



Welcome to Discovery Place Preschool At Christ United Methodist Church Parent Handbook 2020-2021

Discovery Place Preschool is a ministry of Christ United Methodist Church. Our goal is to provide a quality, caring, child-centered, developmentally appropriate program for children ages 18 months through Pre-K. We strive to nurture each child's emotional, social, physical, cognitive and spiritual needs in a safe and loving Christian environment. We communicate God's love and grace to children through words and actions by the teachers and leadership staff. We endeavor to instill in each child their capacity to show their love, respect, and compassion towards others. As a community, our greatest hope is that our students grow on a foundation of God's love and basic bible principles, that they develop a love of learning with an insatiable curiosity, and build life-long friendships that begin in our program.

Curriculum

The curriculum is well planned and covers a variety of subjects and themes throughout the year. We offer a play based program, which means that we believe that children learn best through play and positive interactions with their teachers and peers. We believe that play is and should be the main method from which children learn new skills and that they benefit from learning about the world as authentically as possible. The children are exposed to age appropriate social skills, muscle development, environmental awareness, academic basics that correlate with their age, and some basic Christian foundations. Some of the daily/monthly activities the children engage in include the following: singing, playing, exercise, story-telling, manners, prayer time, bible stories, art projects, language and literacy, motor skill practice, prayer time, sensory activities, social studies, science, math, and holiday celebrations. We also include daily active outdoor activities (weather-permitting), or indoor activities in the large gym. The teachers in each classroom send out lesson plans to share with parents what their child will be learning in their classroom.

Enrollment Policies

Discovery Place Preschool is for children eighteen-months-old to five-years-old. The program meets on Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday of each week. In order to provide for consistency within the program, this year we are only offering enrollment in our three day a week program. We have previously offered one and two day enrollment options, but we will not be doing that this year. Our Preschool

sessions are approximately 3 hours long. We strive to keep a small teacher/child ratio. We have two teachers in each classroom. When the class has reached the maximum limit, a waiting list will be formed. We also offer summer preschool/school-age program. Summer preschool has a different fee and tuition structure than the regular Preschool year.

Immunization records must be submitted before the child can attend school, and then updated as soon as new vaccinations are administered. This year we are asking all parents to submit a new immunization record and registration card by the first week of school. The registration card will look a little different this year and we often find that our records are not up to date with addresses and emergency contacts, so updating your form yearly has become a best practice we execute.

Discovery Place Preschool will operate on a similar schedule as the local school districts. Sessions will not be scheduled during public school holidays. We also have some breaks throughout the school year. A list detailing Preschool breaks throughout the school year will be sent during the first week of school and updated on our website as needed so families can plan accordingly.

Fees & Registration

At the time of new student registration there will be a one-time non-refundable fee of \$40 per child. New and continuing students will be required to pay a non-refundable \$60 supply fee each school year. Tuition for the 2020-2021 school year is \$250 per month.

We encourage you to pay tuition online through the Church website www.christumcutah.net. You can also pay by check. New this year, tuition is due by the 1st of each month. Please make sure you pay your tuition on time so that your child can continue to attend school. If tuition is not paid by the 1st of each month, please add a \$20 late fee when you make the payment. If tuition is more than one week overdue, you may be at risk of losing your child's spot in our program. *Please note: You are paying for your child's place in the class, not the actual days your child attends. This means that occasional sick or missed days will not be taken off of your tuition.* Tuition is averaged out for the entire year, so tuition rates will remain the same, regardless of holiday closures. Covid 19 tuition policy: If we have a case of Covid in a classroom, we will follow the Utah department of health's advice on if and how long we need to close. Most closures will be 10 days, so two school weeks. There are many factors

Withdrawal/Schedule Change Policy

We require you to provide us with a 30 day withdrawal notice. If you withdraw from the preschool in the middle of a month for any reason, you are responsible for the entire month's tuition. In lieu of 30 days' notice, we require one month's payment. We request that once parents have chosen a schedule, they stick with it for the entire school year. We cannot accommodate mid-year changes of schedule, as it often leaves gaps that are difficult to fill and disrupts consistency in the classroom. Because of this, we ask parents to choose their schedules carefully at the time of registration.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Parent teacher communication is very important to us. Teachers will send home a lesson plan on a weekly or monthly basis that will cover what the children will be learning in the classroom. Teachers will occasionally send out letters to the parent's regarding specific information about their class. Those will go home in the child's backpacks. If you would like more time to speak to the teacher about your child, a meeting can usually be arranged between the first and second teaching sessions. Please talk with your child's teacher to arrange this. The director will e-mail important reminders and other information on a regular basis, so please make sure we always have your current e-mail address. We have a parent communication board near the East clock-in computer, so be sure to check that for important information and reminders. We also use an app called Remind to send out reminders and let parents know if there is ever a school closure due to snow or to pass information on during an emergency situation. This app allows for two-way communication, so parents can also check in with teachers or let us know if their child will be out sick. Please check with the director if you are not connected with the school on Remind.

Arrival & Departure

Preschool hours are 8:45 AM-12:30 PM. **Please do not arrive before 8:45 AM for drop off**, as the teachers are preparing for the day. Additionally, please ensure you pick your child up promptly at 12:30 PM. Please call the preschool if you will be more than 10 minutes late picking your child up. *If you're late to pick your child up, a late fee of \$5 per 10 minutes will be assessed. Please pay that fee upon arrival or on your child's next tuition payment. This policy needs to be enforced as late pick-ups cause our teachers to be late clocking out and getting their own kids home or getting to another job or appointment.*

Your child will not be released to a person who has not been authorized by you to pick him/her up. All authorized people should be identified and put into the computer system so they can check they child in and out. Photo identification must be shown before the child is released. *Please notify your child's teacher if someone other than yourself is going to be picking him/her up that day. Remember*

that the teachers may not have seen all of the people in your child's life and they will be alert to anyone they do not recognize picking up the child. Please also inform grandparents/friends/other individuals picking up your children that they will be asked to show identification before picking up your child. This is to keep all of our children as safe as possible.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Drop off is done at the East and Northwest doors of the church. **Please do not park in the spots directly in front of the East Preschool doors. It presents a safety hazard as people back up and children exit the school from those doors.** Please park in the larger East Parking Area, bring your child into the building, and check them in on the computer. We ask parents to come to the classroom to drop-off and pick-up their child. This will allow parents to have a few moments to talk to teachers about any issues that may have come up during the day, see the projects the children are doing in their rooms, and form a relationship with their child's teachers and other parents. It also allows the child to have a happier drop-off and pick-up. Any notes or reminders will be put in children's cubbies to take home at the end of the day. *Because of our dual schedule, cubbies will be shared. It is imperative that you clean out your child's cubby every day!*

Child Guidance Policy

At Discovery Place Preschool, we have basic rules for the health and safety of the children. Definite guidelines for behavior are established so that children know what is expected of them. This helps them to feel secure. We tailor our expectations to fit the developmental levels of the children to minimize frustrations and inappropriate behavior. We arrange the environment and offer a wide variety of age appropriate activities based on the interests of the children. Our goal in guiding children's behavior is to ensure their safety and to assist them in developing self-confidence, self-esteem, self-control, self-discipline and sensitivity in their interactions with others. In helping to direct the child toward self-discipline, the following guidance techniques are used:

- modeling positive behavior;
- Redirection is consistent with the child's needs;
- stating clear limits and involving children in setting those limits;
- having appropriate expectations for children according to their development;
- teaching children to express their feelings in appropriate ways;
- teaching children problem-solving and conflict resolution skills and
- encouraging them to use those skills with their peers;
- respecting and reflecting children's feelings; and

- allowing children to experience natural and logical consequences to their behavior
- If needed, and only to be used sparingly, a child may be removed from the situation to calm down. This time shall be no longer than one minute per year of age.

If a child has persistent behavioral problems, staff will use a variety of guidance strategies, depending on the individual needs of the child. These strategies may include a behavior management program. Families will be consulted if a child has persistent behavioral problems in the center that require a consistent systematic approach.

Health and Safety

Discovery Place Preschool follows the recommendations taken from American Academy of Pediatrics. For your child's protection and consideration of the teachers and other children, please follow these recommendations. Please be alert to your child's physical condition before bringing him/her to preschool. We require that your child be free from fever and symptoms for at least 24 hours before he/she is brought back to class.

A child should not be brought to class when any of the following exist:

1. Fever
2. Vomiting and/or diarrhea
3. Any symptom of the usual childhood diseases: scarlet fever, German measles (rubella), mumps, chicken pox, and whooping cough
4. Common cold - from onset through one week
5. Sore throat
6. Croup
7. Any skin infection, boils, ringworm, impetigo
8. Any unexplained rash
9. Pink eye and other eye infections

You will be called if your child becomes ill while attending preschool. *Please*

Note: Preschool Staff are not authorized to administer medications. Please notify the director if your child becomes ill with a contagious disease so parents of the other children can be notified.

The director reserves the right to cancel class due to inclement weather or a significant health event, such as an outbreak of influenza. You will be notified by a phone call, text and/or email if this is necessary.

Please notify the director or your child's teacher of an expected absence as soon as you know the child will not be attending. We realize that you may not know until the morning of preschool that your child is sick, but please call the preschool

number or e-mail the director to let us know so that we are aware of which children to expect each day.

If there are any significant changes in your life that may affect your child's behavior (i/e new baby, death in the family, move to a new house, divorce, etc....) or if your child has any physical or emotional concerns, please let your child's teacher know. You may also talk to the director regarding any concerns you may have.

Emergency and Non-Emergency Medical Procedures

In case of minor accident or injury:

Staff will administer first aid to the child. The child's parents will be called, if necessary. If any treatment is administered, an injury report will be filled out by the teacher and signed by the parent. One copy will be placed in the child's file, and the other will go home with the parent.

In case of serious illness or accident:

The staff will immediately call 911.

Emergency First Aid will be administered by a staff member if necessary.

All permanent staff are required to be first aid/CPR certified and re-certified every two years.

The parent will be called by another staff member once 911 is called. If unreachable we may call emergency contacts listed on the child's paperwork. The incident will be documented in writing and placed in the child's file.

Evacuation Plan

In the event of a natural disaster, fire, or other emergency situation requiring a need to evacuate the preschool, the following steps will be followed:

1. Children will be escorted out the nearest doors to the farthest part of the parking lot by teachers.
2. Attendance will be taken by the teacher(s) with the group of children.
3. Teachers will bring attendance ledgers, emergency contact numbers, and cell phones in order to contact parents and emergency personnel as necessary.

If deemed necessary, a shelter-in-place protocol will go into effect until the situation is declared safe. Staff will practice emergency plans on a regular basis to ensure preparedness in the event of an actual emergency.

Items Your Child Needs to Bring to Discovery Place Preschool

Bring these items to preschool each day:

* Lunch each day - All foods must be **tree nut free!**

- * Backpack- we will occasionally send notes home, as well as lesson plans and art projects, so having a backpack is important.
- * Change of clothes (and socks) for ALL ages
- * On the first day of school, please bring diapers/pullups, wipes and a labeled Ziploc bag with extra underwear. We suggest you bring a sleeve of diapers for the ease of both the teachers and parents. We will let you know when we need more supplies for your child.
- * Wear shoes and clothes appropriate for play (we ride tricycles and have rubber chips and sand in our play area, and we paint and do messy activities)
- * During winter months bring boots, hat, gloves, snow pants and coat - we play outside as many days as possible.
- * Throughout the year you may be asked to bring items from home for special event days or craft activities (like milk cartons, paper towel tubes, plastic eggs, valentines, etc.)
- * Please leave personal toys at home. This will eliminate lost toys or disputes among the other children. We will have show-and-tell days regularly in order for your child to bring in something special to share with the class.

Be sure to label everything with your child's first and last name on it! Each child will have a cubby to put their coats, lunches and backpacks in. We will also put any items to be taken home in there. The classrooms are used by others throughout the week and they need to use the cubbies as well, so please check your child's cubby every day and take home what is theirs.

Lunch, Snacks and Birthday celebrations

- ✓ Children should bring a lunch - make it something they enjoy eating! Lunch time is a great social time for these little ones and what they are eating can be a great source of something to talk about. Please label your child's lunch bag with their first and last name so there will be no confusion.
- ✓ **Please, no peanuts, peanut butter or tree nuts as we have several students with severe peanut allergies!** This also includes products that have warning labels such as "may contain traces of nuts." Nut allergies can vary in type and severity, so we are endeavoring to be as safe as possible.
- ✓ Children may wish to share the excitement of their birthday by bringing a special treat for the class to enjoy. Please notify their teacher in advance. Parents and siblings are welcome to be a part of these celebrations.

Policy on "Moving Up"

As a general rule, we move the children to the next age group/classroom at the beginning of the new school year each September. There are many important cognitive, social, and emotional milestones that take place during the early childhood years, and we strive to keep children in a setting that is most

appropriate to their individual development. Because we have small classes, each child receives a great deal of individual attention, so you can rest assured that the teachers are making sure that their needs are being met. It is our highest priority at Discovery Place Preschool to encourage growth and development for each child to make sure he or she reaches his or her highest potential.

PRESCHOOL CONTACT NUMBERS

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