

PARENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

Discovery Learning Center
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PURPOSES FOR DISCOVERY LEARNING CENTER

The purpose is to provide a Christian environment in which children can develop their individual and unique potentials socially, emotionally, spiritually, intellectually, and physically.

SOCIAL GROWTH is provided by helping the children develop qualities which will enable them to learn to live effectively with others and value the rights of each individual.

EMOTIONAL GROWTH is nurtured by aiding the children in developing healthy self-identities in which they view themselves with confidence, self-reliance, and self-worth. They will be guided in accepting their feeling and learning positive ways in which to express themselves.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH is enhanced by developing in the children a greater sense of love, brotherhood, peace, and joy according to the life and teaching of Christ.

INTELLECTUAL GROWTH is stimulated by providing an environment that encourages curiosity and creativity according to the individual abilities and readiness of each child.

PHYSICAL GROWTH is enhanced through providing ample space for freedom of movement, balancing periods of quiet and active play, and developing large and small motor skills. It is our goal to provide a positive, flexible, creative and meaningful Christian environment for each child through a consistent, articulated learning program.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIME should be NO earlier than five (5) minutes before class time. All children should be in their classrooms no later than 10 minutes after class begins. Any special circumstances should be worked out with your child's teacher and the director.

OUR POLICIES

ENROLLMENT is for the nine month term. A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$100 will be collected.

TUITION is an annual fee paid in nine monthly installments. Tuition is collected one month in advance and is due by the 1st of the month. A late charge of \$20.00 will be automatically accessed on the 1st of the month if fees are not paid. The child may not return to class until the account is current. Payments should be brought in, mailed to DLC, paid in office, or online.

There will be a \$20.00 charge for all returned checks, as well as any other bank charges that occur.

DISCOUNTS

DLC employees will receive a 50% discount for their children. Current FMCBA employees will receive a 10% discount for their children.

Tuition that is paid in full will be given a 10% discount if paid by the end of September of the current school year.

WAITLIST

Current DLC students will have first priority for enrollment. Children of FMCBA members will be placed at the top of waiting lists.

Each child is enrolled for the entire school year or the balance of the school year. One (1) month's written notice and one (1) month's tuition is due upon a child's early withdrawal from the program.

Latest dismissal time is 2:45pm

There is an overtime charge of \$10.00 for each child that is left past the regular dismissal time. Once you are late past pick-up time, your child's teacher will escort him/her to the aftercare room. Upon your arrival, the fee will be due. Please be prompt.

PARENTAL VISITS: We maintain an open door policy. Please remember our first responsibility is to the children. Since classroom visits can be disruptive, we ask for arrangements be made prior to the visit. Arrival and dismissal times are not the best times for lengthy conversations. Teachers welcome a call from you to discuss any matter that you may have.

CONFERENCES: Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled upon request for all classes.

ILLNESSES: We need to know about illness, especially infectious diseases. We appreciate knowing when a child will be absent.

WE ARE NOT EQUIPPED TO GIVE
MEDICATIONS TO CHILDREN

KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME:

- If s/he has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hours.
- If s/he has been on antibiotics for less than 24 hours.
- If s/he has a rash.
- If s/he has liquid stools.
- If s/he has a heavy nasal discharge.
- If s/he has a constant cough.
- If s/he has inflammation of the eyes.

Please help us by keeping your child home when s/he has any of the above symptoms. None of us like to have our children exposed to illness. If a child at school shows sign of illness that has not been diagnosed by a doctor as non-contagious, s/he will be sent home.

IMMUNIZATIONS: We require immunizations be up to date. A medical form must be completed for each child by his/her doctor. If you do not wish to immunize, please fill out the form from our Director.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP A CHILD:

If your child is to be picked up by someone other than his/her parents, please notify the teacher either verbally or by a written note. No child will be released to an unauthorized person. No child will be released to another child.

All authorized adults who may pick up your child must be in our enrollment system. Please see the DLC Director to add authorized adults as the school year progresses. If you need to make a pickup change during the day, call the DLC office to make arrangements. Safety is a priority for all DLC and First Methodist Staff. A call will be made to the phone number on file to verify any pickup changes. An ID will be required for persons who are not the “regular” pick up adult.

PRESCHOOL ARRIVAL PROCEDURE:

All Classes: In the interest of safety, we ask all parents with children in our program to escort their child / children to their room. Please follow the Drop-Off Schedule.

PARKING LOT PROCEDURES: Those dropping off children will park in the “north” church parking lot and enter through the east courtyard doors. The doors will be open during the time of 9:15-9:45. If you arrive after 9:45, you may ring the doorbell or go to the church office, and they will notify DLC.

Classes begin by 9:40.

Departures:

Please park and come in the building to pick your child up from pre-school. The doors will be open at 2:15. Please follow the Pick-Up schedule.

AGE GROUPING: In keeping with state law, children enrolled in Discovery Learning Center will be placed in classrooms according to their age as of September 1.

Peapods Class: (Staff Only) Newborn-9 months
Class size will be limited to 8 babies per day. *First priority for enrollment will be given to the children of currently employed DLC Staff. *Second priority will be given to the children of parents employed at FMCBA.

TOYS FROM HOME: We ask that you leave your child's toys at home or in the car unless special arrangements are made with the teacher. Children are very possessive of their toys. This can cause problems as we try to help them learn to share.

CLOTHING: Please dress your child comfortably and appropriately for the weather.

TENNIS SHOES are a must due to the amount of activities your child(ren) will be participating in. We have outside time, gym time, and our Creative Movement class throughout the week. We want to keep those little little toes safe.

WASHABLE PLAY CLOTHES are necessary because of the messy art materials and other messy activities. We use the outdoor playground whenever possible. Please make sure your child wears a sweater or coat on cool days so, s/he will enjoy the time on the playground. Removable apparel – gloves, mittens, hats etc...

PROCEDURE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS:

Discovery Learning Center recognizes that each child has unique needs; however, some of these needs we are not able to meet due to our teacher/child ratio and limited facilities (i.e. stairs, access to rest rooms, etc.) These needs include, but are not limited to intellectual, visual, hearing, orthopedic, medical, dietary and emotional needs. The director, teachers, and child's parents will determine whether children with special needs can benefit from our program. The Center is not staffed to enable it to give the necessary one-on-one care needed by a child with intense behavioral issues. Therefore, when this situation arises, parents of said child will be asked to confer with the director and/or staff in an effort to correct this problem. In the event the behavior problem continues, the director may, after consultation with the staff involved, ask the parents to remove the child from the Center.

TOILET TRAINING: Children enrolled in our three year old program **must be completely toilet trained.**

INCLEMENT WEATHER: In case of inclement weather the director will determine if school will close. You will be notified by your child's teacher.

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL: Our last day of school will be May 27. There will not be any make up days for the 2026-27 school year due to absences, inclement weather, or school closings.

A NOTE ABOUT DISCIPLINE:

Interactions between children and staff provide opportunities for children to develop an understanding of self and others and are characterized by warmth, personal respect, individuality, positive support, and responsiveness. Staff facilitate interactions among children to provide opportunities for development of social skills and intellectual growth.

Our staff uses non-punitive, positive techniques of guidance. Limits are set for the children, but the environment is designed so a minimal number of no's are needed. Our methods include positive reinforcement, redirection, anticipation of and elimination of potential problems. Cooperation, helping, taking turns, and talking to solve problems is encouraged. We provide encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism.

STAFF: Our program is staffed by adults who understand child development and who recognize and provide for children's needs. Regular training opportunities are provided to help keep the staff up to date, enthusiastic, and energized.

PREPARATION FOR SCHOOL: Hints for you to help your child have a happy first day of school.

- Talk about school in a positive way. Name specific activities for your child so that they may look forward to their day. “Won’t it be fun to play on the slide on the playground?”
“I know you will enjoy easel painting.”
- Use the teacher’s name frequently so the child becomes familiar with it. Do you know some children who will also be attending?
Perhaps you can invite them over.
- Plan your schedule so the child can be rested, unhurried and relaxed about the first morning.
- Provide a nutritious breakfast every day.
- Expect the child to go to school happily and to have a good time. Your own insecurity will be sensed quickly.

GOODBYE: Take time each day to say goodbye. It may be tempting to leave your child while s/he is involved but that doesn't build trust in the long run. Over time, good-byes strengthen children’s belief that the parents will come back. Build a goodbye ritual. Ask your child “How shall we say goodbye?” “Could I have two hugs?” “Can we rub noses?” Also leave your child with an idea of what you’ll do together at the end of the day.

