

Enrollment Handbook



HOLDING HANDS THAT HOLD THE FUTURE

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Table of Contents

- 1 **PHILOSOPHY**
ACCREDITATION & LICENSING / REPORTING ABUSE & NEGLECT / RECALLED ITEMS / GANG-FREE ZONES / TEACHER:CHILD RATIOS
- 4 **BRIGHTWHEEL**
- 5 **ENROLLMENT PROCESS & INFORMATION**
MEDICAL PERMISSION / IMMUNIZATIONS / MINOR MODEL RELEASE ?
SUNSCREEN * INSECT ? VISION & HEARING SCREENING / TERMINATION
- 8 **GUIDE TO PARENT'S RIGHTS**
- 9 **SCHOOL CALENDAR**
SCHOOL CLOSURES / SCHOOL HOLIDAYS
- 10 **TUITION & FEES**
CHART OF TUITION & FEES
- 11 **FINANCIAL POLICIES**
PAYMENT OPTIONS (FEES, DEPOSITS, REFUNDS, ETC.) / DELINQUENCY / WITHDRAWAL / TERMINATION POLICY / LATE CHARGES / RETURNED CHECKS
- 14 **CURRICULUM & CLASSROOM PROCEDURES**
PINNACLE / ABEKALEARNING WITHOUT TEARS / SCREEN TIME / CLASSROOM SCHEDULE / CLASS PARTIES / ANIMALS / BIRTHDAY INVITES
- 19 **WHAT TO BRING**
BOTTLES / SNACKS / LUNCH / CHOKING HAZARD
- 21 **INDOOR & OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**
WATER PLAY ACTIVITY
- 23 **DISCIPLINE**
SAFE SPACE / TODDLER BITING
- 25 **NAPTIME**
SAFE SLEEP FOR INFANTS / CRIB REQUIREMENTS / SAFE SLEEP REQUIREMENTS
- 27 **HEALTH & WELLNESS**
ILLNESS / MEDICINE / FOOD ALLERGIES / MEDICAL CONDITIONS / INJURY & MEDICAL EMERGENCIES / IEP / MEDICAL DEVICES / EMPLOYEE IMMUNIZATION POLICY
- 30 **FACILITY SECURITY**
KEY FOB / KEY FOB GUIDELINES / CAMERAS
- 31 **ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE PROCEDURES**
PARKING LOT SAFETY / SIGN IN & SIGN OUT / HEALTH CHECK / SEPARATION ANXIETY / RELEASING YOUR CHILD TO OTHERS
- 33 **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES & SAFETY**
DRILLS & EVACUATIONS / PEST CONTROL
- 35 **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**
BRIGHTWHEEL COMMUNICATION / VISITS & PARENT TEAMS / PARENT ORIENTATION / PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES / PORTFOLIOS / PARENT COMMUNICATION / POLICY CHANGES

Preschool Philosophy

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

ACCREDITATION & LICENSING

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

Minimum Standards online:

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>

HHSC Website:

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/>

RECALLED ITEMS

US Consumer Product Safety Commission CPSC
Recall Hotline: 1-800-638-2772 / www.cpsc.gov

REPORTING ABUSE & NEGLECT

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

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

GANG-FREE ZONES

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

TEACHER : CHILD RATIOS

Our current teacher:child ratio enrollment plan is as follows:

Infants: 1:4 Toddlers: 1:5 2 yrs: 1:8 3 yrs: 1:10 Pre-K: 1:11

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

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

We also strive to meet or surpass the recommendations of NAEYC regarding classroom ratios. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has set 10 standards for early childhood programs. Based on research on the development and education of young children, the standards were created with input from experts and educators from around the country. The standards define what NAEYC, the world's largest organization of early childhood professionals, believes all early childhood programs should provide. Appropriate group sizes and ratios of teaching staff to children are maintained (for example, infants—no more than 8 children in a group, with 2 teaching staff; toddlers—no more than 12 children in a group, with 2 teaching staff; and 4-year-olds—no more than 20 children in a group, with 2 teaching staff).

Brightwheel

Brightwheel is the leading app for early-childhood education, trusted by thousands of schools throughout the country. Brightwheel is an all-in-one software solution that allows us to streamline:

- billing and payments (monthly tuition, year-end statements, autopay options)
- communication (messaging, photos/videos of daily activities)
- student sign-in and sign-out

New families receive an invite to create their Brightwheel account during the enrollment process.

Enrollment

Process & Information

Once families have secured days and hours of enrollment the following forms will need to be completed. These forms are shared with families in their Brightwheel account.

1. New Student Enrollment Form: The following information is completed; Child's Information, Address, Enrollment Information, Primary Father's and Mother's Information, Secondary Family, Designated Emergency Contacts, Authorized Pickup, and Parent's Digital Signature.

*Secondary Family: This section is only completed if you have a blended family.

*Designated Emergency Contact: Emergency contacts are someone other than the parent or legal guardian. A full address must be listed for the designated contact.

*Authorized Pickup: Authorized pickup is someone other than the parent or legal guardian.

2. Student Acknowledgement and Release: The parent or legal guardian is giving permission for their child to participate in water activities, use of photographs taken at school and acknowledgement of the Enrollment Handbook.
3. Immunization Record
4. Health Requirements
5. Medical Information: The medical information form is completed by families at the beginning of each Academic and Summer session. Children with a diagnosed food allergy or following an IEP will need to complete specific forms provided by administration.
6. Sunscreen/Insect Permission

Medical Permission to Participate

We must have a hard copy of a doctor's statement of health on file for your child. No faxes, please. Valid document must be scanned; screenshots and photographs will not be accepted. This statement is required upon admission to the program. The doctor's statement should declare the child healthy and cleared for preschool attendance. A Health Requirements form for the doctor is included in the Enrollment forms shared with you via Brightwheel.

Immunizations

Upon admission to the program, a hard copy of your child's immunization record must be presented. Immunization records submitted must be either signed by the pediatrician or rubber stamped by the medical provider. No faxes, please. Valid document must be scanned; screenshots and photographs will not be accepted. State Law requires each child to present proof of immunization for DPT, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A, Chickenpox, Pneumococcal Conjugate and HIB.

Families choosing not to have their child immunized for personal or medical reasons must provide an Affidavit. The affidavit must be updated every two years.

Minor Model Release

In consideration of the engagement of my child (named above) as a model, I hereby confer on University Heights Baptist Church and Discovery Days Preschool the absolute and irrevocable right and permission with respect to the photographs that they have taken of my minor child in which he or she may or may not be included in with others:

- a. to display the same on the campus of University Heights Baptist Church;
- b. to copyright the same in University Heights Baptist Church's name;
- c. to reuse, publish and republish the same in whole or in part, separately or in conjunction with other photographs, in any medium now or hereafter known, and for any purpose whatsoever, including (but not by way of limitation) illustration, promotion, advertising and trade, and;
- d. to use my name or my child's name in connection therewith if he or she so decides.

I hereby release and discharge University Heights Baptist Church and/or Discovery Days Preschool from all and any claims and demands ensuing from or in connection with the use of the photographs, including any and all claims for libel and invasion of privacy. This authorization and release shall insure to the benefit of the legal representatives, licensees and assigns of University Heights Baptist Church and Discovery Days Preschool. I have read the foregoing and fully understand the contents hereof. I represent that I am the parent or guardian of the above named model and I hereby consent to the foregoing on his/her behalf.

Sunscreen/Insect Repellent

Discovery Days will provide a permission form for each family to complete at the beginning of each Academic and Summer session for their child(ren) attending. Parent/Guardian will be able to choose between the following;

- No Sunscreen or Insect Repellent
- Use Sunscreen and Insect Repellent provided by PARENT ONLY
- Use Sunscreen and Insect Repellent provided by DISCOVERY DAYS

Vision/Hearing Screening

Programs licensed by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services are required by the Special Senses and Communications Act of the Texas Health and Safety Code to have a vision and hearing screening on file for Pre-K children. Parents who have a Pre-K child attending are responsible for providing a copy of the vision and hearing screening from their child's pediatrician upon enrollment. The screening test document needs to state clearly if the child passed or failed. Your child's doctor **MUST** complete the form provided below by Discovery Days Preschool. Alternative documents will not be accepted. Valid document must be scanned; screenshots and photographs will not be accepted.

Termination Policy

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

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

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

Guide to Parent's Rights

Senate Bill 1098 from the 88th Legislative Regular Session added Section 42.04271 to the Resources Code and states that a parent or guardian of a child at a child care facility has the right to:

- Enter and examine the child-care facility during its hours of operation and without advance notice;
- File a complaint against the child care facility;
- Review the child-care facility's publicly accessible records;
- Review the child-care facility's written records concerning the parent's or guardian's child;
- Receive inspection reports and information about how to access the child-care facility's online compliance history;
- Have the facility comply with a court order that prevents another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the child;
- Be given the contact information for the child-care facility's local Child Care Regulation office;
- Inspect any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving their child provided that:
 - Video recordings of the alleged incident are available;
 - The parent or guardian does not retain any part of the video depicting a child that is not their own; and
 - The parent or guardian of any other child in the video receives prior notice from the facility;
- Obtain a copy of the facility's policies and procedures handbook;
- Review the facility's staff training records and any in-house training curriculum; and
- Exercise these rights without receiving retaliatory action by the facility.

The child-care facility must provide written notice to the parent or guardian of any other child captured in a video before allowing a parent to inspect a recording. The child-care facility must provide a parent or guardian with a written copy of the rights no later than the child's first day at the facility.

School Calendar

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

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

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

School Closures

In the event the decision is made to close school unexpectedly full tuition will be due unless the center is closed longer than two weeks. If Discovery Days is closed longer than two weeks, a 50% credit will be applied to your account.

School Holidays

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

Discovery Days

Tuition & Fees

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

Item	Description	Amount
Child Registration Fee	The registration fee for the school year is \$200 per child and is non-refundable. The registration fee is due with each application. The registration period for current families begins in February. After 1 week, registration will be open to the public to enroll.	\$150 Academic \$50 Summer Splash
Supply Fee	This fee is due each semester and covers semester supplies for each student.	\$55 Academic \$35 Summer Splash
Tuition	Tuition is calculated based on the Tuition Schedule included in your Enrollment Packet and is due by the 10th of each month. Families with more than one child in the program, will pay 100% tuition for one child and receive a 10% discount for additional children.	Varies
Drop-In Fee	Enrolled children may drop-in for an unscheduled day of school provided there is room in the class. Parents may schedule drop-ins through the office and must pay on the day of the drop-in.	Half-Day \$30 Full-Day \$40 Extended \$15

Financial Policies

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

Payment Options

Our preference is for families to pay fees and tuition using Brightwheel. Families may pay by:

1. Electronic bank transfer/automatic bank withdraw (ACH) from checking account (via Brightwheel)
2. Automatic charge to a major credit card/debit card (via Brightwheel)
3. Check

We are unable to accept cash payments. We are unable to process a payment over the phone.

Registration Fee

The registration fee for the school year is \$150 per child and is non-refundable. The registration fee for the Summer Splash session is \$50 per child and is non-refundable. The registration fee is due with each application. The registration period for current families begins in February. After 1 week, registration will be open to the public to enroll.

Supply Fee

The Academic supply fee is \$55 supply fee and is due August 10th and January 10th per child. Families enrolled in Summer Splash will incur a \$35 supply fee due on June 10th for each child. The fee covers semester supplies for each child.

Academic Year Tuition Deposit

A tuition deposit is required to secure enrollment. The tuition deposit consists of a full tuition payment for the month of May of the following year. Your child's placement in DDP is secured once the registration fee and the tuition deposit are received . Unless alternate payment plans are made with the Director, the tuition deposit is due

Academic Tuition Deposit Refund

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

Summer Splash Tuition Deposit

A tuition deposit is required to secure enrollment. The tuition deposit consists of a full tuition payment for the month of July. Your child's placement in Summer Splash is secured once the registration fee (new families only) and the tuition deposit are received. Unless alternate payment plans are made with the Director, the tuition deposit is due by March 10th. If payment is not received by March 10th, we will assume your child will not be attending and reserve the right to fill your child's space. Tuition deposits and registration fees are non-refundable.

Tuition Payments

Annual tuition is based on the number of days enrolled. For the convenience of parents, the annual tuition is divided into 9 equal payments to cover Sept. – May. (August tuition will be based on the number of days enrolled.) Tuition invoices are sent out on the first day of each month and due by the 10th. There are no refunds for temporary absences due to illness, vacation, accidents, etc. Cancellations or delayed openings due to inclement weather will correspond with HISD cancellations and will not be made up, nor will there be a refund for such cancellations or delays.

Pre-K students must enroll 8-3. We recommend that Pre-K student enroll for a minimum of 2-3 day per week.

Payment Delinquency

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

Withdrawal of Child

After the beginning of the year, should unforeseen circumstances arise, and it becomes necessary to withdraw a child, parents must provide the director with 30 days written notice of withdrawal and shall be liable for tuition for a period of 30 days from the date the notice is given to the school.

Termination Policy

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

Late Charges for Picking Up

A \$10 late fee will be assessed when parents are more than 5 minutes late. This applies for both 1:00PM & 3:00PM pick-up times. At 1:05, all children will be transferred to the extended day nap room. At 3:05, children remaining in our care will either remain with the extended care teacher or will be in the care of a member of our office staff until a parent arrives. In addition to the \$10 late fee, parents who are more than 5 minutes past their 3:05 pick-up time will incur a \$1 per minute fee. Late charges will be invoiced immediately to your Brightwheel account and due within 24 hours.

Returned Checks

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

Curriculum & Classroom Procedures

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

Pinnacle

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

August & September

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

October

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

November

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

December

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

January

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

February

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

March

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

April

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

May

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

A Beka

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

August & September

Verse: I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Ps. 139:14 Bible Stories: Creation, Adam and Eve, Noah Obey God, Abraham and Lot, Isaac the Promised Son, A Bride for Isaac, Joseph, Baby Moses

October

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

November

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

December

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

January

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

February

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

March

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

April

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

May & June

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

Learning Without Tears

- Handwriting Without Tears is an award-winning curriculum that follows a natural developmental progress from the easy to advanced handwriting skills. Preschoolers will use hands-on learning tools and exercises that follow a sequence of imitation, copying, and independent writing. The curriculum is designed to reach a variety of students through the use of music, games, stamp and screen, letter dough, wood pieces for letter construction, and slate boards. Shapes, colors, letters, and numbers will be introduced and explored in the daily activities. Four-year-olds will receive a workbook to track progress as they prepare for kindergarten.
- A-Z for Mat Man & Me is a resource to teach alphabet knowledge through meaningful and engaging stories. Meaningful, engaging stories and activities help students learn letter forms, names, and sounds, with the ultimate goal of leading children toward reading comprehension. Each pre-k child will receive a practice book for emerging readers. The practice book for emerging readers provides meaningful and fun practice for letter learning and meaning making. Activities include the developmentally appropriate letter formation support from Handwriting Without Tears, including gray strokes for tracing and double lines to assist with letter placement and size.

Screen Time

Children under the age of two, no media time is recommended since during the first two years of life children's brains and bodies are going through critical periods of growth and development. It is important that young children experience social interactions with their parents and caregiver. Excessive media use for older preschoolers has been associated with lags in achievement and knowledge and skills, as well as negative impacts on sleep, weight, and social and emotional health. A screen time activity MAY NOT be used for children two and under. A screen time activity MAY be used for children who are three years and older. If a screen time activity is used the activity MUST follow these guidelines:

- Related to the planned activities that meet educational goals
- Age-appropriate
- Not exceed 30 minutes per day
- Not used during mealtime, snack time, naptime, or rest time
- Does not include advertisement or violence
- View screen time with teacher
- Teacher interacts with children while viewing,
- Turned off when not in use

Class Schedules

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

Class Parties

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

Animals

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

Birthday parties & Invitations

Parents may provide a special snack or dessert to be served for a child's birthday, but licensing requires a 24-hour notice provided to the teacher in cases where a snack or dessert will be shared with the entire classroom. A signature sheet will be provided in the classroom for parents to sign off as approval for the special treat provided.

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

What to Bring

All items sent with your child must be clearly labeled with the child's first name and last initial. Items without a label cannot be given to a child. This includes diaper bags, backpacks, jackets, blankets, pacifiers, bottles, lunches, cups, etc.

Please do not send toys from home. Make sure your child dresses appropriately for outside play, including appropriate footwear. Children staying for the full day (8am-3pm) will need to bring a roll-up nap mat. Nap mats will go home daily with each child. We are unable to store them overnight. Children who attend every day of the week may send a package of diapers, changes of clothes, wipes, etc. to be kept in the classroom. Nursing mothers have the right to breastfeed in a designated area or provide breastmilk for their child while in our care.

Bottles

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

Snacks

Children 12 mo+ will be provided a mid-morning snack each day. The Snack Schedule can be found in Brightwheel through the documents tab. In the event of allergy or personal preference parents will need to provide an alternate snack. Parents of children less than one year old must send a light snack each day (ex: a small amount of crackers and a few ounces of juice). Sending too much snack spoils lunch and takes up valuable play time. Please send snacks in a sealed plastic container labeled with your child's first name and last initial. If the curriculum requires a teacher-prepared snack, You will be notified by an allergy alert sign posted outside the classroom door on the day of the activity. Please inform teachers if your child is restricted from eating the snack.

Lunch

At lunchtime, your child will be taught to pray and thank the Lord for their food before eating. Lunch is an important time for your child to learn manners and discuss their day with the teacher and their classmates. Therefore, we want teachers to be able to quickly serve lunch and sit down to converse with your child.

Pack Your Own Lunch

You are to send a “ready to eat” lunch with your child that requires no preparation and that your child can eat on their own; we are unable to heat food. Commercial items (ex: Lunchables) are permitted if they do not require the teacher to heat items. Each lunch item should be placed in a container labeled with your child’s first name and last initial. Discovery Days is not responsible for its nutritional value or for meeting the child’s daily food needs.

Choking Hazard

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

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

Indoor & Outdoor Activity

Discovery Days strongly believes and supports the need for physical activity each day. When children participate in physical activity each day, multiple health benefits accrue. Regular physical activity builds healthy bones and muscles, improves muscular strength and endurance, reduces the risk of developing chronic disease risk factors, improves self-esteem, and reduces stress and anxiety. Beyond these known health effects, physical activity has beneficial influences on academic performance. In addition, cognitive skills and motor skills appear to develop. Research has shown that physical movement can affect the brain's physiology.

- Infants will be given opportunities for physical activity, including supervised tummy time.
- Infants can not be in a restrictive device for more than 15 minutes, unless eating or transported.
- Toddlers thru Pre-K age children will participate a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity each day.

Discovery Days will promote all children's active play every day. Children will have ample opportunity to do moderate to vigorous activities, such as running, climbing, dancing, skipping, and jumping to the extent of their abilities. Opportunities for active play may overlap with outdoor play when weather permits. Physical activity may take place in the classroom, playroom (C109), or on the playground depending on weather conditions. Discovery Days will not play outside if weather conditions pose any concern for a child's health and safety such as a significant risk of frostbite or heat-related illness. Weather that poses a significant health risk which includes wind chill factor (below - 15°), heat index (above 90°), and air quality. Discovery Days will monitor weather conditions through local news and weather alerts.

Water Play Activity

Parents will be notified in advance of any outside water activities. These typically occur during our Summer Splash session. All water activities take place on our playground. On these days, please ensure that your child arrives in their swimsuit with sunscreen applied. If your child wears diapers, please include a swim diaper on water days. Additionally, please pack a change of clothes and a plastic bag for wet clothes. Upon enrollment parents complete a permissions form to participate in water activities, notating if their child can or can not swim without assistance.

Discipline

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

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

Safe Place

A specific place in the classroom for children to decompress separated from other children and the teacher (within the classroom). This is NOT a timeout. Once children are calm, they are able to make rational decisions and learning occurs.

Toddler Biting

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

- Operate from the understanding that your role is to protect ALL of the children in your care. The children who are bitten need protection from the biter and the child who bites needs support

and understanding so that he learns how to interact positively with his peers. He needs your help, too.

- One way to offer protection is to shadow the child. Be near their side and ready to redirect before anything happens.
- Place the child in a high chair or crib with an age appropriate activity when you are unavailable to shadow (Examples: diaper changing, clean up lunch, etc.).
- Calling for assistance when needed.
- When possible, an extra staff member will be placed in the classroom as needed.

Naptime

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

Children 12 mo+ will rest quietly on a personal nap mat in a designated space in their nap room after a diaper change or restroom break. They will not be forced to sleep but will be required to rest quietly in a dimly lit room with soft music playing. Bottles or training cups are not allowed during naptime. Please send labeled nap mats that roll-up and have a handle for hanging or a duffel bag that includes all labeled nap items. Nap mats will be sent home each day. After 1 hour of rest-time, teachers will allow each child who is awake to participate in an alternative activity until the naptime is over for the other children.

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

Safe Sleep for Infants

Infants must have a supervised nap period that allows the infant to maintain his or her own pattern of sleeping and waking periods

Crib Requirements

Infants must have their own crib daily. Infants may not share the same crib. An infant may remain in the crib for up to 30 minutes after awakening, as long as the infant is content and responsive. Drop gates must be secured when occupied by an infant. Cribs are sanitized between use and when soiled.

A full-size crib must have:

- A firm, flat mattress that snugly fits the sides of the crib and that is specifically designed to use with the crib model number. The mattress must not be supplemented with additional foam material or pads.
- Sheets that fit snugly and do not present an entanglement hazard.
- Secure mattress support hangers, and no loose hardware or improperly installed or damaged parts.
- A maximum of 2 3/8 inches between crib slats and poles.
- No corner posts over 1/16 inch above end panels
- No cutout areas in the headboard or footboard that would entrap an infant's head or body;
- Drop gates, if present, which fasten securely and cannot be opened by a child;
- Documentation that each crib meets the applicable federal rules at *Title 16, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1219 and 1220 concerning "Safety Standards for Full-Size Baby Cribs"* and *"Safety Standards for Non-Full-Size Baby Cribs,"* respectively, or documentation that each crib is a medical device listed and registered with the US Food and Drug Administration and
- A label with the infant's name. As an alternative, you may label cribs with a number and have a number/infant assignment map available.

Safe Sleep Requirements

The requirements for safe sleep must be followed unless there is a completed Sleep Exception Form that includes a signed statement from a health-care professional stating that it is medically necessary for sleeping in a restrictive device, a different position, or swaddled.

- Infants must not have their heads, faces, or cribs covered by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing at any time.
- Infants **MUST BE** placed on their backs to sleep in their own crib. Infants who are developmentally able to roll from from back to stomach and stomach to back may do so independently once placed in the crib in a face-up position for sleep
- Infants may not sleep in a restrictive device such as a swing, bouncer, or car seat. Infants who fall asleep in a restrictive device or arrive at the center asleep in a car seat **MUST BE REMOVED** and placed in a crib.
- You may not lay a swaddled infant down to sleep or rest on any surface at any time.

Health & Wellness

Illness

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

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

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

Medicine

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

Food Allergies/ Medical Conditions

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

Discovery Days is informed of ongoing medical conditions by the parent on the Medical Information Form submitted in Brightwheel at each session. Children with a medical condition that requires Discovery Days to administer medication or immediate emergency care must provide an action plan signed by the primary care physician. Action plans must provide information on how to administer, when to administer, and dosage amount of medication(s). Procedures according to the Medication Policy will be followed.

Injury & Medical Emergencies

When minor injuries occur at school, parents will be notified through Brightwheel and asked to sign an incident form at pick up. The signed incident form will be kept on file in the preschool office. Parents may view the incident form upon request. In the event of a medical emergency, we will notify both the parent and EMS.

Individualized Educational Program (IEP)

A parent must provide a child with special care needs with accommodations recommend by;

- A health-care professional or
- A qualified professional affiliated with the local school district or early childhood intervention program

If a parent shares an IEP plan for their child, Discovery Days Preschool will make every effort to incorporate the plan, where applicable, into the child's daily activities. Discovery Days is not responsible for the purchase or maintenance of adaptive equipment recommended for the child. Discovery Days is not responsible for ensuring ECI or another qualified service provider visits the operation to provide service.

Medical Devices

If your child is in need of a medical device during attendance, such as a helmet, cast, etc, a physician's note stating limitations and allowances regarding the device is required. The note must be signed and dated by the physician.

Employee Immunization Policy

In compliance with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Minimum Standards Rule # 746.3611, which requires a policy for protecting children from vaccine-preventable diseases, Discovery Days has implemented the following immunization policy. While the safety of our employees and the children in our care is paramount, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases optional to the employees. Vaccines that we currently *recommend* our employees receive:

- **Influenza (annually)** - This immunization helps protect against the flu. Factors that determine if a flu vaccine is recommended: people at a higher risk of severe flu and persons with close contact with others who are at a higher risk of flu, including persons who care for children younger than 12 months of age.
- **Pertussis (Whooping Cough)** - Two immunizations known as DTap and Tdap help protect against this disease. Whooping Cough is very contagious and most severe for babies. Factors that determine if a pertussis vaccine is recommended: if the individual did not receive this vaccination as an adolescent and is in close contact with children younger than 12 months.

If the employee is not exempt from having these immunizations, we recommend that employees consider these immunizations.

Facility Security

Key Fob

The purpose of the key fob system is to establish reasonable security for all staff members, children and families associated with Discovery Days Preschool. It is your responsibility to follow the guidelines of this agreement. Discovery Days Preschool reserves the right to revoke a parent's privilege to hold a key fob. Families opting to receive key fobs (2 per family) are required to provide a \$25 deposit fee and a signed parent agreement form. If a family leaves the program, the \$25 deposit fee will be refunded upon the return of both key fobs. There is no charge to preschool families unless key fobs are lost, stolen or not returned at the end of the school year or when a child leaves the program.

Key Fob Guidelines

- Key fobs will become active at 7:55 a.m.
- Each family will receive TWO key fobs. Key fobs are the property of Discovery Days Preschool.
- Children may not push the security release button when exiting the building.
- If you forget your key fob or come after school hours you will need to buzz in at the front door and speak to a staff member to gain access to the building.
- Please do not hold the door open for anyone other than you and your child. The door needs to close between individual families entering the premises.
- Anyone without a key fob who will be picking up/dropping off a child, will buzz in to gain access and will be asked to sign in at the front desk. Do NOT share your key fob with family members or friends.

Cameras

There are cameras located in all preschool classrooms, hallways, the entrance and on the playground.

Arrival & Departure Procedures

Parking Lot Safety

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

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

Sign-In and Sign-Out

Parents must sign children in and out at the classroom door each day via Brightwheel using the classroom tablet. Children may not be signed in before 7:55am and must be supervised by a parent or guardian until school begins. This allows teachers ample time to prepare classrooms and activities. Teachers will open their doors to greet children at 7:55am.

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

Health Check

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

Separation Anxiety

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

Releasing Your Child to Others

Written authorization via email or handwritten note is required to release a child to someone other than the parent or legal guardian, to add, or delete someone from the pick up list. OR a parent/guardian may add an authorized pick up to your Brightwheel account yourself through your Brightwheel application. If someone requests to pick-up your child and is not on the approved list, they will be referred to the office staff. All persons on the pick-up list must provide proper photo identification.

Authorized pick ups must use their assigned Brightwheel code to sign out a child. Those who do not know their assigned code need to check in with administration in the Preschool office.

Emergency Procedures & Safety

Drills and Evacuations

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

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

Fire Drills

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

Severe Weather Drills

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

Emergency Evacuations

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

Lockdowns

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

Pest Control

Texas Structural Pest Control Board Regulations, section 595.8(c), requires day care centers to inform parents or guardians of students in writing that pesticides are periodically applied indoors and on perimeters and that parents can sign up to be on a registry to be notified of the times and types of applications. This notification is made when the student registers, at the beginning of the school year or whenever a student enrolls. Pesticides are applied quarterly at Discovery Days Preschool.

Parent Involvement

Brightwheel Communication

Brightwheel messaging is the preferred method of communication with administration and classroom teachers. Teachers will supply parents with a lesson plan each week via Brightwheel. Lesson plans may be viewed at any time on Brightwheel in the learning tab. Infant and toddler teachers will also provide parents with daily care information regarding the sleep, diapering, eating, and mood of the child for the day through your child's Brightwheel feed.

A Discovery Days calendar is shared with you on Brightwheel at the beginning of each new session (Academic/Summer) with a listing of events.

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

Visit & Parent Teams

Children and parents new to the program may schedule a pre-enrollment tour. Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom at any time and will be encouraged to participate by helping with special events, school promotion, water days, and more. Additionally, you may inquire with the teacher about serving as a room parent.

Parent Orientation (Meet the Teacher)

Parent orientation will be held at the beginning of the Academic Year. All parents, even those with children previously or currently enrolled in the program, are encouraged to attend orientation. Those unable to attend will receive orientation information on their child's first day of school.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences for families whose children attend in the Three Year Old and Pre-K classes are scheduled regularly in the Fall and Spring for families to discuss student evaluations, development, accomplishments, curriculum, and home life. Teachers will post a schedule with appointment availability outside the classroom. Please arrive a few minutes early on the day of your conference to help us stay on schedule and ensure ample time to discuss your child's development. Regular class time will continue for your child during the conference. Parent-Teacher conferences for families whose children attend in the Infant thru Two Year Old classes are scheduled as needed.

A phone conference will take place in February of each year for all families to discuss developmental progress, accomplishments, discipline, and home life. We hope these times serve to strengthen the partnership between Discovery Days and your family. Parents will also be asked to complete a survey of the program.

Portfolios

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

Parent Communication Policy

Discovery Days Preschool is committed to fostering a respectful, collaborative, and supportive environment for children, families, and staff. Clear and appropriate communication is essential to maintaining a positive school community and ensuring the safety, privacy, and well-being of all children.

Communication With Staff

Parents are encouraged to share questions, concerns, observations, and suggestions regarding their child or the program. To ensure concerns are addressed appropriately and accurately:

- All concerns should be directed to classroom teachers or administration, not addressed during drop-off or pick-up when staff supervision responsibilities are ongoing.
- Brightwheel messaging, email, phone calls, or scheduled conferences are the appropriate channels for communication.
- Staff will communicate with families regarding their own child only, in accordance with confidentiality and privacy requirements.

Communication Regarding Student Incidents

When incidents occur involving children (including but not limited to hitting, biting, or other behavioral concerns):

- Discovery Days staff will manage the situation, document the incident, and communicate directly with the families of the children involved.
- Information shared will pertain only to the parent's own child. For the privacy and protection of all children and families, parents may not discuss incidents involving children directly with other parents.

Communication With Other Parents

To promote a respectful and unified school community:

- Parents should not approach, question, or address other parents regarding classroom incidents, discipline matters, or concerns involving children.
- Concerns about another child's behavior or classroom situations should always be brought to staff or administration for review and follow-up.

Expectations for Respectful Communication

Discovery Days Preschool expects all communication to reflect mutual respect and partnership. This includes:

- Speaking respectfully to staff, administration, and other families. Addressing concerns in a constructive and solution-focused manner.
- Following handbook policies and school procedures when raising concerns.

Policy Compliance

Violation of this communication policy may be considered a violation of the Enrollment Handbook. As outlined in the handbook, verbal expression of concerns, written evaluation of issues, and parent conferences will precede any further action. Our goal is always to maintain positive relationships and a supportive environment for every child and family.

Discovery Days Preschool values open communication and partnership with families and is committed to working together to ensure the best possible experience for all children.

Policy Changes

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