

Discovery Woods School

Preschool Family Handbook

A Montessori-Inspired Program



Discovery Woods

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

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

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School Staff Roster

Administration

Kara DeVriendt, Executive Director, office@discoverywoods.com
Brittney Buchite, Business Manager, business@discoverywoods.com
Lily Antoine, Administrative Assistant, mainoffice@discoverywoods.com

Teaching Staff

Emily Sipprell, 5th- 6th Grade Teacher
Ashley Gangestad, 2nd-3rd Grade Teacher
Chasidi Grant, K-1st Grade Teacher
Susan Kirby, Special Education Teacher
Jenni Blessing, Preschool Lead Teacher

Laiken Bladow, 4th Grade Teacher
Renee Huberty, K-1st Grade Teacher
Dawn Snook, Special Education Lead
Nick Forbes, 5th- 6th Grade Teacher

Educational Support Staff

Kaylyn Thompson, K-6 Behavior Interventionist
Tosha Nelson, Preschool Assistant
Ann Weber, Academic Interventionist
Cassie Brooks, Educational Assistant
Sara Prettyman, Educational Assistant
Karen Rock, Educational Assistant
Joslyn Plourde, Educational Assistant

Samantha Thompson, Educational Assistant
Kayla Johnson, Preschool Assistant
Emily Jolie, Academic Interventionist
Breanna Mott, Educational Assistant
Mary Doucette, Educational Assistant
Heidi Rock, Educational Assistant
Brittany Thurstin, Educational Assistant

Other Support Staff

Nate Oanes, Technology Coordinator
Rob Gartner, Janitor
Kori Sawyer, After Care

Michael Knakmuhs, Boiler Technician
Andriah Schwartz, After Care
Amber Kounkel, Office Assistant

AmeriCorps Tutors

Mary Morris, K-3 Math Corps
Maddie Anderson, Early Learning Corps
Terry Ely, K-3 Reading Corps

School Board Roster

Emma Needham	Chair/Parent
Dawn Snook	Vice Chair/Teacher
Ashley Gangestad	Secretary/Parent
Rebekah Kent-Ehlebracht	Treasurer/Community Member
Matt Hastert	Member/Parent
Denise Belden	Member/Parent
Melina Kramer	Member/Parent
Chasidi Grant	Member/Teacher
Kara DeVriendt	Ex-Officio/Executive Director

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 programs that are comprehensive and interdisciplinary.
- 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, guide self-regulation, and offer explicit teaching and modeling of academic skills.
- Children benefit from programs that welcome families, as well as members of the community, to be involved.

Discovery Woods Preschool operates with up to 20 preschool students aged 33 months to 5 years. The program operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 2:55 pm for full-day students and 8:00 am to 11:30 am for half-day students. Parents have three enrollment options, including 5 mornings, 3 full days, or 5 full days.

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 Parent Aware four-star rated program and participates in Voluntary Prekindergarten through the state of Minnesota; these programs open up the opportunity for families to access funding and scholarships so that 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 academically-focused 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; additionally, students learn how a calendar and clock work during a special learning time each day. Preschool students have two large motor times during the day, which may occur 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 Calendar

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

Safety and Student Arrival/Dismissal

Morning Procedures:

- School starts at **8:00 am**
- Drop-off is between 7:35 - 7:55 am. Students can not be in the building before 7:35 a.m.
 - When dropping a student off at school in the morning, families may 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 into the office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass to be identified as a "safe" adult, and sign out before leaving the building.

Afternoon Procedures:

- School ends at **2:50 pm**
 - Parents/guardians are not to pick up students before 2:50 unless the office has been contacted prior to 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 is coming to the doors of the building 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 may only be released to adults who are included on the Emergency forms.
- Parents/guardians will need to contact the school if anyone other than someone approved for pick-up 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 After Care. Families will be billed for the days their child uses After Care.

Please remember to keep the school informed about any changes to the list of names, phone numbers, etc. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to notify the office of all changes promptly. If at any time a new person needs to be added to a student's pickup list, it must be done in person. The school cannot make changes to an emergency list with a phone call to the office. If there is a court order denying someone contact with a child, a copy must be provided to the office.

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

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/guardians, community members, etc. 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 reserve 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 choose to 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.
- If volunteering in buildings, an annual criminal history background check must be completed prior to volunteering each year. Once volunteers have completed the background check process, they are placed on an "approved volunteer list" within the school.
- 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 are prohibited.
- All Board of Directors policies, administrative guidelines, and school rules governing adult and student conduct apply to visitors in our building.

Visitor Meals

Family members can eat lunch with a student, as long as they have made arrangements with the office **before 8:30 a.m.** on the day they will be visiting. Visitors will need to inform the office about how many extra lunches to order, whether they will be for adults or children, and with whom they will be eating. The cost of an adult meal is \$4.10 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 try to keep student files current for emergencies, but we ask for families' cooperation in doing this. ANY time there is a change in a child's home address, phone number, parent cell

phone number, work number, custody information, etc., please inform the office immediately. Do not call or email the teacher; make sure to speak with someone in the office to ensure your information is updated in case of any emergency.

Background Searches

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

Attendance Policies

DWS emphasizes the significance of good attendance on school success. Discovery Woods School defines good attendance as attending at least 96% of the school year. Regular school attendance is an important ingredient for a successful education. Minnesota law requires students to attend school.

General Guidelines for attendance include the following:

- If a child is going to be tardy or absent from school, the parent or guardian must contact the office at (218) 828-8200 between 7:30 am and 8:00 am. In the event that the phone call is not answered, families should leave a voicemail.
 - Do not email or send this information with a sibling.
 - Do not contact the classroom teacher.
- Any absence or tardiness will remain unexcused if the school does not hear from a parent or guardian.
- An illness causing 3 or more days of absence from school requires a doctor's note upon the student's return.

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 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**.

Excused Absences Include

- Student Illness - A doctor's note must be provided after 3 consecutive days' absence
- Medical/Dental appointment
- Serious illness in the student's immediate family.
- Significant family events, such as a death in the student's immediate family.
- Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action.
- Religious instruction not to exceed 3 hours a week, or as agreed upon by the parent and the school district.
- Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
- Student under suspension.

Unexcused Absences Include

- Any time parents/guardians do not call the office to report their child's absence, or failure to send a note about the absence.
- Missed the bus
- Car trouble
- Baby-sitting
- Shopping/running errands
- Oversleeping
- Needed at home

Communication

The staff at DWS are here for the well-being of the students. Families and staff can work together to ensure that each child is well cared for and can reach 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 support the work of the 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:

Family Conferences

Conferences allow students to share the amazing work they have been doing with their families, as well as allow for questions and concerns to be addressed between parents and teachers. Although conferences are scheduled twice per 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

Progress reports will be sent to parents electronically twice per year at the end of each semester. These reports give summary information about how a child is performing in all content areas.

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 out a monthly newsletter highlighting events and giving information such as the lunch menu and reminders of closings. Teachers will also send out classroom newsletters at least monthly to update families about what is going on 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.

Parent/Guardian Grievance Procedure

It is the goal of DWS to provide a quality environment that supports the child as well as works with the family to meet individual needs. It is important to the staff and school board to ensure that we are following our mission to serve children and families by offering a quality program. Thus, we wish to make it possible for families to let us know when they feel we have 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 regarding school policies, administration, educational methods, or overall concerns regarding the facility or equipment should address grievances with the Director. The Director will schedule a meeting with the parent as soon as possible. At the time of the meeting, the group will try to come to a solution to the issue or closure on the topic.
- Second, parents who feel their concerns have not been adequately addressed may submit their grievance in writing to the DWS Board of Directors. Two members of the Board and the Director of the school will meet with the parents to seek a resolution to the problem, either verbal or written. A written report will be sent to the parents and filed in the school records.

Board meetings

As a public charter school, DWS holds monthly board meetings to discuss the ongoing operation of the school. Anyone is welcome to attend these meetings. These meetings give parents the opportunity to learn more about the operation of the school, as well as provide a platform to address ideas and concerns.

Health and Safety

Immunizations

Upon enrollment, documentation of current immunizations must be submitted. For inadequately 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. We emphasize the importance of vaccination to protect the health and safety of all the children and staff at our program.

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 disease. Programs may use an off-site community park/recreation area as their outdoor play space if it is within 4 blocks of the center.

Our outdoor guidelines for healthy development - children should go outside when:

A. The weather seems comfortable, and when it 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, dress in warm, dry layers and play in wind-protected areas. (Use weather quality guidelines.) Please ensure your child comes dressed in appropriate indoor and outdoor clothing.

B. It is snowing, raining, or when snow is on the ground, and the children are wearing water-resistant clothing. Snow and rain are important learning materials.

C. Children have a runny nose, a cold, or an ear infection unless they have 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 needed. A parent/guardian or alternate emergency contact, as 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 your work, home/mobile phone numbers, and at least two people authorized to respond. These emergency contacts also need to be authorized to pick up your child. All staff members will be trained in Pediatric First Aid and Infant and Child CPR before unsupervised direct contact with children and within 90 days of hire.

Student Illness and Medication

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

- Call or email the office
- Do not contact the classroom teacher about the illness; contact the office.
- Do not send illness information with a sibling
- Failure to call the office results in an unexcused absence.
- Call or email the office each day your child is home ill.
- If you visit a doctor, request a note and drop it off at the front office.

Medication Guidelines

Medications (prescription and non-prescription) must be sent to school in the original container labeled with the student's name, prescription number, directions for administering, and the doctor's name. They must be accompanied by a Medication Permission form from a physician as well. Students are not allowed to bring aspirin or any other kind of medication to administer to themselves. Parents must bring all medication to the

office. All medication, both prescription and non-prescription, will be dispensed from the office.

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 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.

Non-Prescription Medication Form

- Must be completed by the parent.
- Requires a signed note by the parent stating the name of the medication, dosage requirement, and the student's name.
- 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 a physician determines has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk to others.
 - Chicken pox until the child is no longer infectious or until the lesions are crusted over.
 - Vomiting - 2 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 and has not completed 24 hours of antimicrobial Therapy;
 - Lice, ringworm, or scabies that are untreated and contagious to others.
 - Fever: 100-degree Fahrenheit axillary or higher 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 your 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 your child. Your child will be monitored, and comfort measures will be provided. In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called, and then the parent.

The parents are asked to notify the program within 24 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, when a child is diagnosed by a child's source of medical or dental care as having a contagious disease. 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.

Meals & Snacks

Student Breakfast

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

Student Lunch

Lunch 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 every day right away in the morning, and the lunch providers are notified regarding the number of meals to deliver each day. 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.

Every family with children who attend DWS must fill out the free and reduced lunch Application for Educational Benefits and send it to Brainerd ISD 181. 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.

Birthday Treats

Discovery Woods School supports the celebration of birthdays as long as it is done in a manner that does not disrupt the normal flow of the day. In order to support healthy choices and the variety of dietary restrictions of students, **parents should be mindful about sending birthday cakes or sweet snacks**. Birthdays can still be celebrated without sweets and sometimes without food at all. Some ideas of how to celebrate include: Enjoying a healthy snack such as fruit or cheese (no homemade treats); passing out a pencil for each student; donating a special book to the classroom library; and having the class decorate a banner with special messages.

Allergies & Dietary Restrictions

Information regarding children with known allergies, special dietary needs, or nutritional needs must be collected by families. A Child Allergy Plan (CAP) will be developed for "any noted allergy" with the parents and/or physician. The plan will be maintained in the child's file and will be updated at least yearly or more often if any changes are made to allergy-related information in the child's plan. Children's allergy information will be available at all times, including on-site, when on field trips, or during transportation.

- Staff will be informed of any of the children who have food allergies. A copy of the CAP will be available where food is prepared and served.
- 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.

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 developmental level of the children.
- ★ 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 and 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, which requires an increased amount of 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: Ignoring a child who is trying to gain attention by acting out may be an appropriate response, unless it is a behavior that is unsafe.
- ★ Redirection/ Distraction: This technique offers an alternative to a child, such as suggesting a new activity, or a 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.

It is our goal to work together for a positive outcome of behavior change. Circumstances may arise when we may immediately disenroll a child if his or her behavior creates a health or safety risk to themselves, other children, or the 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 use of a 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 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 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 what 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

Should it ever be necessary to cancel school due to bad weather, please listen to local FM radio programming in the morning or watch the news TV-WCCO for updates.

Things to keep in mind during inclement weather include:

- Due to transportation sharing, DWS will start late or close at any time the Brainerd School District 181 does.
- If the weather causes a two-hour late start, do not bring students before 9:35 am.
- Do not call periodically to see if school is going to close early; we only know when we get an official notification from the Brainerd School District.

In the event of needing someone else to pick up your child, do not ask the school office to call anyone for you; it is your responsibility to do so.

Emergency Procedures and Drills

Students practice fire drills once a month during warmer weather so they may practice how to exit the building safely. There are maps and exit plans in each room of the school to facilitate the rapid exit of the building. While taking care to explain the process to the children so they are not alarmed, staff and students treat these drills seriously as if they were real emergencies. Tornado drills are held from April through September. Children are instructed on what to do during a tornado. Intruder drills also take place. This is a situation where children may not go outside because there may be suspicious activity, or, depending on the situation, they would enter a room that would be safe during a tornado or would be able to be secured.

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 or otherwise will be allowed at school.

Field Trips

Parents or guardians must sign a permission form for field trips. If a class is to take 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. Transportation for a field trip will always follow state regulations regarding transporting children. 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 (with emergency numbers for the child's parent, persons to be called if a 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

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. 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 it can be found under "Family Information" at the school's website - www.discoverywoods.com

Although every effort will be made to update the Preschool Family Handbook on a timely basis, 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 do its best to 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 2025-2026 Calendar									
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	In Session	Workshop
August	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Teacher Workshop 8/25-8/28	4
	31								
September	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Labor Day 9/1 - No School	4
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	First Day of School 9/2	5
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		5
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28		5
	29	30							2
								Days - 21 Hours - 131.25	
October			1	2	3	4	5	No School - Inservice Day 10/3	2
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		5
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	No School 10/16-10/17, EM Conf 10/16	3
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26		5
	27	28	29	30	31				5
								Days - 20 Hours - 125	
November							1		0
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		5
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	No School - Inservice Day 11/10	4
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		5
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	No School - Thanksgiving 11/27-28	3
	30								
								Days - 17 Hours - 106.25	
December	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	No School - Inservice 12/1	4
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		5
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		5
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	No School - Winter Break 12/24-1/2	2
	29	30	31						0
								Days - 16 Hours - 100	
January				1	2	3	4	No School - Winter Break 12/24-1/2	0
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	No School - Inservice 1/5	4
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Half Days 1/15 and 1/16	5
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	No School - MLK Day 1/19	4
	26	27	28	29	30	31		End of 1st Semester 1/18	5
								Days - 18 Hours - 112.5	
February	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		5
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	No School - Inservice 2/13	4
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	No School - President's Day 2/16 (Snow Makeup)	4
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28		5
								Days - 18 Hours - 112.5	
March	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		5
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	No School - Spring Break 3/9-3/13	0
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	School Resumes 3/16	5
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28		5
	29	30	31						2
								Days - 17 Hours - 106.25	
April			1	2	3	4	5	No School - Spring Holiday 4/13	2
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	No School - Inservice 4/6 (snow makeup)	4
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		5
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26		5
	27	28	29	30					4
								Days - 20 Hours - 125	
May					1	2	3		1
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		5
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	No School - Memorial Day 5/25	5
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	KinderFriend Day 5/26	5
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Last Preschool Day 5/29	4
								Days - 20 Hours - 125	
June		1	2	3	4	5	6	Half Days 6/1 and 6/2	1
								Last Student Day (K-6) 6/2	
								End of 2nd Semester 6/2	
								Teacher Workshop 6/3	
								Total Days	169
								Instructional Hours:	11
								PreK- 1,044	
								K-6- 1,051	

Appendix B



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

All DW Students

Backpack
Headphones in a Ziploc bag (Not preschool)
Kleenex
Cleaning wipes
Colored pencils
Pencil top erasers
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

K-1 grade

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies and/or:
Magic erasers
Playdough
Hand Wipes
Food Coloring (liquid)
Stamp Pads (washable)
Optional- Super One/ Dollar Store gift cards

2-3 grade

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies
1 Composition notebook

4th grade

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies
1 Composition notebook

5th-6th grade

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies and/or:
2 composition notebooks
Calculator (TI-108 or the TI-30xs will be used in future grades)

Preschool

\$20 to cover a portion of the classroom supplies and/or:
Magic erasers
Play-Doh
Student Scissors
Hand Wipes
Water Color Paints
Food Coloring (liquid)
Stamp Pads (washable)
Optional- Super One/ Dollar Store gift cards

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

Appendix C - Sample Preschool Schedule

Time	Class Activity
8 - 8:30 am	Morning Meeting
8:30 - 9 am	Montessori Works & Choice Reading
9:00 - 9:30 am	Large Motor
9:30 - 10 am	Read Aloud/Snack
10:00 - 10:45 am	Literacy Learning Groups
10:45 - 11 am	Bathroom, Wash Hands, Transition Songs
11:00 -11:30 am	Lunch
11:30 -11:35 pm	Transition
11:35 -11:50 pm	Calendar/Clocks
11:50 -12:15 pm	Choice Reading
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
2:45-2:55 pm	Pack Up
2:55 pm	Dismissal