



Discoveryland Preschool

Parent Handbook

2022 – 2023

Discoveryland Preschool
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About Discoveryland

Discoveryland is a California state-licensed facility providing a full-day preschool program. Discoveryland is owned and operated by A Child's Heart, Inc. The owner and director of Discoveryland Preschool is Nichelle St.Helen.

Licensure

Discoveryland Preschool is licensed by the State of California,
Department of Social Services.

License: 073408920
Community Care Licensing Division
1515 Clay St # 1102, Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 622-2602

THE PROGRAM

Philosophy

We believe that every child is a unique, special, and creative individual of great value designed for a specific purpose by God. By providing a warm, secure environment, we hope to develop a feeling of self-esteem within each child. Because children profit from the opportunity to make choices, every effort is put forth to give each child the chance to move about in an environment that offers many attractive, interesting, and stimulating experiences. Thus, through an individualized response to the environment, each child becomes a well-rounded human being capable of choices appropriate to personal needs and the ability to develop in all areas of growth—spiritual, emotional, social, physical, intellectual, and creative.

Mission

To provide a nurturing, creative, and spiritual environment where children will be introduced to Jesus and prepared for successful life-long learning and service.

Goals

The following goals guide Discoveryland in the preparation of the learning environment and curriculum:

1. To establish an awareness of individuality and personal self-identity, encouraging positive self-esteem.
2. To build self-control and self-discipline.
3. To expand freedom of choice and decision-making within reasonable limits and encourage problem-solving.
4. To establish an awareness and love of God and a respect for creation.
5. To develop creativity.
6. To promote curiosity about and an awareness of the world in which we live.
7. To develop language and conceptual skills.
8. To provide appropriate play experiences that contribute to the child's developmental needs
9. To develop fine and gross motor skills.

- 10. To build good health habits and manners.
- 11. To provide experiences that will stimulate a sense of personal responsibility and an awareness of the rights of others.
- 12. To introduce children and their parents to our affiliate, Pleasant Hill Adventist Academy, as a possible place to continue the child's Christian education journey.

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Purpose

- 1. To provide an opportunity for children to experience quality learning and a social environment.
- 2. To provide quality preschool and child care for Pleasant Hill and the surrounding communities.

Curriculum

Our first goal is to stimulate joyful intellectual curiosity and an appreciation for learning in the community. With mindful attention to developing each child's ability to respond with empathy, compassion, and kindness to others, the teachers devote time and attention to gently nurturing a greater awareness of the present moment. This supports each child's developing ability to interact appropriately with peers and adults in a group setting, gradually increasing the ability to react with increased self-control and compassion. The more academic aspects of the curriculum stem from this foundation of nurturing calm and consideration for the needs of others. We believe that play is a child's work and we partner with you to show them a love for God and nature through play.

Daily Schedule

- 7:00 AM - Preschool Open
Free Play & Centers (Opening Classroom)
- 8:15 - Welcome Circle & Worship
- Outdoor Play (weather permitting)

- 9:30 - Bathroom and Handwashing
Snack
- 9:45 - Free Play & Classroom Centers
- Activities: Theme/Art/Circle/Craft
Cooking/Music/Science/Show & Tell
- 11:15 - Bathroom and Handwashing
- 11:30 Lunch
- 12:30 PM - Half-day Program Pick-Up
- 12:30 - Rest Time / Quiet Time
- 2:30 - Free Play / Story
- 3:15 - Bathroom and Handwashing
Snack
- 3:30 - Outdoor Play (weather permitting)
- 5:00 - Free Play & Centers (Closing Classroom)
- 6:00 PM - Preschool Closed

Program Activities

The program includes the following:

Indoor Activities:

- Food experiences using a variety of foods and processes
in the preparation of healthy snacks.
- Science and nature with discovery and exploration.
- Sensory materials for a variety of tactile experiences.
- Art for experimentation in a variety of media stressing creative
self-expression.
- Manipulative materials for spatial and matching experiences and small
motor development.
- Dramatic play areas for housekeeping, dress-up, play-acting roles, and
practical life experiences.

- Pre-writing experiences using cutting, coloring, and small motor development.
- Pre-reading experiences using books, listening opportunities, and language development.
- Motor perception with body and spatial awareness and the development of integrated motor skills.

Outdoor Activities:

- Development of cooperative and large motor skills by using the following equipment:
 - swings and slides
 - climbing equipment
 - mud kitchen
 - sandbox
 - water play
 - tricycles and riding toys
 - balls—throwing and catching
 - play structures
 - large motor games
 - walks on campus and trails

Check-In/Check-Out

The iPad at the entrance is for checking in and checking out. Every child must be checked in and checked out correctly each day to avoid late charges.

Signing a child in and out is mandatory by California State Licensing.

Circle Times

Each classroom has two circle times, a morning welcome circle and thematic circle time. These activities are carefully planned to be learning experiences for the children.

Morning Welcome Circle

The morning circle time is an introduction to the day's activities. Please plan to arrive before the morning circle time or bring your child after the circle time has ended (see each classroom schedule). It is very disruptive when children arrive during the morning circle time, so please plan accordingly.

Share Day

Wednesdays are Share Day. The shared item should coordinate with the classroom theme. This is a chance to help your child learn by sharing a special item from home. Share Items must be put in a bag labeled with their name and then placed in the shared bucket until Share Circle. Please do not allow your child to bring a weapon or scary item.

Other than Share Days, we asked you to please leave toys and personal items at home. Toys from home can be lost, fought over, and broken. Children should be free to focus on the planned activities and classroom materials free from distraction by toys from home. A small comfort toy is acceptable for new or young students until they are comfortable at preschool and then need to be taken home. A soft naptime toy or comforting item will be allowed to be used during naptime as long as the item does not cause general distraction. These soft nap toys must be labeled with your child's name.

Lunch

A healthy lunch is provided by parents. Lunch is eaten at 11:30 am.

Rest Times

Rest time is taken in the afternoon from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

A bed is provided for each child.

The bedding is to be washed weekly.

Snack

Mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks that may consist of organic fruit, vegetables, crackers, or other healthful seasonal foods will be served along with water. Each snack will consist of food from two different food groups.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Clothing

Each child should be dressed appropriately for the weather with sweaters, jackets, mittens, and hats as necessary. Each child needs a complete change of clothing at school with the child's name written in ink on the clothing article. Durable and washable clothing will allow the child to participate in a wide variety of activities. Please do not send children to preschool in clothing that might be damaged by water, sand, mud, or art materials. Shoes or buckled sandals are best for outdoor play. A swimming suit, water shoes, and towel should be sent with your child for the summer.

Your child's safety and comfort will be considered at all times.

Please label all clothing, lunch pails, etc. with your child's name. With so many children enrolled, there are often duplications. Items not labeled and not claimed in one month will be donated to a needy cause.

Cubbies

Each child at Discoveryland is assigned space for their jacket, extra clothes, lunch, and materials for taking home. Each child's space is identified by a name and snapshot photo. Dirty clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and should be taken home each day. If your child has dirtied all of his or her spare clothes, we will provide them with Discoveryland clothes. If your child comes home in clothes that are not his or hers, please wash and return these items as soon as possible.

Parent Corner/Entrance

The parent entrance will be equipped with the following:

- An iPad to check your child in and out, check your account, and display any needed messages.
- A parent bulletin board to display special announcements.
- Payment box for payments (in the office)

Parent Grievances

If a parent has a grievance with the program or a specific staff member, the parent should arrange to discuss the problem with the director to help facilitate a solution.

Parent Meetings

Parent meetings are held at Discoveryland when announced.

Parent Rights

This form must be signed by the parent before the child enrolls and is included in the registration packet.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Parents will be informed of current information and events through e-mail messages, or a newsletter, or on the bulletin board. Please read the information in the newsletter and on the parent bulletin board as these will notify you of any special activities, events, or announcements important to your child during the month. Also, check your mailbox daily, please, for materials to take home. Parent/teacher conferences will be held by appointment with the director.

Parent Visits

Parents are welcome to visit Discoveryland at any time. Personal appointments

can be made to meet with teachers after school hours.
It is easier for the child and parent if both have visited the school together before the first day at school. The child's anxiety is somewhat relieved if the opportunity is given to become familiar with the teacher and surroundings. We encourage parents to visit their child's room at any time. However, if this causes an upset to your child's day, we ask that you call to check up on your child.

Personal Property

Discoveryland is not responsible for damage to personal property or lost articles. The parent assumes full responsibility for all items sent with their child.

Personal Rights

This form must be signed by the parent before the child enrolls and is included in the registration packet.

Special Needs

If your child has special needs that the preschool is equipped to handle, parents should make these needs known to the director at registration and methods to deal with them must be discussed and agreed upon before the child attends.

Special dietary and allergy arrangements must be made in writing and the director should be notified of such before a child begins attendance.

If the student has restrictive dietary needs and adjustments must be followed, it may be necessary for alternate snacks to be sent from home.

Toys from Home

A soft nap time toy or comforting item, for those adjusting to school, will be allowed to be used during nap time or until the adjustment is successful. Please do not bring toys from home as they are easily misplaced or broken.

We thank you so much for your cooperation in advance.

Transportation Policy

The Discoveryland staff is not responsible for transporting children to or from school. Parents are responsible for finding persons, outside of Discoveryland staff, to transport their children when they are unable. Parents are also responsible for arranging their childcare during holidays and after hours.

Please do not request the staff to make exceptions to this policy.

ENROLLMENT

Admission Policy

Discoveryland grants admission to children ages two to six years whose needs can be met by the program. Discoveryland reserves the right to refuse admission based on age, available space, or inability to provide adequately for the needs of the child.

1. A child must be fully immunized before he or she begins attendance at Discoveryland.

The immunization requirements are:

- 3 Polio shots (3 doses with one after the third birthday)
- 4 DTP shots (Diphtheria, Pertussis/Whooping Cough/Tetanus, 4 doses with one taken after the second birthday)
 - 1 Hib shot
- 1 MMR shot (Measles, Mumps, Rubella with 1 dose on or after the first birthday)
 - 3 Hepatitis B shots
 - 1 Varicella
- Official record or copy of immunization must be submitted to the director and will be kept on file.

2. Before a child begins attendance all registration materials must be

completed and on file. The registration fee and beginning tuition must be paid in full. The registration packet has all the forms.

3. Any unpaid balance due Discoveryland must be paid in full before a child resumes attendance after the 5th day.

Nondiscrimination

Discoveryland Preschool is operated on a nondiscriminatory basis and no one will be excluded from enrollment because of race, gender, or religious affiliation.

Registration

Children may be registered at any time space is available. If space is not available, an application should be completed and returned with the application fee in order for the child to be placed on the waiting list.

The parent or guardian must complete the forms in the registration packet before any child may be admitted to Discoveryland. The necessary forms in the registration packet are as follows:

1. Admission Agreement
2. Emergency Information
3. Personal Rights
4. Health History Report & Immunization Record
5. Parent Agreement
6. Parent Rights
7. Physician's Report
8. Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Admission and Financial Contract

The registration fees are due before the child begins fall attendance.

This fee includes enrollment in the following summer session.

Those enrolling only for the summer session will pay modified fees.
All fees are non-refundable payments. Payment is due on the 1st of
each month or the first day of service.

Tuition is billed monthly and payment is due on the 1st of every month or first day of service.

Tuition payment must be received for your child to continue attending
school. The rate does not change if a child misses days due to illness or vacation.

Signing a child in and out is mandatory by California State Licensing. If the
school is found to be out of compliance, a \$1,500 fine could be charged against
the school. The child's parent or guardian who failed to sign their child in will be
responsible for reimbursing the school if a fine is incurred.

If a child willfully damages or destroys school property, the child's parent or
a guardian who enrolled the child will reimburse the school for replacement or
restoration costs.

Collection/attorney fees accrued to collect past-due payments will be charged to
the child's account.

Fee Schedule/Admission Contract

This form must be signed by the parent before the child enrolls and is included in
the registration packet.

Financial Assistance

If you need financial assistance, please direct all inquiries to the director.

Late Fees

A late fee of \$25/first 10 minutes & \$5/minute will be charged for students picked up:

Full-day: Monday through Thursday after 6 p.m.; Friday after 4 p.m.

Records

The following records are required to be kept on file:

- a child's current address, home phone number, parent's work number,
parent's cell phone number
- a place of employment for both parents
- a list of people and medical personnel to be called for emergencies
- legal custody report (if applicable)

Please inform the director if there are any changes regarding the above information. We appreciate your cooperation.

Registration Fee

A registration fee is charged at the time of registration to cover the cost of materials the children will be using for the year. This fee is non-refundable and must be paid in advance annually when enrolling your child.

All fees and tuition are paid in advance. Registration fees are partially prorated after January 1.

Returned Checks

There will be a charge of \$40.00 for returned checks. If two checks are returned within three months, then only cash or money order will be accepted as payment.

Tuition

Monthly tuition charges must be paid before the child's care begins on the first of each month. Tuition is the same for weeks with holidays. If tuition is not paid by the due date, it will be considered delinquent and subject to a late fee. Tuition payment must be received for your child to continue attending school.

Please note that a late fee of \$25 a day will be added after the 1st day of scheduled payment and after five days, the student will not be accepted unless the bill is resolved.

Absence

If your child misses a day of attendance, that day may not be “made up” on another day. If your child needs to be away from school for an extended period, please see the director make special arrangements. We cannot always guarantee admission after extended leaves.

Arrival and Pick-Up

Please plan for your child to arrive before the morning welcome circle which is at 8:45 a.m. If you are running late, please plan to arrive after the morning welcome circle ends at 9:15 a.m. (see classroom schedules). Please call the center if you are running late. Please plan to have your child arrive no later than 10 a.m. so they can participate in the activities that the teachers have planned for the day. We find that when they arrive late in the morning they have missed out on important learning experiences and those drop-offs are more difficult.

Attendance Plans

Plans may be selected for:

Five-day, Three-days, or Two-day Schedules

- Full-day hours: Monday-Thursday, 7 am - 6 pm Friday, 7 am - 4 pm

- Part-day hours: 8:30 am - 12:30 pm or 2:30 pm - 6 pm

Holidays

Discoveryland is closed on these federal holidays:

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Presidents' Day

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Independence Day

Labor Day

Presidents' Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving (Wednesday, Thursday & Friday)

Christmas (Closed Christmas through New Year)

On occasion, Discoveryland will be closed due to teacher in-service or continuing education. These dates will be posted on the yearly calendar.

Vacation Notice Form

Please fill out a Vacation Form when your child will be on vacation.

Weather Closures

Weather in Pleasant Hill can be unpredictable and Discoveryland will always put the safety of your child first if weather may present a risk. Discoveryland will communicate any closures or changes in hours due to weather via email messages to families, updates on our Facebook page, and outgoing messages on our phone. If the advisories are posted during business hours, our staff will also inform each family if we require an early pickup due to closure. We will stay open as long as it is not a safety issue for our staff or families.

If the National Weather Service announces there is an elevated fire or smoke risk during fire season, please check your emails and our Facebook page regularly for any updates. Discoveryland has a safety plan, including evacuation, if required.

Withdrawal Policy

A child may be asked to withdraw from the program under the following conditions:

- the child has a consistent problem of aggressive or disruptive behavior that

continues after the following:

1. Parent Conference
2. Time for improvement
3. Re-evaluation
4. Parent meeting to discuss options if the behavior has not improved
5. Expulsion
 - the child has special needs that the school is not able to meet
 - the child's parents fail to meet their financial responsibility

A Discoveryland administrator will meet with the parents in an attempt to correct the problem. If a solution is not found, a five-day notice of termination will be given.

Keeping rates as affordable as possible requires that Discoveryland operates at capacity level, thus a four weeks' notice must be given if your child is to be withdrawn. Tuition will continue for four weeks if notice is not given.

Discipline

It is against Discoveryland policy to use any punishment which includes negative physical touching. In addition, the staff is required not to use any technique against a child which results in humiliation, ridicule, or deliberate devastation of self-esteem.

Discoveryland staff utilizes the following techniques:

1. Prevention—trying to avoid problems before they arise by good planning.
 2. Extinction—ignoring the negative behavior so that the child is not reinforced for doing it.
 3. Redirection—distracting the child's attention from the disruptive behavior by some other activity that is acceptable.
 4. Discussing outcomes—making certain the child understands what will happen if he or she persists in unacceptable behavior.
 5. Take a break—giving a child space apart from the group to gain self-control.
- If several attempts at positive discipline have failed, the director will guide the

teacher to help correct the problem and will solicit parent cooperation.

The school reserves the right to dismiss a child if, in the opinion of the staff, the child's needs can no longer be met.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If your child is hurt or has another emergency, the following will be done:

1. If the injury is not serious, simple first-aid will be administered by the school staff. An "Ouch Report" will be sent via e-mail on ProCare in the parent's mailbox.
2. If the injury is serious or may require a doctor's attention, the parent or other responsible person will be contacted and the child will be taken to the emergency room at John Muir Health.

Emergency Disaster Plan

An emergency plan is posted in every classroom and the office.

Emergency Information

This form must be signed by the parent before the child enrolls and is included in the registration packet.

Health History

This form must be signed by the parent before the child enrolls and is included in the registration packet.

Illness Policy

A fact of life is that children get sick, and the staff recognizes the difficulty that working parents have when their child is sick. However, so that an illness is not spread to the other children, their families, and the staff, it is required that you find alternate care for your sick child. Arranging such care as soon as your child's

symptoms appear will avoid the last-minute morning rush. It is important to call and notify the school when your child is sick and will not be attending. You will be asked to take your child home if:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the facility activities.
2. The staff cannot adequately care for the sick child without compromising the care of the other children.
3. Fever—axillary (armpit) temperature of 100 degrees or greater at school or within the last 24 hours. A fever must be gone for 24 hours before returning to school without the aid of medication.
4. They have signs or symptoms of possibly severe illness (e.g., persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, lethargy, or green/yellow mucous continually draining from the child's nose for more than one day).
5. Eye infection (conjunctivitis) “pink eye”—May return 24 hours after treatment applied. Viral cases require a doctor’s note for return.
6. Diarrhea—after two very liquid stools. May return after 48 hours of no diarrhea.
7. Strep Throat or Other Streptococcal Infection—until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.
8. Impetigo—until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
9. Vomiting—vomiting more than once in the previous 24 hours. May return after 24 hours of no vomiting.
10. Rash with Fever and Behavior Change—until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
11. Scabies, Head Lice—24 hours after treatment has been initiated and no nits appear in hair when inspected.
12. Chicken Pox—until 6 days after onset of rash and all sores have dried and crusted.
13. Pertussis—until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment to prevent

infection from recurring.

14. Mumps—until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.

15. Measles—until 6 days after onset of rash.

16. Rubella—until 6 days after onset of rash.

Upon arrival, each child is checked by a staff member to screen for early signs of illness. As stated in Title 22 Regulation 101226.1:

(a) The licensee shall be responsible for ensuring that children with obvious symptoms of illness including, but not limited to, fever or vomiting, are not accepted.

(b) (1) No child shall be accepted without contact between center staff and the person bringing the child to the center.

(2) The licensee shall require that the person bringing the child to the center remain until the child is accepted.

If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be notified immediately and asked to pick up your child for the protection of the other children and the staff at Discoveryland. If your child contracts a communicable disease such as Covid-19, monkeypox, chicken pox, ringworm, pink eye, scabies, etc., please notify the director so other parents will be aware of possible symptoms in their children. The staff at Discoveryland have to take into consideration not only the health of your child but the health of all the children in their care. Thank you for helping us to have a healthy preschool.

Medication

If your child has an allergy or is recovering from an illness and is no longer contagious but still requires medication, it may be given at school under the following conditions:

1. The medication is in its original prescription container.
2. The child's name, dosage, times of administration, name of the physician, and name of pharmacy are properly labeled on the container.
3. All medications must be turned in to the director or teacher in your child's class upon arrival.

4. Parents must complete the “Medicine Form” for the medication to be dispensed.

All medication is kept in the kitchen out of children’s reach.

Physician’s Report

This form must be signed by the parent before the child enrolls and is included in the registration packet.

MISCELLANEOUS

Birthdays

Birthdays are usually celebrated during afternoon snacks. Parents are welcome to send a special treat but please let us know in advance. It is also thoughtful to inquire about dietary limitations so that alternate treats can be provided for the children who require them.

Celebrations

Occasionally special holiday celebrations will occur when there are games, food, and/or entertainment.

Cleanliness

The teachers keep the toys clean in each classroom by sanitizing them daily and weekly.

Field Trips

Consent for field trips is part of the application form. Field trips are taken several times a year. Teachers are present for all field trips. Parents are encouraged to drive children on field trips. Parents must have proof of adequate insurance and seat belts for all children. Parents will be notified at least one week before a driving field trip. Spontaneous walking trips close to the school premises may be taken without notice when weather permits.

Fundraisers

Fundraisers are held periodically to help defray the costs of additional equipment or children's supplies instead of higher tuition. Notice will be given in advance of any fundraisers and each parent is asked to participate if possible.

Food Guidelines

We strongly recommend that all lunches be prepared with healthful, whole grain foods, fruits, and vegetables. Foods such as candy, cookies, and sugary drinks are not recommended for young children. Some guidelines which might be helpful when feeding children are:

1. No hard candy or gum should be sent in the lunch.
2. Please have all fruits and vegetables should be peeled and cut into smaller sections as much as possible.
3. Try to serve food that your child will like which is not high in fat or sugar. Try to get nutritious drinks that are not just flavored sugar water. Please avoid sending desserts.
4. Be creative and provide variety in taste and texture. Cutting sandwiches with fancy cookie cutters can sometimes enhance the desire to eat more.
5. Put the child's name on their lunch container or brown bag for identification. The child is not always able to tell the teacher which lunch is theirs, especially if another child has an identical lunch container.
6. Please, only bring food that can be heated up in the microwave, ready to eat.

Disclaimer

This handbook is for informational purposes and does not directly or indirectly constitute a contract between a parent and Discoveryland. Also, the contents of this handbook are subject to change at any time at the discretion of the Discoveryland staff, the owner/director.