinderstart, Explorers Classes)

- Conferences will be held twice a year (fall and spring). If an additional conference time is requested, an agreeable time between staff and parents can be scheduled. It is during these conferences that parents are notified as to their children's intellectual, physical, social, emotional and spiritual development.
- Data Privacy: The Discovery Center obtains and uses information about all children enrolled in order to assist in the planning of their educational program and in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Human Services. Federal and state laws allow parents and guardians to inspect and review all official records, files, and data relating to their child. Access to such information by third parties is limited and controlled in accordance with legal rights of data privacy. Currently, the only others who could potentially access a child's file would include the public health nurse, the DHS licensing agent, and accreditation officials.
- All information regarding the assessment of children will remain confidential and will be stored in a locked office. They are available to review between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:00 pm by parents, teachers, directors and the state licensing agents. No information will be released without parent permission. Any changes in regulations governing access to files and familial rights will be shared with families.
- The Discovery Center uses the Development Continuum Assessment from The Creative Curriculum. Ongoing observation through classroom play and activities is our primary way of collecting facts and learning as much as possible about each child. To help us remember and use what we learn from our observations, we document what we see on each child's continuum. We also collect samples of child's work samples over time to keep in their portfolios. In addition to sharing this information with parents at conferences, teachers use assessment results to give direction for planning and adjusting lesson plans and curriculum.
- The Discovery Center staff encourage and support parents to make the primary decisions about services that their children need and then encourage them to advocate to obtain those needed services.

## **E. Health Care Summary and Immunization Record**

*Health Care Summary:* DHS requires that a health care summary be completed by the child's health care provider and be submitted to the school **within 30 day of the child's first day of school**. Updated forms will be required annually.

*Immunization:* DHS requires that either a child's immunization records or a signed notarized statement of parental objections to immunization be **submitted by the child's first day of school**.

## **F. / G. Accident and Illness at School**

### **Minor accident/illness:**

1. The Discovery Center staff will isolate the sick child and keep them within sight and sound at all times.
2. Keep the child lying down on a cot and protected from excessive cold and heat.
3. The parent will be notified of the illness, advising them of care given and informing them of the policy for care of children who become ill or injured at school. If neither parent is available, the individual listed under the emergency contact on the child's emergency card will be contacted.

### **Severe accident/illness:**

1. Staff provides immediate first aid, 911 will be called if parent(s) cannot be reached, the school's emergency care policy on the emergency permission release goes into effect.
2. Child will be transported by ambulance, if necessary.
3. Parents or designate will be contacted.

All accident reports must be signed by the parent and will be kept on the file in the school's Accident Log and child's permanent file. An analysis of the Accident Log is reviewed annually to identify potential hazards.

### **Infectious and communicable disease:**

1. If there is exposure to communicable diseases, parents will be alerted, in writing or by phone, so that they may be aware of the incubation period for the disease, and symptoms should the illness have spread.

### **Emergency medical source: 911**

- White Bear Lake/Stillwater/Mahtomedi/Eagan/Forest Lake:
  - St. John's Northeast- 651-779-4400
  - Lakeview Hospital- 651-439-5330
- Minnetonka: Gillette / Minnetonka Clinic- 952-936-0977
- **Waconia: Ridgeview Medical Center- 952-442-7850**
- Wayzata/Edina/Minneapolis: Fairview Southdale- 952-924-5000

## **H. Administration of Medicine**

The Discovery Center staff will administer physician prescribed medicine accompanied by an authorization form completed by the parent. Medicines must be stored in the original container with the child's name as well as information on dosage amounts and times. You may request that your pharmacy issue two bottles for the medication so that you will be able to keep some at home and some at the school. If over-the-counter medication (such as pain reliever, Cortizone cream, or cough medicine) is to be administered at the school, you must obtain written instructions from your child's physician and also fill out a medicine form. Prescriptions can be honored for 2 weeks from the issue date. We need written physician permission to extend administration beyond this time frame. For chronic conditions (such as diabetes or asthma) your physician needs to complete a health plan. Associated medications may be given for up to 6 months.

## **I. Field Trips (Discovery & Kinderstart Classes)**

Signed permission slips provided by the Lake Area Discovery Center for each child going on a field trip must be on file with the Lead Teacher prior to going on the field trip. Parent volunteers for field trips are greatly appreciated and are encouraged to volunteer. AM and PM classes may be combined for some fieldtrips and will use an alternating time schedule for each trip. We will ride a bus to and from field trip locations. Any child who rides with their parent on their own vehicle must also return in this same vehicle. A child who rides the bus must ride to and from the field trip on the bus.

\*\* There is an additional charge for fieldtrips to help cover cost of field trip specialist and bus/transportation. If cost is prohibitive for your child to participate, please contact your lead teacher or [office@ladcfamilies.org](mailto:office@ladcfamilies.org) .

## **J. Research and Public Relations**

If The Discovery Center or any child in our program is involved in any type of experimental research or public relations activity, a signed permission form will be obtained from a parent(s) before it is undertaken, for each occasion. This will be maintained in the child's school records.

## **K. Snacks/Lunches**

Snacks are served each session (a.m. & p.m.) Snacks and milk is provided by the program. Snacks include cereal, crackers, fruit, vegetables, cookies, fruit snacks, raisins, etc, and meet nutritional regulations put out by the USDA's Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). A planned snack schedule is sent home monthly with the activity calendar.

During the school year, The Discovery Center offers daily hot / cold lunch, served from a qualified caterer. All food meets the NSLP (National School Lunch Program) guidelines, with fresh and wholesome menus and increased daily fruits and vegetables. Menus to meet dietary, allergy or ethnic needs are available.

For foods that are known to cause choking (ie: hot dogs, grapes, carrots), The Discovery Center will ensure that these items are diced into pieces small enough chewing and swallowing. The Discovery Center avoids the use of popcorn, hardy candy, nuts and peanut butter in our snacks for young children.

Federal regulations require that each child's lunch consist of items from the four food groups and meets the USDA's CACFP food guidelines. For menu ideas and nutrition information please go to the USDA's website @ [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov).

<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Ages 3-6 years</b>
Milk (The Discovery Center will provide)	3/4 Cup
1 Vegetable AND 1 Fruit (or 2 different kinds of veggies, or 2 different kinds of fruits)	1/2 Cup
Meat, Fish, Poultry, Cheese, Legumes	1 to 1 1/2 oz.
Bread, or Noodles, etc.	1/2 slice or 1/3 cup

## **L. Behavior Guidance Plan** (Minnesota Rules, part 9503.0055, subparts 1-6)

The Discovery Center promotes a positive approach to managing the behavior of all children. All behavior guidance methods used are tailored to the developmental level of the children that the program is licensed to serve. These policies and procedures are in place to protect the safety of all children and staff.

Use of the following techniques are implemented by The Discovery Center staff and outlined in the Parent Handbook as a positive model of acceptable behavior.

- **Prevention:** A well-designed environment prevents frustration, interruptions, and hazards. We strive to maintain stimulating classrooms so that the children can be engaged in productive and positive activities.
- **Positive Redirection:** This technique involves redirecting unacceptable behavior to an acceptable alternative. We will recognize children for their appropriate behavior and successful interactions.
- **Modeling:** Teacher and peer-modeled appropriate behavior is provided to help the children pattern positive responses. When needed, the staff will demonstrate such things as “gentle touches” to make an impression on children.
- **Boundaries:** The Discovery Center has clear and simple rules in each classroom. Such guidelines as “walking feet, inside voices, listening ears and gentle touches” help the children to achieve acceptable standards.
- **Problem-solving:** We appeal to the child’s growing intellectual and moral reasoning by using natural and logical consequences. Asking questions often helps a child to develop correct responses. We regularly remind the children to “use their words” to resolve issues.

Children are in the process of learning appropriate behavior. They are constantly experimenting with many different types of actions, and are looking for direction and limits. Our methods include recognition and encouragement of appropriate behavior as often as possible.

**When inappropriate behavior becomes apparent, the following “5 Step Behavior Guidance Plan” is carried out by The Discovery Center staff in order to insure safety of all the children and staff.**

### **STEP 1– TEACHER PRESENCE**

Teacher may need to stand near, look at, put hand on shoulder, etc., to show a child that his/her behavior is not acceptable.

### **STEP 2—REDIRECTION**

Teacher leads child to new activity to avoid conflict; may separate from toy, etc.

### **STEP 3—PROBLEM SOLVING WITH CHILD**

Teacher helps child to solve problem, think of alternative solutions, models words to use instead of physical reaction, lets child voice their feelings, and acknowledges other feelings, etc.

### **STEP 4—NATURAL AND LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES**

Teacher calls upon the child to assist in remedying the situation. (i.e., after a child knocks over another’s toy blocks purposely, that child would be asked to help pick them up, etc.)

All consequences for unacceptable behavior are immediate and relate to the observed inappropriate behavior.

### **STEP 5—SEPARATION FROM THE GROUP**

No child will be separated from the group unless the following has occurred:

- Less intrusive methods, as listed in Steps 1 through 4, of guiding the child's behavior have been tried and were ineffective.
- The child's behavior threatens the well-being of the child or other children in the group.

A child who requires separation must

- Remain within an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard by a program staff person.
- Have the return to the group contingent on the child's stopping or bringing under control the behavior that precipitated the separation and
- Be returned to the group as soon as the behavior that precipitated the separation abates or stops.

**Separation Report: All separation from the group will be documented on the Daily Log and will include the following information:**

- The child's name; staff person's name; time; date
- Information indicating that less intrusive methods were used to guide the child's behavior;
- How the child's behavior continued to threaten the well-being of the child or other children in care; If a child is separated from the group three or more times in one day, the child's parent will be notified and the parent notification will be indicated in the Daily Separation Log

If a child is separated five or more times in one week, eight times or more in two weeks, the procedures under "Persistent Inappropriate Behavior" will be followed.

### **Prohibited Actions**

**The Discovery Center prohibits the following actions by or at the direction of a staff:**

**No Child will be subjected to corporal punishment, which includes but is not limited to...**

- |                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| • Rough Handling | • Slapping |
| • Shoving        | • Kicking  |
| • Hair Pulling   | • Biting   |
| • Ear Pulling    | • Pinching |
| • Shaking        | • Hitting  |

**No child will be subjected to emotional stress, which includes but is not limited to...**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Name Calling   | • Separated from the group, except as outlined in Step 5 "Separation from the Group"   |
| • Ostracism  | • Withheld from food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a punishment for unacceptable behavior.                            |
| • Shaming  | • No physical restraints will be used, other than to hold a child in an effort to protect him/her from hurting themselves or others. |
| • Making derogatory remarks about a child or the child's family      | • No mechanical restraints will be used on a child, such as tying.   |
| • Using language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child. |  |
| • Spanking   |  |
| • Punished for lapses in toilet habits.                              |  |

## **Persistent Inappropriate Behavior**

**If a child is consistently showing unacceptable behavior, the following steps will be taken:**

1. The persistent unacceptable behavior will be observed and recorded by the teacher or assistant along with written documentation on how the teachers responded to the behavior. This documentation will be kept in the child's file.
2. Staff will inform the Site Director of the inappropriate behavior, their observations, documentation and response to the behavior. The Site Director will give feedback and offer suggestions to staff on other ways to handle the behavior.
3. If the staff and Site Director feel the behavior is not diminishing after implementing The Discovery Center Behavior Guidance Plan or if a child has been separated from the group more than 3 times in one day or 5 or more times in one week, the child's parents will be notified and the parent notification will be indicated in the Daily Separation Log.
4. A meeting will be set up with the child's parents, The Discovery Center teaching team and Site Director. If needed, other professionals will be consulted ie: District Early Childhood Special Education; Private Psychologist, Health Care Professional or the Wilder Foundation. If all avenues have been exhausted here and the staff feels a child would be better served in another program, staff will assist parents in finding a new program that best meets the needs of the child.

## **M. Pet Policy**

Pets may be brought to "Show and Tell" at The Discovery Center only if:

- Animals appear to be in good health
- Have documentation to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children.

The Discovery Center staff will supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior and will make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed.

**Due to risk of salmonella poisoning, The Discovery Center refrains from the use of reptiles as classroom pets.**

## **N. Parents are free to visit the center anytime during the hours of**

**operation.** Parents may also review the Child Care Program Plan and Parent Handbook anytime by calling our Main Office #651-762-7884. If parents have any questions or comments concerning the program that haven't been answered by staff, they are welcome to call DHS/Licensing (information below).

## **O. Department of Human Services, Licensing Division #651-431-6500**

## **Rest / Nap Program Policy** (Minnesota Rules part 9503.0090, subpart 1)

- **Quiet/Rest Time Policy (3, 4, 5 year olds)**
- Children who attend all day have a half-hour Quiet Time following lunch. This is an opportunity for children to rest their bodies before starting the afternoon programming. The teacher varies the types of choices children have during this quiet period. They include: reading books, listening to stories, using a “Quiet Bag” or watching an educational movie. If children fall asleep during this time, they are allowed to sleep past the allocated 30 minutes until they wake up on their own. A child who has completed a nap or rested quietly for 30 minutes will not be required to remain on a mat/cot.
- A floor mat map is followed to place children’s mat/cot in quiet areas, physically separated from children who are engaged in an activity that will disrupt a napping or resting child. They are placed clear of aisles, allowing unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each piece of napping and resting equipment. Mats/Cots must be placed directly on the floor and are never stacked when in use. If bedding is used, separated bedding is used for each child and is washed weekly and when soiled or wet. Blankets, if used, are washed or dry-cleaned weekly and when soiled or wet.

## **Communicating Concerns, Suggestions or Grievances**

(Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.04, subdivision 1, (d))

A parent(s) / guardian’s suggestions and concerns are considered valid and will be addressed. Your ideas and feedback help us make continual improvements to our program. We will work with you in resolving problems that may arise. In order to address concerns and suggestions at the most appropriate and effective level, we suggest the following:

- Parent(s) / guardian should direct any concerns by speaking or scheduling a conference with the Lead Teacher. If issues are not resolved (within one week), or you have additional concerns, parent/guardians are encouraged to contact the Site Director for more information or help. If the Lead Teacher is also the Site Director, parent/guardians are invited to contact the Executive Director via [office@ladcfamilies.org](mailto:office@ladcfamilies.org) with additional concerns. The Center strives to make the educational experience excellent for all.

The Discovery Center staff encourage parents to raise concerns so that staff can work collaboratively with them to find mutually satisfying solutions to then be incorporated into classroom practice.

## **Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Policy**

(Minnesota Statutes, sections 245A.145, subdivision 1 / 245A.66, subdivision 1)

### **Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect**

- Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

## Where to Report

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at #651-431-6600.

Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency or local law enforcement.

Ramsey County: Non-Emergency #651-266-4444 / Social Services: #651-266-8500

Washington County: Non-Emergency #651-430-6457 / Social Services: #651-430-6455

Carver County: Non-Emergency #952-448-4200 / Social Services: #952-361-1600

Hennepin County: Non-Emergency #612-370-3879 / Social Services: #612-348-3552

MN State Child Protection/Maltreatment #651-431-6600

If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division, at 651-431-6500

## What to Report

Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the reporting of Maltreatment of Minors act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556)

A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.

An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

## Retaliation Prohibited

Lake Area Discovery Center shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

## Failure to Report

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from the employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS:

## A. Staff/Child Contact

Children require physical contact for their care and for healthy development. Our physical interaction with children will involve the following:

- Nurturing: which includes such touching as hugs, hand-holding, carrying, cuddling, and back rubbing. This type of contact is never made against the child's wishes.
- Safety and guidance: which includes restraining the child from harmful situations, separating conflicting children, guiding children by gently leading, and administering first aid.
- Hygiene: which includes face and hand washing as well as assisting with such needs as diapering/toileting, cleaning the child up after becoming dirty, examining for rashes or unusual marks, and changing children's clothes when necessary.

## B. Health and Safety Issues

Be sure to keep The Discovery Center informed regarding your child's health status. Inform your teacher when immunizations are given, allergies are discovered, food restrictions are required, or medicines are prescribed.

- Public Health Nurse or Physician Assistant (PA): Periodically, a certified public health nurse or physician assistant will provide consultation services to The Discovery Center staff. The nurse instructs staff regarding child development, sanitation procedures, administration of medicines, and so forth. She regularly safety checks the playgrounds and the environment and also reviews the logs kept on illness/injury.
- The Discovery Center will immediately notify the parent, legal guardian or other person authorized by the parent when your child has any sign or symptom that requires exclusion from the program.

*Staff and teachers will provide information to parents verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which your child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability and control measures that are being implemented at The Discovery Center and that you can implement at home.*

### **1. Exclusion from the Program**

A child will be excluded from The Discovery Center when these conditions exist:

1. A reportable illness or conditions, as specified in Part 4605.7040, that the commissioner of health determine to be contagious and a physician has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk of others.
2. Chicken pox, until child is no longer infectious or lesions are crusted over.
3. Vomited since admission that day.
4. Has had abnormally loose stools since admissions that day.
5. Has contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye.
6. Has a bacterial infection such as streptococcal pharyngitis or impetigo and has not completed 24 hours of antimicrobial therapy.
7. Has unexplained lethargy.

8. Has lice, ringworm or scabies that is untreated and contagious to others.
9. Has a 100 degree Fahrenheit or higher temperature of undiagnosed origin before fever reducing medication is given.
10. Has an undiagnosed rash or a rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition.
11. Has significant respiratory distress.
12. Is not able to participate in the classroom/program activities with reasonable comfort.
13. Requires more care than the program staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in class.

**\*\* Child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. \*\***

**When your child is sick, please call The Discovery Center Main Office 651-762-7884 OR the office of where your child is enrolled:**

- |                                     |  |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| • Annunciation<br>612-289-6823      | Lutheran)<br>651-728-1416              | • St. Helena<br>Office 612-729-9301 |
| • Calvin Christian<br>612-790-2541  | • Notre Dame<br>Office<br>952-358-3500 | • St. Joseph Office<br>952-442-4500 |
| • Faith Lutheran<br>612-300-7767    | • Our Savior's<br>651-439-5704<br>x25  | • St. Jude's<br>612-757-2550        |
| • Faithful<br>Shepherd 651-262-2897 | • Presentation<br>651-770-3093         | • Trinity<br>651-232-1264           |
| • Redeemer<br>612-222-5655          | • St. Bart's Office<br>952-473-6189    |                                     |
| • Community of<br>Grace (First      |  |                                     |

## 2. Allergies

The Discovery Center is a peanut-aware environment and strives to avoid peanut-butter and whole peanuts/tree-nuts in all food or beverage products purchased for the program. However, we are in facilities that are used by other groups and/or the public. Some students also bring bag lunches from home. The Discovery Center staff removes any food items from home that may contain peanut butter or whole peanut/tree-nuts, but since original packaging is not available to check, staff cannot ensure items from home may have tree-nut exposure. Therefore, The Discovery Center cannot be held liable for peanut-containing products that may be left in the building or are sent in bag lunches.

If a student has a life-threatening food allergy, the classroom lead teacher will notify all classmate families of the presence of a severe food allergy. The lead teacher and site-director will check labels of all foods purchased for safety before purchasing. The teaching team will participate in any additional training or information sessions regarding a child's care (ie: epi-pen) at the request of the parents.

Areas used by children who have allergies to dust mites or to components of furnishings will be maintained by the program according to recommendations of the program Health Consultant.

## **Student Allergies**

- Parents/Guardians will notify the center of student allergies via the following forms:
  - Health Care Summary (Student File Packet)
  - Emergency Card (Student File Packet)
  - Special Health Needs / Allergy Action Plan Form (from Classroom Teacher)
  - Individual Child Care Program Plan- Allergies (ICCPP-Allergies)  
(from Main Office/Site-Director)

A student's allergy information will be reviewed at least annually or following any changes made to the allergy-related plan by the Site-Director.

- Each staff person who is responsible for carrying out the individual child care program plan will be updated by the Site-Director.
- Responsible staff persons will sign the ICCPP when they are notified of the change.
  - A child's allergy information will be available at all times; On-Site (child's file; posted in classroom; classroom/extended care/playground copies of emergency cards) and carried off-site during fieldtrips (classroom emergency cards taken with off-site/first aid bag)
  - A child's allergy information is also posted/available to the staff person in the area where food is prepared and served to the child.
  - The Discovery Center will contact the child's parent/guardian as soon as possible in any instance of exposure or allergic reaction that requires medication or medical intervention. (As a licensed program, The Discovery Center must call emergency medical services when epinephrine is administered to a child in our care.)

### **3. Under-Immunized Policy**

When a child is under-immunized due to medical conditions or family's beliefs, The Discovery Center will notify the parents when/if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program and exclude under-immunized children from The Discovery Center when acute signs of illness are present, as listed under "Exclusion from the Program".

When a child is under-immunized due to the immunization schedule being not up-to-date, The Discovery Center will notify parents about missing immunizations and advice for documentation on medical conditions, family beliefs, or request documentation of scheduled appointment for immunizations.

### **4. Personal Hygiene/Hand Washing**

Children and staff members will wash their hands with soap and water when hand washing would reduce risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and others.

Hands are washed:

- Upon arrival at school; before and after eating; after toileting/diapering; before preparing or serving foods; after handling any raw food that requires cooking; after playing in water shared by two or more people; handling pets and other animals, or materials that may be contaminated by contact with animals.

Adults also wash their hands:

- Before and after feeding a child; before and after administering medication; after assisting a child with toileting and after handling garbage or cleaning

Disposable gloves are available throughout the school. Wet or soiled clothing will be changed promptly using the items in the child's backpack provided by home. Health guidelines prohibit us from washing out clothing that contains blood or feces. The school maintains a supply of extra clothing to use if there is not a change of clothes in the backpack. The Discovery Center clothing should be laundered and returned the following school day.

## **5. Communal Water Policy**

We have a sensory table in the classroom for children to stand and play. During sensory play, children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the sensory table to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers as well as the water table. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

## **6. Skin Protection Policy**

To protect against cold, heat, sun injury and insect-borne disease, The Discovery Center ensures that children are wearing clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather; children have the opportunity to play in the shade and are wearing sun-protective clothing and/or applied skin protection. Permission for staff to apply sunscreen is included in the Permission Form in the student file packet.

## **7. Biting Policy and Information**

Biting is a normal state of development for young children who are teething and are still developing language skills. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common in children under the age of three. The Discovery Center provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative play, respect for others and non-aggressive problem solving between children.

Young children/toddlers bite for a variety of reasons: sensory exploration, panic, crowding, seeking attention, or an intense desire for a toy. The Discovery Center teachers plan activities and supervise carefully in order for biting not to happen. There are times, however, when a teacher cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite.

### **BITING POLICY:**

1. The bitten child is consoled and the area is washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising.
2. With the teacher's help, the child who bit helps the hurt child feel better by offering "I'm sorry" words, a hug, or help to get the ice/water. (Teachers help older children through a conversation about what happened and what choices can be made in the future.)
3. A written incident report is given to the parents of both children involved when they are picked up that day. (Due to confidentiality, children's names are not used/released.)
4. If a child bites two or more times total, the teacher will call parents/emergency contacts to come pick up the child. The teacher will also set up a time to meet with parents in person to talk through circumstances and next steps. The safety and well-being of all children is priority.

## **8. Toileting Procedures & Toilet Training Policy**

During the school year we know that many children will show signs of readiness for toilet training. In order to help you with the transition from diapers to toilet training, we ask that parents help us by following some simple steps.

### **Signs of Readiness...**

- Parents will know their child is ready to wear underwear to school when they are able to stay dry for at least two hours.
- Until that time, we ask that children be sent to school in pull-ups.

### **Once wearing underwear please...**

- Dress your child in easy to remove clothing to help them be successful and independent. Tights, buttons, snaps, zippers and overalls can be frustrating for little hands
- Have your child use the bathroom upon arrival at The Discovery Center.
- Please let staff know if you would like them to remind your child to use the bathroom halfway through class.

The Discovery Center 3 to 5 year old classrooms are not equipped with a changing table, so it is difficult to change them should children have a bowel movement.

## **9. TOILETING ACCIDENT POLICY:**

If a Discovery or Kinderstart student has 3 bowel movement or urine accidents at school, within a 2 week period, staff will meet with the parents to discuss a different time of day to attend school that doesn't interfere with their biological clock. If this does not help, the child will need to play at home until independent with the use of the toilet. We look forward to working with you as your child moves toward more independence.

## **10. Diapering**

Children who are in diapers or pull-ups will be checked approximately two times per 2 1/2 hours and will be given attention in between times as needed. Our public health nurse / physician assistant carefully oversees our diapering procedures. Only disposable diapers are accepted at our schools.

## **C. Emergency Preparedness**

All teachers and assistants are required to maintain current first aid and CPR certification. Training sessions are conducted by certified instructors who meet the Department of Human Services requirements. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit and staff members are instructed as to correct usage of the contents. The Discovery Center conducts monthly fire drills, which are timed and logged. Tornado drills are also practiced and logged April through September.

### **1. Hazards**

The Discovery Center protects children and adults from hazards including:

- Electrical shock, burns or scalding
- Tripping or falling: floor coverings are secure to keep staff and children from tripping or slipping
- This program excludes baby walkers

- Areas in the building or classroom that have been recently painted, carpeted, tiled, or otherwise renovated are ventilated before they can be used by children.
- Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, pails and water tables.
- The Discovery Center is a smoke-free facility and prohibits the use of firearms and other significant hazards that post risks to children and adults.
- Written procedures are in place to protect children and adults from environmental hazards such as hair pollution, lead, and asbestos, according to public health requirements.

*The Discovery Center maintains the facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact and inhalation. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques are used for least hazardous means to control pests and unwanted vegetation are used.*

## **2. Missing Child Policy**

- If a teacher is alone, children will be taken with to walk and find assistance.
- If additional staff are available, an adult will be asked to stand at each outside door to watch for the missing child.
- Staff will conduct a thorough search of the building and grounds before police are contacted.
- If a child is not found within five to 10 minutes, the police will be called and parents contacted.

## **3. Plan for Emergency Shelter**

Emergency shelter for children will be provided under the direction of the Director, in cooperation with local authorities.

## **4. Emergency/Accident Procedure**

Every child will participate in periodic fire and tornado drills at school. Parents are encouraged to discuss the experience with the child. In the event of a real disaster, we urge the parents to follow these procedures:

1. DO NOT call or come to your child's school or our Main Office. We will contact parents when able.
2. Community disasters will be reported on the radio.
3. Be assured the center personnel are giving children any necessary care.
4. The safest place in a disaster is to remain off the streets and out of the way of any rescue mission.

## **5. Fire Evacuation**

Children will be taken out of the environment by means of the nearest exits and taken to a central meeting spot. Primary exits to outdoors are located throughout each of the buildings. There are also two exits located in each classroom. Fire Department will be contacted: 911

## 6. Tornadoes

In case of a tornado emergency, the staff will make sure all children are accounted for and move them to the designated shelter areas. The children will be taught to crouch down, head towards the wall with their hands over their heads.

## 7. Emergency Closings

**EMERGENCY CLOSING:** i.e., broken or frozen water pipes, The Discovery Center will follow the local school district announcements made on WCCO radio beginning at 6:30 a.m. or parents will be notified by phone.

**WEATHER:** The Discovery Center will follow the local public school district for the first 3 closure days (cold or snow). Additional closure days for SNOW, The Discovery Center will follow the local public school due to travel safety for families and staff. Additional closure days for COLD, The Discovery Center will open regional sites to accommodate childcare needs.

## D. General Information

### 1. Items from Home

**Discovery & Kinderstart-** Each week two (2) children are given a sharing bag to take home. The children may choose a favorite toy, book, etc. to put in the bag and bring back the following class day to show the class. We ask that you please limit it to one (1) item, unless it goes with something else. Please leave all other toys at home.

**Explorers-** Children in our Explorers classes are welcome to bring favorite comfort items from home, to help with separation and transition times. (blankets; stuffed animals; pacifiers; dolls, etc.)

### 2. Lost and Found

There is a lost and found located near the sign-in tables. Feel free to check it if you have misplaced an item. Please let the staff know if you cannot locate something. We will do our best to find it. We have a good track record of finding lost things, if they have been labeled with the child's name.

### 3. Ideas for Parent/Child Separation

Children handle separation from their parents in different ways. You know your child best and we will work with you to make the transition into The Discovery Center a smooth one. Visiting the center at least once with your child prior to the first day is recommended.

On your child's very first day, we recommend that you:

- Inform your child of what your plans are. Tell him or her that they are going to The Discovery Center and let him or her know where you will be while they are at school. Let him or her know when you will be back.
- Bring your child to a staff person and share whatever information is necessary.
- Make the break! Give your child a hug and a kiss with a work of encouragement. They will pick up on your confidence and comfort level.
- If you want an The Discovery Center teacher to step in and help with your departure, please let us know. We are willing to help, but do not want to intrude.
- Feel free to call the school after you arrive at your destination so that you can check on how the adjustment is going.

## 4. Outside Days

During the winter months, the children go out on designate days; weather permitting. The temperature must be 10 degrees above zero with wind chill for us to go outside. Please send outdoor play clothing on those play days. Teacher call for weather updates and temperatures: #763-512-1111

\* Children usually play on the playground but, will, on occasion go sliding on the hills. Children are supervised at all times and teachers stay near equipment where injury could occur.

## 5. Parent/Teacher Organization

Preschool parents will be part of the Notre Dame Academy Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO). The primary goal of this parent-led group is to support classroom teachers and assist with family events and fundraising efforts. Watch for information sent throughout the school year.

## 6. Children's Arrival

Our classroom doors officially open 5 minutes prior to the beginning of each class.

1. Sign-In your child by initialing next to your child's name at the Sign-In Table outside the classroom.
2. Your child participates in Sign-In by locating their picture/name card on the table and placing it in the pocket chart near the sign-in table.
3. Please help your child wash their hands upon entering the classroom, before playing.
4. Connect with one of your child's teachers before leaving. You are welcome to look around the room with your child, or do a quick game or activity together!

## 7. Transportation

Parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from The Discovery Center. We ask that parents sign their child in and walk the child to the class room door and make sure a Discovery Center teacher knows that they have arrived. This will insure the safety of all the children.

## 8. Drop-Off and Dismissal

Children may be dropped off or picked up from their classrooms or from the playground, and need to sign them in and out with a staff member before parents' departure.

Please make every effort to drop-off and pick-up your child to and from class in a timely fashion following the reserved/confirmed attendance schedule from Admissions. The program cannot guarantee there are enough staff scheduled to accommodate early-drop off or late-pick up availability without prior approval.

Concerning late pick-ups, children quickly become concerned while waiting. Also, teachers have a limited amount of time to prepare the room for their next class.

**Early Drop-Off / Late Pick-Up Fee:** If parents consistently drop-off or pick up their child(ren), outside of the reserved/confirmed attendance schedule they will be assessed a fee of:

\* \$25.00 first 10 minutes and \$1.00/minute per child thereafter.

\* At the discretion of the site-director, a family may lose the privilege of using the extended care program if early-drop off/late-pick up becomes a repeated issue.

## **9. Release of Children** Security check for picking up children:

1. Each child has file contains information as to which person(s) are allowed to pick up a child. People who are unfamiliar to staff will be asked to show picture identification and teachers will check this with the child. If their name is not on the child's file, a parent or guardian will be called for approval for their child to be released to this individual. Permission by parent or guardian may be given over the phone or written on the child's daily record sheet.
2. If anyone new comes to pick up the child, (other than the person authorized), the staff will ask for picture identification. A child may never leave school without parent approval. If an unauthorized person comes to pick up a child and the parent cannot be reached by phone, the child will not be released. Staff will ask for a picture of the person, contact the child's parents, and inform the Director of the person's name and address.
3. Children will not be released to persons incapacitated or who are suspected of abuse attempts. When a child's safety is in question, the child's parents will be called. If the incapacitated suspected person resists, the teacher/Director will call the police. Parents will also be contacted. If a child is not picked up and parent(s)/guardian, or other contacts listed on the emergency card, cannot be reached, the police may be called to pick up the child.

## **10. Special Need Students**

Students with special needs may be assessed by the Early Education Assessment Team from the district in which they live. The Discovery Center staff will be a part of that process as long as families request it.

## **11. The Discovery Center Board of Directors**

The Discovery Center is a non-profit organization, governed by a Board of Directors. The Board is made up of one representative from each of the partner churches/schools plus one community member-at-large who oversee the financial and policy decisions of The Discovery Center. The Board of Directors meets quarterly throughout the year. The Discovery Center Executive Director serves on the Board as a non-voting member.

## **12. Annual Program Fundraiser Commitment**

Lake Area Discovery Center is a non-profit organization, which means that no state or federal taxes are paid on an annual basis. In order to maintain that non-profit status, The Discovery Center must show the federal government that:

1. The Discovery Center provides tuition assistance for families in need.
2. The Discovery Center has a nondiscriminatory policy whereby no child is denied the opportunity to attend the program based on color, race or national/ethnic origin.
3. The Discovery Center is an equal opportunity employer.
4. The Discovery Center holds an annual fundraiser.

The Discovery Center Board of Directors has chosen to hold an annual Bike-a-thon/Fall Festival or to join the Partnered School Fundraising Event to fulfill its federal government fundraising commitment. This money will be used for both tuition assistance and curriculum development, so every child benefits from the donations, and helps to "bridge the gap" between tuition and the classroom/curriculum enrichment as well as licensing/accreditation fees that help maintain high-quality programming.

**Each family enrolled in The Discovery Center is committed to \$90/child toward The Discovery Center Fundraiser. There are two options to choose from to fulfill this commitment:**

1. Make a \$90.00/child donation paid via the Student Tuition Account in Procure in October. (tax-deductible)
2. Opt for a tuition increase of \$10.00/month (total \$90.00/child). Increase will be reflected and paid via the Student Tuition Account in Procure.

## **E. Payment Policies**

### **1. Tuition and Fees**

Registration, Tuition and Fee rates and information may be requested from The Discovery Center Main Office by emailing [office@ladcfamilies.org](mailto:office@ladcfamilies.org), or calling 651-762-7884 to have updated electronic tuition rates emailed directly to you.

### **2. First Payment**

Three payment schedules are available to families:

**9 month schedule**—The Ala Carte / Monthly Tuition schedule is paid one month ahead AUGUST through APRIL, for a total of 9 monthly tuition payments for the school year program (September through May).

**12 month schedule**—The total tuition is divided by 12 monthly payments. (September through May).

**39 weekly schedule**—The Inclusive / Weekly Tuition schedule is paid weekly, September through May for a total of 39 weeks of tuition during a full school year.

- **Vacation Vouchers (Inclusive Only)**: The Inclusive Tuition payments include two (2) weeks of vacation vouchers per year between September and May. Vacation time must be taken in blocks of at least one (1) week at a time. Vouchers have the value of the weekly tuition rate and cannot be transferred to another school year.

Account Activity are available on your Procure Discovery Center Student Account.

### **3. The Discovery Center Federal Tax ID #41-1937239**

### **4. Tuition Payment Options**

Families may choose from 2 tuition payment type options

**Accounts un-paid for 15 days will result in the child will get to “play at home” until the account is paid in full.** This may result in a child losing their spot in class or having to re-enroll.

1. Automatic Withdrawal from Checking Account (.42/transaction.)
2. Auto-payment with Credit Card (A 3% service fee per transaction.)

### **5. Extended Care Program Payment Options**

Extended Care times that are reserved as a part of a student’s schedule will be figured and included with the Weekly or Monthly Tuition Payment. Drop-In Extended Care is paid via the Auto-Payment Authorization form, signed by the parent the day of drop in care. (A minimum of 24 hours is requested to check drop-in availability with the Site Director.)

### **6. Holidays and In-Service Days**

Families who pay the Inclusive Tuition Rate may attend the provided The Discovery Center childcare offered on In-Service Days, Conference Days, Spring/Winter Breaks and other calendared days at no additional cost. (Location of childcare will be announced if not enough students are scheduled for care on-site.)

### **7. Late Payment Fee**

All tuition payments, beginning in September, are due on the first of the month. A \$25.00 late fee will be assessed if payment is not received by the 15th.

If an account is not paid by the end of the month the parent will be notified by the site director that their child will get to “play at home” until the account is paid in full. This may result in a child losing their spot in class or having to re-enroll.

## **8. Late Payment Policy**

Families choosing to pay monthly by check will also be required to give a secondary payment option. If a tuition payment is not received in The Discovery Center Main Office by the 15th, parents will be sent an email letting them know that the secondary payment option will be activated within seven days.

## **9. Tuition Assistance**

The Discovery Center works hard to provide opportunities for all children to attend. If the tuition is cost prohibitive, families may apply for tuition assistance. Tuition assistance may also be available through partnered churches and schools. Families are eligible to receive only one form of financial assistance, whether that is a church-sponsored scholarship, The Discovery Center-sponsored assistance or County Assistance.

TO REQUEST A SCHOLARSHIP FORM, PLEASE CONTACT THE MAIN OFFICE  
[office@ladcfamilies.org](mailto:office@ladcfamilies.org)

## **10. Leave of Absence Policy**

Children who have a planned absence longer than 2 weeks during the school year, may have their spot held in the program by paying half of the tuition during the absence. If no payment is received, the spot will be released and the family may re-enroll with an additional registration fee (if a spot is still available).

## **11. Cancellations (Fall Registration)**

1. Full refund of the first tuition payment will be granted if notice to withdraw your child(ren) is received at the Main Office on or before August 15<sup>th</sup>.
2. Half refund of the first tuition payment will be granted if notice to withdraw your child(ren) is received at the Main Office after August 15<sup>th</sup> but before September 1<sup>st</sup>.

*No tuition refund will be granted if notice to withdraw your child(ren) is received at the Main Office on or after September 1<sup>st</sup>.*

*Mid-year withdrawals require a two week notice.*

## **12. Withdrawing from the Program or Reducing Days/Time Scheduled**

A two (2) week notice of withdrawal from the program prior to the child's last day is requested. This notice may be given verbally to the Director or in writing. If the notice of a withdrawal is not given, the parent(s) is requested to pay the child's tuition for the two (2) weeks following the child's last day.

Schedule change requests that result in reducing days or times a student attends will be assessed a \$25/update processing fee.

**Thank you for choosing The Discovery Center!**

**If you have any questions about the contents of the Parent Handbook,  
Student Account or Classroom/Program, please call or email  
The Discovery Center Main Office**

**651-762-7884**

**[office@ladcfamilies.org](mailto:office@ladcfamilies.org)**