

Discovery Woods School

Preschool Staff & Family Handbook

A Montessori-Inspired Program



**Discovery Woods
School**

Discovery Woods Preschool is a Certified Childcare Center

604 N 7th Street, Brainerd, MN 56401
218-828-8200

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

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Discovery Woods Preschool

Program Philosophy

Discovery Woods Preschool believes all children benefit from a high-quality early childhood program. The Discovery Woods Preschool program approach is based on the philosophy that:

- Children benefit from comprehensive and interdisciplinary programs.
- Children benefit from programs that honor personal growth and development by maximizing their strengths and unique experiences.
- Children benefit from programs that foster social relationships, self-regulation, and explicit teaching and modeling of academic skills.
- Children benefit from programs that welcome the involvement of families and community members.

Discovery Woods Preschool's school-year program operates 2 classrooms, with up to 20 preschool students aged 33 months to 5 years in each. The school year program operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 2:50 pm, with the option to extend the day in the school's Aftercare program. The summer preschool program operates 1 classroom with up to 20 preschool students aged 33 months to 5 years. The summer year program operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5 pm.

The supervision ratio is one teacher per ten students at all times. For this reason, the preschool program has one lead teacher and two assistant teachers working with the students at all times. Discovery Woods Preschool is a four-star-rated Parent Aware program. These programs create opportunities for families to access funding and scholarships and accept Child Care Assistance (CCAP), so our program can welcome a variety of families from different income backgrounds.

Discovery Woods Preschool uses Montessori materials and methods during the Great Period learning block. During the literacy block, the program incorporates evidence-based early literacy practices recommended in the LETRS Early Childhood Educators training manual. A daily academic read-aloud time for students builds background knowledge through vocabulary and topic exploration. Preschool students also have opportunities every day to discover the joy of reading during choice reading time. Math instruction cements foundational skills in preparation for the Kindergarten math curriculum and is incorporated into the designated math learning block. Students learn how a calendar and a clock work during a special learning time each day. Preschool students participate in two large-motor activities during the day, inside or outside, depending on the weather. Students experience social-emotional development guidance during morning meetings, circle time, and closing meetings.

Discovery Woods Preschool

Program Policies

Operation Information

School Year Preschool Program

School Calendar

Please see the school year calendar for Discovery Woods School in Appendix A

Payment Policy

The Discovery Woods Preschool calendar year runs from September through May. Tuition rates have been averaged over the nine-month school year to ensure they remain constant each month. As such, tuition rates do not drop during months with holidays or breaks. Tuition is due by the 15th day of each month. Tuition is considered late if payment arrangements have not been made by the end of the month. If tuition has not been arranged or paid by the end of the month, the child will not be able to attend the following month, and a late fee will be added.

Discovery Woods Preschool Tuition Schedule:

- Non-refundable one-time Registration Fee: \$50.00/family
- \$750/month for 5 full days per week (no part-time options)

Termination Policy

The Discovery Woods Preschool program expects students to be enrolled from the time of their admission until the end of the school year. The program requires a parent/guardian to provide a two-week advance notice if they wish to withdraw their child from the program. If withdrawal from Discovery Woods Preschool occurs in the middle of a month, the monthly tuition will be prorated for the number of days the child attends that month. If notice of termination is not given, the parent/guardian is still responsible for paying tuition for the entire month.

Attendance/Absence Policy

The success of the Discovery Woods Preschool program depends upon student attendance. If a child needs to be absent due to illness or other circumstances, please contact the front office before 8:00 am. The preschool program does not give discounts or refunds for days children do not attend. If a child needs to take a leave of absence for a month or more, the parent/guardian may discuss payment options with the administration.

Important times and procedures involving attendance include:

- School starts at 8:00 am and ends at 2:50 pm.
- Students will not be allowed into the building before 7:35 am.
- Students not in the classroom at 8:00 am will be counted as tardy. Tardy students must report to the office with their guardian to sign them in before heading to class.
 - If a child will be late and needs a school lunch, a call must be placed to the office before 8:30 am. Families should send a packed lunch to school if they are unable to call before this time.
- If the office does not hear from an absent child's parent/guardian by 9:00 am, the emergency contact will be called to verify the child's absence.
- If a child becomes ill or injured during the day, the school will contact the parent/guardian at one of the numbers provided on the **emergency form**.

School-year Drop-off Procedures

- School starts at **8:00 am**

- Drop-off is between 7:35 and 7:55 am. Students can not be in the building before 7:35 a.m.
 - Families pull up in front of the building at the 7th Street entrance.
- When dropping off in the morning, parents do not need to enter the building with their child. If entering the building, parents/guardians must stop in the office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass to be identified as a "safe" adult and sign out before leaving.

School-year Pick-up Procedures

- School ends at **2:50 pm**
 - Parents/guardians are not to pick up students before 2:50 unless the office has been contacted before pick-up time.
- Notice of **pickup changes** must be provided to the main office **no later than 1:30 PM** on the day of the change. Office staff will not accept changes after this time.
- Students wait in their designated area until they are called for pickup.
- For safety reasons, students will be dismissed when their vehicle pulls up to the sidewalk near the front door. Parents/guardians are to wait in their vehicle, taking their place in the line of cars.
 - If a parent/guardian plans to wait at the school doors to pick up their child(ren), they are to park farther from the front doors or on the opposite side of the street to allow pick-up traffic to flow.
- Students can only be released to adults included on the Emergency forms.
 - Parents/guardians will need to contact the school if anyone other than an approved adult will be picking up a student. Any person not on the emergency form who picks up a student must have identification for the student to be released.
- Children who are not picked up by 3:10 pm will be taken to Aftercare. Families will be billed for the days their child uses Aftercare.

Student Breakfast

DWS's school-year students may eat breakfast between 7:35 and 8:00. Students may order a school breakfast or bring their own. DWS encourages healthy eating; snacks are to be healthy and low in sugar and salt. Fresh fruits or vegetables are a good option, as are cheese, yogurt, hummus, and wheat crackers.

Student Lunch

DWS's school-year lunch program is provided on-site through a contract with Brainerd School District 181. The lunch menu is indicated on a monthly lunch calendar. Students may bring their own cold lunch from home or may order a hot lunch. A lunch count is taken daily upon arrival, and the lunch providers are notified of the number of meals to deliver. Students must arrive at school on time to order hot lunch. A call can be placed for a hot lunch if a child will be late for school.

Please call ISD 181 **(218) 454-6939** with questions about a child's breakfast/lunch account or payments. When leaving a message, please include your name and number.

IMPORTANT!

*Every DWS family **MUST** complete an application for educational benefits during the school year for the state's free and reduced-price lunch program. Return this application to the main office or send it to Brainerd ISD 181.*

Family Conferences

Conferences allow students to share the amazing work they have been doing with their families. Conferences also provide time for communication between parents/guardians and teachers. Although conferences are scheduled twice per school year for all students, a parent may request a conference at any time to discuss concerns about their child. If a parent is unable to attend a conference in person, a phone or virtual conference is an option. Parents/guardians of students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) are required to meet once a year with the special education team in addition to parent-teacher conferences.

Report Cards & JMC

For the school-year program, progress reports will be sent to parents electronically twice per year at the end of each semester. These reports provide information about how a child is performing academically and socially/emotionally. DWS uses a student management system called JMC. Families will receive emails and text messages through this system. Report cards are created and sent through this system

Newsletters & Events

DWS will send a monthly school newsletter highlighting events and information, such as the lunch menu and other general reminders. Teachers will also send a classroom newsletter at least monthly to update families about happenings in each student's classroom. Throughout the year, DWS offers family engagement opportunities like student showcases at the end of each semester, a literacy and math night, field trips, Scholastic book fairs, and other classroom-specific activities.

Summer Preschool Program

Enrollment & Tuition

Students aged 33 months to age 5 (before Kindergarten) are welcome to enroll in the Discovery Woods School (DWS) Summer Preschool Program. Current DWS preschool children and those enrolled in the fall will have priority for summer enrollment; however, any child who meets the program requirements is welcome. The program will be limited to the first 20 students. Although students who enroll are encouraged to be potty-trained or actively working on potty training, the program accepts students who are not yet fully potty-trained.

DWS does not require an application fee for preschool enrollment. Tuition is due on Monday of each week. If tuition has not been arranged or paid by the end of the week, the child will not be able to attend the following week, and a late fee of \$25 will be added.

Summer Preschool Tuition Schedule:

The Discovery Woods Summer Preschool program runs from June through August*.

Schedule	Price per Week	Hours of Care
M-F	\$200	8 am – 5:00 pm

*A Summer preschool calendar will be sent out to families upon acceptance into the program.

Pick-up and Termination Policy

Timely pickup is required. Late pickups disrupt staff schedules and impact program operations. It is understood that unforeseen circumstances may arise; however, families must communicate with preschool staff if they anticipate being late. A late fee of \$20 will be charged, plus \$1 for every 1 minute past the scheduled pickup time of 5:00 p.m. Repeated late pickups may result in removal from the program.

The DWS Preschool program expects students to be enrolled from the time of their admission until the end of the summer program. The program requires a two-week advanced notice if a student withdraws from the program. If a student withdraws from DWS Summer Preschool, payments are required during the withdrawal period. If notice of termination is not given, the parent/guardian is still responsible for paying tuition for the entire week, and any payments already made will not be reimbursed.

Absence Policy

If a child needs to be absent due to illness or other circumstances, please contact the main office before 8:00 am. The preschool program does not give discounts or refunds for days children do not attend. If a child needs to take a leave of absence for more than two weeks, the parent/guardian may discuss payment options with the administration.

Summer Drop-off Procedures

- The summer program starts at **8:00 am**

- Drop-off is between 7:30 and 8 am. Students will not be allowed into the building before 7:30 am.
 - Pull up in front of the building at the 7th Street entrance.
 - A staff member will be at the door to greet children.
- When dropping off in the morning, parents do not need to enter the building with their child. If entering the building, parents/guardians must stop in the office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass to be identified as a "safe" adult and sign out before leaving.

Summer Pick-up Procedures

- The summer program ends at **5 pm**
 - Please arrange with the office staff and preschool lead if a child needs to be picked up early.
- Students can only be released to adults included on the Emergency forms.
 - Parents/guardians will need to contact the school if anyone other than an approved adult will be picking up a student. Any person not on the emergency form who picks up a student must have identification for the student to be released.
- If picking up after 1:30 pm and students are not outside in the playground, please call the Preschool summer phone at 218-820-6958, and a staff member will walk your child out to you. If you are picking up your student from the playground outside, PLEASE check out with a staff member before leaving with your child.
- If a student is not picked up by 5 pm, late fees will be applied

Student Meals

Summer program meals are dependent on availability through ISD 181's food program and vary from year to year. Please check with the Discovery Woods School main office for more information about breakfast and lunch availability for the summer preschool program.

School Year & Summer Preschool Program Information

Brightwheel

When starting our preschool program, all preschool families are automatically enrolled in Brightwheel. Discovery Woods School uses Brightwheel as the primary billing platform for preschool families. Through Brightwheel, families can view invoices and make tuition payments. Families are expected to keep their Brightwheel account active and ensure payment information is kept current.

Pathway Early Learning Scholarships & CCAP

Discovery Woods School accepts Pathway I, Pathway II, and the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to help eligible families with preschool tuition costs. Families are responsible for completing and maintaining all required applications, renewals, and documentation to remain eligible for funding. Pathway I and Pathway II applications are available in the school office. Any tuition balance not covered by scholarships or CCAP funding remains the responsibility of the family. Families with questions about eligibility or who need assistance with the application process are encouraged to contact the school office. We are happy to help guide families through the application process whenever possible.

School Parking

Discovery Woods School creates a learning environment that is safe for every child, family member, staff member, and guest. To help maintain safety:

- Remember to park in designated parking areas
- Reduce speed when driving through the parking lot/school zone and watch for children
- Make sure children do not open the doors of the vehicle before coming to a complete stop
- Pull as close to the curb as possible during drop-off and pick-up
- Make sure children exit on the sidewalk side of the vehicle
- Be aware that buses use the south side of the building; do not park or drop off students on that side

Transportation

DWS does not transport preschool students to and from the program. The preschool program is a

parent/guardian pick-up and drop-off program. For field trips, Brainerd Public Schools (ISD 181) or Crosby Public Schools provides bus transportation for students attending the Discovery Woods PreK or K-6 school program.

Please remember to keep the school informed regarding any changes to the list of names, phone numbers, etc., of individuals who are allowed to pick up or visit a student. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to notify the office promptly of any changes. If there is a court order denying someone contact with a child, a copy of this order must be provided to the office.

Visiting/Volunteering at the School

Family Involvement

Discovery Woods School encourages family involvement.

- Families play an integral role in assisting with student learning.
- Families are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school.
- Families are full partners in a child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making at the school

Visitors

DWS welcomes visitors throughout the school day. The term "visitors" includes all volunteers, parents or guardians, and community members. As a school safety measure, all visitors to classrooms must be pre-approved and follow the following protocols:

- All visitors must have a specific destination for their visit. Administrative staff reserves the right to deny entrance to visitors with no specific purpose or destination for their visit.
- All visitors entering beyond the main office must be prepared to show a driver's license or a valid state-issued ID for verification.
- All visitors must sign in at the main office immediately upon arrival and sign out before exiting the building. Visitors may drop off items in the main office and leave the building.
- All visitors must wear a name tag or visitor's badge while in the building. This will identify visitors to the students and staff members.
- Adult visitors are advised to use adult/staff restroom facilities.
- All visitors/staff/volunteers are expected to observe the policies and procedures in the school's family handbook, a copy of which will be provided to the volunteer upon request.
- For the privacy of students and staff, cell phones, cameras, and recording devices may not be used in or near classrooms. The use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, marijuana, or other controlled substances is prohibited.
- Possession or carrying of knives, firearms, or any other weapon is prohibited.
- Abusive language and/or conduct endangering the health and safety of students, staff, and other volunteers is prohibited.
- All Board of Directors policies, administrative guidelines, and school rules governing adult and student conduct apply to visitors in our building.

Visitor Meals during the School Year

Family members can eat lunch with a student, as long as they have made arrangements with the office. If a visitor plans to eat lunch provided by the school, they must notify the office **before 8:30 a.m.** on the day of the visit. The cost of an adult meal is \$5.05 and can be paid in the office. Visitors should have the correct amount of cash or pay by check.

Parent Contact Information

The school makes every effort to keep current student files for emergencies, but we ask for families' cooperation to ensure information is up to date. ANY time there is a change in a child's home address, phone number, parent's cell phone number, work number, custody information, etc. Please inform the office immediately to ensure your emergency information is up to date.

Background Checks

We conduct background checks on volunteers and staff as required by law. This does include board members. (There will not be a charge to the volunteer.)

Keeping the Building & Premises Free of Hazards

DWS will ensure that all classrooms are clean and materials are in good repair by checking that furniture and equipment are structurally sound and appropriate to the age and size of the students who use the area. Hazardous items, including but not limited to sharp objects, medications, cleaning supplies, poisonous plants, and chemicals, will be kept out of children's reach. When handling and disposing of bodily fluids and other potentially infectious materials, staff must wear gloves, disinfect surfaces, and dispose of bodily fluids in a securely sealed plastic bag.

Communication

The staff at DWS is here to ensure the safety and well-being of the students. Families and staff can work together so each student reaches their full potential within the school. It is helpful for staff members working with students when families provide any relevant information that will help guide positive working relationships with the student. Staff supports the work of parents or guardians, and parents support the work of the educators. Several ways for parents to stay connected and updated about their children and school events throughout the school year include the following:

Parent/Guardian Grievance Procedure

DWS strives to provide a quality environment that supports the child and works with the family to meet individual needs. The staff and school board wish to ensure that children and families feel that a quality program is being delivered. Thus, families are asked to let us know when they feel the program has not met their needs. DWS wishes to address any concerns that may arise with parents or families. All concerns are taken seriously. To address and resolve grievances regarding the program, the following procedure has been established:

- First, parents with concerns about school policies, administration, educational methods, the facility, or equipment should address grievances with the School Director. The School Director will schedule a meeting with the parent as soon as possible. At the meeting, the group will discuss a possible solution to the issue or conclude the topic.
- Second, parents who feel their concerns have not been adequately addressed may submit a written grievance to the DWS Board of Directors. Two members of the Board and the School Director will meet with the parents to seek a resolution to the problem, and communication will be made either verbally or in writing.

Board meetings

As a public charter school, DWS holds monthly board meetings to discuss school operations. Anyone is welcome to attend these meetings. These meetings allow parents to learn more about school operations and provide a platform to address ideas and concerns.

Health and Safety

Supervision

Staff must supervise each child at all times with a ratio of 1 adult per 10 preschool-age students. Staff is responsible for the ongoing activities of each student, appropriate visual or auditory awareness, physical proximity, and knowledge of activity requirements and each child's needs. Staff will intervene when necessary to ensure each child's safety.

Outdoor Play

Regular physical activity has important health benefits. Weather permitting, daily outdoor play will be provided. Going outside offers an environment that encourages exercise and a different setting. Being outside reduces the spread of infectious diseases. Programs may use an off-site community park/recreation area as their outdoor play space if it is within 4 blocks of the center.

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to send a child appropriate indoor/outdoor clothing.

Children will go outside even when...

- A. The weather is somewhat uncomfortable. In summer, Children should wear light-colored, lightweight sun-protective clothing and hats, sunscreen, play in shaded areas, and have drinking water available. In winter, children should wear warm, dry layers.
- B. It is lightly snowing or raining, or when snow is on the ground. Children should wear water-resistant clothing.
- C. They have a runny nose, a cold, or an ear infection unless there is a documented condition identified by their health care provider that can be worsened by cold, wind, or being outdoors.

First Aid & CPR

In the event of any accident or illness, trained staff will administer First Aid and/or CPR according to the guidelines of their training and OSHA. If it is a medical emergency, 911 will be called. As determined by the paramedics, the child will be transported to Essentia Health – St. Joseph's Medical Center. Parents will be responsible for the cost of any medical transportation. A parent/guardian or alternate emergency contact listed on a child's emergency contact information will be contacted as soon as possible. Parents are responsible for keeping emergency information up to date. This includes work, home/mobile phone numbers, and at least two people authorized to respond. These emergency contacts must be authorized to pick up the student. All staff members will receive all the state-mandated training for certified child care centers.

Immunizations

Upon enrollment, documentation of current immunizations must be submitted. For inadequately immunized or unimmunized children, a signed, notarized statement of parental objection to the immunization or a medical exemption is required. There may be children at the program who are not fully vaccinated.

Student Illness and Medication

If your child becomes ill and misses school, please make sure to do the following:

- DO call or email the office each day your child is home ill.
- DO NOT contact the classroom teacher about the illness; contact the office.
- DO NOT send illness information with a sibling

Medication Guidelines

Written permission from the child's parent/guardian must be obtained before medication is administered; written permission is required for prescription and nonprescription medications, diapering products, sunscreen lotion, and insect repellent. Medications (prescription and non-prescription) must be sent to school in the original container labeled with the student's first and last name, prescription number, directions for administering, and the doctor's name. Parents must bring all medication to the office, as students will not be allowed to keep or administer any medications to themselves at school. All prescription and non-prescription medications will be dispensed from the office, and all medicines, insect repellents, and diapering products will be stored according to directions on the original container. To ensure the safety of medication administration, the medicine will only be given to the child whose name is on the label, will not be given after the expiration date on the label, and will be returned to the child's parent/guardian or destroyed if unused. The administration of medication will be documented, and this documentation will include: the child's first and last name; name of the medication or prescription number, date, time, and dosage; name and signature of the person who administered the medication; and this documentation will be available to the child's parent or guardian.

Prescription Medication Form

- Must be signed by the physician.
- Form must be renewed annually.
- The container must be labeled by the pharmacy with the medication name, dose, and doctor's

Non-Prescription Medication Form

- Must be completed by the parent.
- Requires a signed note by the parent stating the medication's name, dosage requirement, and the student's name.

name.

- Inappropriate age or dose will not be given without a doctor's specific, signed order.
- Medication should be brought to the office by a parent.

- Inappropriate age or dose will not be given without a doctor's specific, signed order.
- The medication must be in the original, unopened container. A plastic bag or mixed medications will be returned.
- Will be given according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Exclusion of an Ill Child

Children should be kept home if they have any of the following symptoms or illnesses: MN Rule 3 9503.0080. Exclusion of Sick Children guidelines are as follows:

- Any child with a reportable illness or condition, as specified as contagious by the health department and/or a physician determines that sufficient treatment to reduce risk to others has not been received.
 - Chickenpox – until the child is no longer infectious or until the lesions are crusted over.
 - Vomiting – 1 or more times since admission that day.
 - Diarrhea – 3 or more abnormally loose stools since admission that day
 - Contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye.
 - Bacterial infection, such as strep throat or impetigo, has not completed 24 hours of antimicrobial therapy;
 - Lice, ringworm, or scabies that are untreated and contagious to others.
 - Fever: 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher axillary temperature of undiagnosed origin before fever-reducing medication is given.
- Undiagnosed rash or a rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition.
Significant respiratory distress; fast, difficult breathing, uncontrolled coughing, and/or wheezing.

If a child becomes ill or injured during the day, she/he will be kept isolated from the other children and under staff supervision. A parent or your authorized pick-up person will be notified and asked to pick up the child. The child will be monitored, and comfort measures will be provided. In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called, followed by the parent.

The school will post and give notice to parents/guardians if it is reported that a child has a contagious reportable disease – scabies, impetigo, ringworm, or chicken pox – as specified in Minnesota Rules, part 4605.7040. Parents are asked to notify the program within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, when a child is diagnosed with a contagious disease by a medical or dental provider. Contagious illnesses will be reported to all parents the same day the information is received. The staff will post a notice in a prominent place stating the illness, incubation period, early signs to watch for, and exclusion recommendations. Behavior or health issues that may affect the safety, health, and general well-being of other children may result in limited exclusion or termination of enrollment.

Dietary Guidelines

Birthday Treats

Discovery Woods School supports the celebration of birthdays as long as it does not disrupt the normal flow of the day. Please contact the main office to inquire about any dietary restrictions of students in the classroom before sending birthday treats. Some ideas to celebrate birthdays without food items include passing out a pencil for each student or donating/reading a special book to the class. **DWS is a peanut-free school.**

Allergies & Dietary Restrictions

Discovery Woods School collects allergy information from all families and maintains a student allergy list, which is posted privately in the main office and all classrooms. Families should check with the office or classroom teacher before sending any food into the school that may cause an allergic reaction for one or more students. Documentation regarding children with known allergies, special dietary needs, or nutritional needs must be

provided to the school by the child's parent or guardian. A Child Allergy Plan (CAP) will be developed for any allergy noted by the parent/guardian and/or physician and kept in each child's record. The CAP includes: a description of the allergy-specific triggers, avoidance techniques, symptoms of an allergic reaction, and procedures for responding to an allergic reaction (medication, dosages, and a doctor's contact information). The plan will be maintained in the child's file and updated annually or more often if any changes are made to allergy-related information.

- Staff will be informed about children with food allergies annually and will be updated if any changes are made to the CAP.
 - A record of staff training on students' CAPs will be kept in the school's main office.
- The program will contact the child's parent or legal guardian as soon as possible in any instance of exposure or allergic reaction that requires medication or medical intervention. Emergency medical services are always called when epinephrine is administered to a child.

Each child's CAP will be available at all times, including on-site, on field trips, and during transportation. Food allergy information will also be readily available to staff in the area where food is prepared and served to students. The CAP form is available in Appendix D.

Behavior and Discipline

Behavior Guidance

This behavior guidance policy is designed to:

- ★ Ensure that each child is provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior.
- ★ Promote the child's developmental level.
- ★ Redirect children and groups away from problems toward constructive activity to reduce conflict.
- ★ Teach children how to use acceptable alternatives to problem behavior to reduce conflict.
- ★ Protect the safety of children and staff members.
- ★ Provide immediate and directly related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior.

Young children need to be taught appropriate behaviors. Preschoolers begin to develop an understanding of rules and can comprehend when they have not been followed. A brief explanation of the unwanted behavior helps them to understand. The teacher will follow up by asking the child about his/her feelings and suggesting appropriate behavior. School-age children begin to develop a sense of personal responsibility and self-control, and will recognize the removal of privileges.

Positive behaviors are promoted in the following ways:

- ★ The classroom is designed to be developmentally appropriate.
- ★ The materials and activities sufficiently engage children of all age groups.
- ★ The staff model, encourage, and praise positive behaviors by using clear positive statements of behavior expectations.
- ★ The curriculum is designed to be engaging and age-appropriate for the children.
- ★ The staff appropriately supervises and interacts with the children.

Persistent Unacceptable Behavior

Discovery Woods Preschool will use the following procedures for behavior that is persistent and unacceptable and requires increased staff guidance and time. This behavior policy applies to all children in our care. If a child is not behaving appropriately, we will use the following positive guidance techniques:

- ★ Ignoring: Unless it is an unsafe behavior, ignoring a child who is trying to gain attention by acting out may be an appropriate response.
- ★ Redirection/ Distraction: This technique offers the child an alternative, such as suggesting a new activity or different material, encouraging independent play, or interacting with the child differently.
- ★ Discussion: Discussing with the child how their behavior is inappropriate and engaging with the child in other words or methods that would suggest a more appropriate response.
- ★ Reasonable Consequences: The staff may implement reasonable consequences, such as taking away an object if the child uses it to hit another child.

When staff observe a persistent unacceptable behavior, they will observe and record the behavior in writing.

If these positive guidance techniques are not effective, parents/guardians will be contacted with the following progressive guidance techniques:

- A. We will inform parents/guardians in writing what behaviors have been observed and what the staff has done to try to modify the behavior.
- B. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the school Director and Preschool Lead teacher will meet with parents/guardians to develop a written action plan to correct the behavior. We will seek input and agree on steps to attempt to modify the behavior. We may suggest involving outside resources to assist with the situation.
- C. If the inappropriate behavior persists, the child will need to take a day or two of behavioral leave of absence on the next scheduled day/s of care. (Standard attendance rates apply during behavioral leaves.)
- D. After returning to group care, if the child continues to act inappropriately, we may disenroll the child. We reserve the right to use these progressive guidance techniques at our discretion.

The school program's goal is to work together to achieve positive behavioral outcomes. Circumstances may arise in which the school may immediately disenroll a child whose behavior poses a health or safety risk to themselves, other children, or staff.

Prohibited Actions

Positive reinforcement is the best approach to discipline. The following actions are prohibited by or at the direction of a staff person:

1. Subjection of a child to corporal punishment, which includes, but is not limited to, rough handling, shoving, hair pulling, ear pulling, shaking, slapping, kicking, biting, pinching, hitting, and spanking.
2. Subjection of a child to emotional stress, which includes but is not limited to: Name-calling, ostracism, shaming, making derogatory remarks about a child or the child's family, and using language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child.
3. Separation of a child from the group except within the rule requirements (see below).
4. Punishments for toileting accidents.
5. Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a punishment for unacceptable behavior.
6. The use of physical restraint other than to physically hold a child, where containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm.
7. The use of prone or any contraindicated restraint will not be allowed under any circumstances.
 - A program must not use a prone restraint on any person receiving services in a program, except in the instance that a person rolls into a prone position during the restraint, the person must be restored to a non-prone position as quickly as possible.
 - A program must not implement a restraint on a person receiving services in a program in a way that is contraindicated for any of the person's known medical or psychological conditions.
8. The use of mechanical restraints, such as tying.

** All staff will be trained on all current prohibited actions.

Student Separation from Class

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

- Less intrusive methods to guide the child's behavior have been tried and have been ineffective.
- The child's behavior threatens the well-being of the child or other children in the program.

A child who requires separation from the group will:

- Remain within the classroom where the child can be seen and heard by a program staff person;
- The child's return to the group will be contingent on the child's stopping or bringing under control the behavior that precipitated the separation, and
- The child will be returned to the group as soon as the behavior that precipitated the separation stops.

All separations from the group will be noted on a daily log that includes the following:

- The child's name, the staff person's name, time, date, and information indicating less-intrusive methods were used to guide the child's behavior, and how the child's behavior continued to threaten the well-being of the child or other children in our 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 on the daily log. If a child is separated five times or more in one week or eight times or more in two weeks, the procedure outlined in the section titled "Persistent Unacceptable Behavior" will be followed.

Weather and Emergency Drills

Inclement Weather Communication

If weather conditions make it necessary to delay or cancel school, Discovery Woods School will follow the decisions made by Brainerd Public Schools (ISD 181) due to shared transportation services. Please keep the following in mind:

- Discovery Woods School will have a two-hour late start or close whenever Brainerd Public Schools (ISD 181) does.
- If there is a two-hour late start, students should not arrive before 9:35 a.m.
- School closure and delay announcements will be communicated through our normal communication channels as soon as we receive official notification from Brainerd Public Schools (ISD 181). Information may also be available through local news outlets, including WCCO-TV, and local radio stations.
- Please do not call or email the school to ask whether we will be closing early or delaying school. We will notify all families promptly once an official decision has been made.
- If someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up a student due to an early dismissal or school closure, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make those arrangements and notify the school office.

School Year Emergency Drills

Fire drills must be conducted five times per school year so students practice exiting the building safely. There are maps and exit plans in each room of the school to facilitate the rapid exit from the building. While taking care to explain the process to the children so they are not alarmed, staff and students treat these drills seriously. An annual tornado drill is held in April. Children are instructed on what to do during a tornado. Lock-down drills must be conducted five times during the school year. During lockdown drills, students move away from the locked classroom door, classroom lights are turned off, and students must sit quietly for a very short period. Although DWS keeps this a very low-stress practice drill and does **not** simulate active shooter situations or require that students arm or defend themselves in any way, parents may choose to opt out of the lockdown drills.

Other Information

Naps and Rest

Discovery Woods Preschool does not offer a nap time.

Classroom Animal Visitation

Service animals are permitted to accompany a person with disabilities on school property and school buses consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended, Minnesota Statute §256C, and Minnesota Statute §363A.19. A person who is training a dog to be a service dog shall also be permitted to have the dog on school property. No other animal meant for support will be allowed at school.

Field Trips

Parents or guardians must sign a permission form for field trips. If a class takes a field trip, information and permission slips will go out to families at least a week before the trip. The permission slip must be signed and returned to school for children to attend the field trip. Field trip transportation will adhere to state regulations. Students will be transported on a school bus or another appropriately equipped vehicle. At times, teachers need parent volunteers to chaperone field trips. Staff will take emergency information (emergency numbers for the child's parent, persons to be called if the parent can't be reached, and the child's doctors), a first-aid kit, and attendance records on all field trips.

Maltreatment of Minors Policy & Mandated Reporting

The policy of Discovery Woods School is to fully comply with Minn. Stat. §626.556, requiring school personnel to report suspected child neglect or physical or sexual abuse. A person mandated to report physical or sexual abuse or neglect must submit the information to the commissioner. It shall be a violation of this policy for any school personnel to fail to immediately report instances of child neglect or physical or sexual abuse when the school personnel knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years. Due to the length of the Maltreatment of Minors Policy, a copy can be requested from the office or found under "Family Information" on the school's website - www.discoverywoods.com. DWS must inform the commissioner within 24 hours of the death of a child in the school program or any injury to a child in the school program that requires treatment by a physician or advanced practice registered nurse. The school must use the "Child Care Center Serious Injury and Death Reporting Form" on the Certified Center web page.

Although every effort will be made to update the Preschool Family Handbook, the DWS Executive Director and the Board of Directors reserve the right, and have the discretion, to change any policies or procedures without notice, consultation, or publication, except as required by law. Discovery Woods School will communicate any changes to families as they occur. Please contact the school's Executive Director with any questions or concerns regarding the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.

Appendix A – School Year Calendar

Discovery Woods 2026-2027 Calendar

	S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
September		31	1	2	3	4	5	Teacher Workshop 8/31-9/3
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Labor Day 9/7 - No School
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	First Day of School 9/8
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
	27	28	29	30				
October					1	2	3	No School - Inservice Day 10/2
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	No School 10/15-10/16-EM Conference
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
November	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	No School - Inservice Day 11/5
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	No School - Thanksgiving
	29	30						
December			1	2	3	4	5	
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	No School - Winter Break 12/23-1/5
	27	28	29	30	31			
January					1	2		No School - Winter Break 12/24-1/5
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	No School - Inservice 1/4
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	School Resumes 1/5
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	Half Days 1/21 and 1/22
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	End of 1st Semester 1/22
	31							
February			1	2	3	4	5	
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	No School - Inservice 2/12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
	27	28						
March			1	2	3	4	5	
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	No School - Spring Break 3/8-3/12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	School Resumes 3/15
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	No School - Spring Holiday 3/26
	27	28	29	30	31			No School - Inservice/Snow Make up
April					1	2	3	
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	No School - Inservice/Snow Make up
	25	26	27	28	29	30		
May						1		
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	Last Preschool Day 5/28
	30	31						No School - Memorial Day 5/31
June			1	2	3	4	5	KinderFriend Day 6/2
								Half Days 6/3 & 6/4 (Last Day K-6th)
								End of 2nd Semester 6/4

Appendix B



604 N 7th Street
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-828-8200
www.discoverywoods.com

All DWS Students

Backpack
Headphones in a Ziploc bag (not preschool)
Kleenex
Cleaning wipes
Ticonderoga Sharpened Pencils
Colored pencils
Pencil top erasers(not preschool)
Washable markers
Whiteboard/Dry Erase markers (thin & thick)
Small Whiteboard/Dry-Erase erasers
Highlighters
Outside shoes/boots
Inside shoes for the classroom/PE class
Personal water bottle

Preschool

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies and/or:
Magic erasers
Playdough
Student Scissors
Hand Wipes/baby wipes
Washcloths or hand towels for spills
Watercolor Paints
Stamp Pads (washable)

Kindergarten

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies and/or:
Magic erasers
Playdough
Hand Wipes
2 composition notebooks
watercolors

1st grade

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies and/or:
Magic erasers
Playdough
2 composition notebooks
Hard pencil case

2-3 grade

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies and/or:
1 Composition notebook
2 folders

4th-6th grade

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies and/or:
2 composition notebooks
Calculator (TI-108 or the TI-30xs)
2 Folders

Aftercare: Crayola crayons, colored pencils, Play-Doh, beads, string, paints, watercolor paper, and paintbrushes.

Office: Packing tape, duct tape, pens, white and colored card stock, band-aids

****Please label with the student's name/initials: headphones, backpacks, shoes, water bottles, and jackets. All other supplies are SHARED within the classroom.***

Appendix C – Sample Schedules

Time	SCHOOL YEAR Classroom Activities
8 – 8:30 am	Morning Meeting
8:30 – 9 am	Montessori Works
9:00 – 9:30 am	Read Aloud/Snack
9:30 – 10 am	Large Motor
10:00 – 10:45 am	Literacy Learning Groups
10:45 – 11 am	Bathroom, Wash Hands, Transition Songs
11:00 – 11:45 am	Lunch & Transition
11:45 – 12:15 pm	Circle Time and Calendar/Clocks
12:15 – 1 pm	Math Learning Groups
1 – 1:30 pm	Large Motor
1:30–2 pm	Read Aloud/Snack
2–2:30 pm	Montessori & Choice Works
2:30–2:45 pm	Closing Meeting
2:45–2:50 pm	Pack Up & Dismissal

Time	SUMMER Classroom Activities
7:30–8:15	Arrival – breakfast, quiet work, bathroom
8:15 – 8:45 am	Morning Meeting
8:45 – 9:15 am	Recess
9:15 – 10 am	Literacy Stations
10 – 10:20 am	Bathroom break & Snack
10:20 – 11 am	Choice Reading & Free Choice Play
11:00– 11:30 am	Lunch
11:30 –12 pm	Calendar/Weather
12 –1 pm	Montessori Works
1 – 2 pm	Bathroom Breaks & Recess w/Water Play
2 – 2:30 pm	Math Stations
2:30– 3 pm	STEM
3 – 3:15 pm	Choice Reading & Snack
3:15 – 4 pm	Free Choice + Directed Drawing
4 – 5 pm	Bathroom Break + Outside Play

Child Allergy Plan (CAP)

Student Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Grade/Classroom: _____  Allergies & Triggers Known Allergies: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ Triggers: ☐ Ingestion ☐ Skin contact ☐ Airborne exposure ☐ Other: _____	Insert Child's Picture Here:
 Recognizable Symptoms of Allergic Reaction ☐ Hives ☐ Flushing or redness ☐ Swelling ☐ Breathing difficulty ☐ Other: _____	
 Avoidance Procedures ☐ Frequent hand washing after meals and activities ☐ Classroom free from allergen-containing products ☐ Separate seating during meal/snack times ☐ Avoid foods processed in facilities with listed allergens ☐ Other precautionary measures: _____	
 Emergency Action Plan For Mild Reaction: ☐ Administer antihistamine (e.g., Benadryl) per dosage guidelines For Severe Reaction / Anaphylaxis:	

- ☐ Administer EpiPen immediately
- ☐ Call 911
- ☐ Notify parents/guardians

Emergency Contacts: *Name, relationship, and phone number*

1. _____

2. _____

Medication Details

Medications Required: _____

Dosage Instructions: _____

Prescribing Physician: _____

Clinic Name: _____

Contact Number: _____

Authorization

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____