

Discovery Years, Inc.
Early Learning Center

6847 Addicks-Satsuma Rd
7020 Fry Rd

Houston, TX 77084
Cypress, TX 77433

(281) 861-0404 tel
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POLICIES & GUIDELINES

PROGRAM INFORMATION AND WHAT WE OFFER:

Purpose and Goal:

We strive to provide our students with opportunities to learn more about themselves, understand the world around them, learn how to live with others, and participate in pre-kindergarten readiness activities. Discovery Years' goal is to provide a loving and stimulating environment in which each child is able to gain a positive self-concept. (TRS)

In the event your family needs additional special accommodations for various reasons such as home language assistance, special needs/differing abilities, cultural backgrounds, etc., please discuss with Director prior to enrollment to ensure such accommodations can be met. (TRS)

Facility:

Our facilities include ½ acre age-appropriate playgrounds, lots of shade, riding tracks for tricycles, bright cheerful and open classrooms, fully developed centers, clean commercial kitchens, and security-code access.

Discovery Years has farm animals at each location for school mascots. Both schools have their own spacious barn yard areas on the back of each school playground. The animals are very docile and friendly, and enjoy the children's company.

Teachers:

Our staff is carefully selected on the basis of their professional training and friendly, caring way with children. Teachers must comply with annual requirements for continuing education, CPR and First Aid training.

At this time, our staff are encouraged, but not required, to receive vaccinations for preventable diseases such as the flu or Pertussis. (CCR28)

Nutrition: (CCR 10)

Nutritious meals are served daily Monday through Friday.

Breakfast is offered each morning and is served between 6:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., and upon request. A nutritious lunch is served at 11:00 a.m., as well as an afternoon snack at 2:30 p.m.

Discovery Years participates in the **Child and Adult Care Food Program**. This program asks for meals to meet the suggested requirements established by the USDA. Prepared food that is brought into the program to be shared among children must be commercially prepared or prepared in a kitchen that is **inspected by a local health official**. Milk, fresh fruit and vegetables are available for children who bring their lunches from home. Our children's health and safety come first, therefore, the following policies have been put in to effect: Liquids and foods hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of reach of children. Foods that causes severe allergic reactions will not be permitted into the center and we will advise families of this information at times where foods are brought into the center. Our staff is trained to handle medical emergencies regarding allergic reactions should they arise. (TRS)

Menus are posted in the front lobby. These are rotated on at least a 4-week basis to ensure the children receive and are offered a variety of foods. Resources regarding healthy snacks, proper serving guidelines, etc. can be found in our Parent Resource Area.(TRS)

If families choose to provide their own meals from home, please drop off with staff personnel at the front desk so we may ensure all food is stored and prepared properly.

Discipline: (CCR7)

Methods of discipline that a caregiver may use at Discovery Years include:

- A. Praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
- B. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
- C. Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
- D. Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.
- E. Notifying parents of behavioral problems that the caregiver has not been successful at changing with the above mentioned methods.

HOURS OF OPERATION AND PROGRAM INFORMATION: (CCR1)

<u>Preschool & Toddler Academic Program:</u>	<i>(August through May - Ages 18 mos. to 5 years)</i>	
5, 3 or 2 Day Program	6:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.	Monday - Friday
Mother's Day Out	8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Monday - Friday

Discovery Years preschool curriculum is developed to provide for your child's physical, emotional, social and cognitive development. Each child's special interests and developmental needs are also considered. Monthly topics and weekly themes are incorporated into the daily learning schedule in Language Arts, Math, Science, Music, Art, Movement and Play. A rest period is provided each day after lunch. Special visitors are invited to the school to provide knowledge and a variety of hands-on learning experiences for the children. A fall festival is planned in October to bring families and teachers together to celebrate the end of another long hot summer. This is also an opportunity to allow the children to show off some of their work, which is displayed throughout their classrooms. Graduation ceremonies for children moving on to kindergarten are observed each year in May. Look for details which will be posted in the school lobby.

School Age Program: ((August through May - Ages 5 to 12 years)

Before School Care	6:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Monday - Friday
After School Care	3:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.	Monday - Friday

Transportation: A Cy-Fair school bus picks up and drops off children attending Horne and Duryea Elementary Schools. Discovery Years provides transportation for school age children attending various other elementary schools. Parents must give advance notice if a child will not be returning after school to Discovery Years on the bus. (CCR14)

Summer Program: (June through August - Ages 18 mos. to 12 years)

5, 3 or 2 Day Program	6:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.	Monday - Friday
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Arts & Crafts, Music, Games, Mad Science Experiments, and Reading Club activities will fill each day. A daily rest period is provided after lunch for the children five years and younger. A wonderful variety of special interest programs are scheduled to provide entertainment and learning experiences for everyone. Splash days for all children, and varied field trips for the school age children are provided weekly.

Water Activities: Splash days will be designated on our monthly event calendar. Children will need signed consent to participate and required splash day attire will be needed as well as an extra change of clothes. (CCR15)

Field Trips: During the summer program, children ages 5 & up will be able to attend field trips to various local establishments. Participants must have already completed kindergarten or subsequent grade level. (CCR16)

Curriculum:

Our curriculum is based on the premise that young children learn best through play. Classes are divided into centers which include Dramatic Play, Manipulative Play, Blocks, Art and Science. Each child is also exposed to a wide range of experimentation with various art media and creative materials. The daily program at Discovery Years includes indoor and outdoor play utilizing a variety of equipment to develop large and small motor control. We use Frog Street curriculum which is a developmentally appropriate curriculum that is research-based and aligned with the Texas Education Agency's Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines.

Physical Activity: (CCR18 & TRS)

Children benefit from physical activity and outdoor play in a variety of ways. Aside from keeping children physically healthy and reducing the risk of disease as they get older, playing outdoors provides a wealth of sensory experiences, exposure to vitamin D, a variety of opportunities to build muscle strength and it develops coordination of the body. Outdoor physical play also contributes to cognitive development and social/emotional development through the different stages of play and engaging in interactions with peers. Children are able to critically think, problem solve, initiate and follow through with their own ideas, and learn situational awareness.

We are proud to offer an outdoor space that provides opportunity for all of the above. The children in care have opportunities in the morning and afternoon for outdoor play, weather permitting. Please refer to the classroom schedules for the duration of play.

We engage the children in structured physical activity, as well as, allow time for children to use their imagination and engage in unstructured play. We have various outdoor open-air spaces, a covered area, as well as adequate space in our classrooms to engage in physical activity.

For your child's safety, it is required they wear tennis shoes for outdoor and physical play. Clothing that is very loose is also a concern in an outdoor play area so please keep that in mind and send an extra change of clothes.

Weather conditions are monitored daily, and in the event of harsh weather, plans are adjusted on lesson plans to ensure a mix of moderate to vigorous physical activity is achieved daily.

Screen Time: (TRS)

Children are constantly taking in and processing information from the world around them, therefore, it is imperative that young children engage in hands on interactions within their environments. Technology and screen time limit the child's sensory experiences, problem solving skills, and social interactions that are naturally occurring through play. Because of this, we try not to utilize screen time unless it is supplemental to the curriculum we are implementing. We follow the Texas Child Care Regulation guidelines in regard to screen time, which is 1 hour a day for ages 2 and above. We do not allow any type of screen time for children under the age of 2. Resources regarding limiting screen time usage can be located in our Parent Resource Area.

Technology and Interactive Media:

Discovery Years Early Learning Centers are not currently utilizing technology and interactive media in the classroom.

Child Assessments: (TRS)

Formal and informal assessments are utilized in our program to gather information regarding the children's developmental progress. This information is used to adjust and adapt our curriculum to meet the children's needs. We conduct informal observations of the children daily and complete formal assessments two times a year.

Parent Teacher Conferences are encouraged two times a year to discuss the developmental progress of your child. (TRS)

Holidays:

Discovery Years will be closed in observance of the following holidays; New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Advance notice will be given informing parents of the days we will observe these holidays. Days closed are based on day of the week each holiday falls.

Vacation and Absences: (TRS)

Each child is allowed up to three weeks of "tuition free" family vacation time for each calendar year, provided that the child is not in attendance at Discovery Years. Free vacation shall require two weeks advance notice of the dates requested. If a parent discontinues bringing a child to Discovery Years and subsequently wishes to return, the annual enrollment fee may be reassessed. Admittance will be based on available space. A notice is required for absences. Please note; 4 days is considered a full week, and a \$50 (per day fee) will be applied to 2 or 3 days of attendance. Families are required to pay tuition for a minimum of 2 days attendance per week, unless they have some "tuition free" vacation days remaining and prefer to apply them instead.

ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES:**Admission:**

All admissions and enrollment forms must be filled out completely with updated information prior to enrollment. For emergency purposes, it is very important that we have current primary, secondary, and emergency contact information in the children's files. If you are unable to update your contact information with a member of the staff, please send an email to seaman.robert@gmail.com. (CCR13 & TRS)

Health Records:

A statement of good health and a complete immunization record signed by a physician must be furnished prior to a child's enrollment. Please ask your child's pediatrician or refer to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Guidelines if you have questions regarding vaccinations and when your child should receive them. (CCR 11)

Please discuss any special needs your child may have with the Director prior to enrollment. This helps us research and obtain specific training on how to provide the best possible care for your child.

Hearing and Vision:

The Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, requires a screening or professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems for the following children who are enrolled in childcare centers: First-time enrollees who are four years of age or older and all children enrolled in programs who are four years of age by September 1st of each year will be screened for possible vision and hearing problems prior to completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment, whichever is longest, or present evidence of screening conducted one year prior to enrollment. (CCR 12)

Registration Fee:

An annual registration fee for the school year is required for each child, and is due each August, at the beginning of the school year. Families enrolling after the school year starts, are required to pay the annual registration fee in full, upon enrollment. A summer activity fee for the Summer Program is also required for each participating child, and is payable in advance each summer.

Tuition:

Tuition is due in advance each week on Monday. A late fee of \$5 will be charged for each day after Tuesday that tuition is unpaid. Discovery Years reserves the right to request tuition in advance, on a biweekly or monthly basis, from families which habitually pay late. In addition, a \$25 fee will be assessed for returned checks. Discovery Years **does not** offer refunds. (TRS)

GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES:**Drop-Off / Pick-Up: (TRS & CCR2)**

Every child must be signed in when dropped off and signed out when picked up at school. Sign In / Sign Out sheets are located in the school lobby. Children must be escorted into the school and left with a Discovery Years staff member. Discovery Years opens at 6:30 a.m. and closes at 6:30 p.m. There will be a charge of \$1 per minute after 6:30 p.m. for late pick-up. This late charge is to be paid upon pick-up to the staff member in charge.

Individuals who are on the approved pick up list, but have not picked up before will need to provide a valid Driver's License to copy and place into the child's file. (CCR2)

Late Morning Arrival:

Most of the academic instruction happens in the morning. We strongly encourage you to have your child at school prior to 8:30 a.m. to ensure their participation in the activities, as well as, limiting any disruption to the other children.

Dress Code:

Children will be introduced to many things which can be messy... such as art, which will include painting, gluing, cutting, and coloring with markers and crayons. Outside play will include playing with sand, rolling in grass, riding tricycles, swinging, climbing, running, and other activities. Therefore, it is important that children wear clothes that will allow them to successfully participate in these activities. For your child's safety, tennis shoes are required to be worn for outside and inside play. A change of clothes is required for each child, as well. Label each item with your child's full name, and place the clothing in a gallon sized zip lock bag. Be sure to include your child's full name on the outside of the bag. (TRS)

Diapers:

Families with children enrolled still wearing diapers need to supply the following:

- * Diapers as needed
- * Two boxes of 80 count baby wipes every month

Personal Blankets:

Please do not send your child to school with pillows or blankets. Discovery Years will provide each child with a soft mat or cot and blanket. The mats are wiped down daily, and the blankets are washed weekly and stored in each child's individual cubby.

Toys:

Please leave all toys at home. Each classroom is equipped with developmentally appropriate toys and learning materials. Discovery Years is concerned about the safety of each child enrolled. On show-and-tell days or special activity days, a teacher may request an item from home (check the monthly class calendar). At these times, the item brought will be placed in your child's cubby, or with the teacher for safe keeping. The Discovery Years staff asks for your cooperation in this matter. Discovery Years will not be responsible for lost or broken toys.

Pets and Animals: (CCR17)

Animals are not permitted to be brought to Discovery Years unless the Director is notified in advance, and permission is given. This is for the protection of everybody, including the pet.

ILLNESS, MEDICATION, AND EMERGENCIES:**Illness: (CCR3)**

Illnesses that would prohibit a child from being admitted for care are as follows:

1. If the illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
2. If the child has one of the following, unless a medical evaluation by a healthcare professional indicates that you can include the child in the childcare center's activities:
 - A. Oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavioral changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
 - B. Rectal temperature of 101.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavioral changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
 - C. Armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavioral changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
 - D. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavioral changes, or other signs the child may be severely ill.
3. If a healthcare professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

Health Checks:

Temperatures are taken immediately upon arrival and a general observation of the child is done at the door. If the child has any symptoms of being ill, it will be required that the child not stay in care that day and only return with a doctor's note and symptom free. (CCR 27)

Medication: (CCR4)

In accordance with State Licensing requirements, Discovery Years can only administer medicine under the following guidelines:

- * Medicine must be in original container
- * Medicine must be labeled with child's name
- * Medicine must be labeled with the date (if prescription medicine)
- * Medicine must include directions to administer the medication
- * Medicine that is prescribed must include the name of the physician prescribing the medication

Medical Emergencies: (CCR5)

The following steps will be implemented in the case of critical illness or injury requiring immediate attention of a physician;

- A.** Contact emergency medical services or take the child to the nearest emergency room.
- B.** Give the child first-aid treatment or CPR when needed.
- C.** Contact the physician identified in the child's records.
- D.** Contact the child's parent.
- E.** Ensure supervision of the other children in the group.

Discovery Years does not maintain or administer unassigned epinephrine auto-injectors in the event of an emergency anaphylaxis reactions. (CCR29)

Topical Ointments, Repellent, and Sunscreen: (CCR 19)

If you wish for your child to wear any topical protectants, such as ointments, repellent, or sunscreen, you must complete an authorization form giving permission to the center to apply the exact protectant provided by the parent. The protectant must not be expired, and must be labeled with the child's first and last name.

Non-Medical Emergencies: (CCR24)

Discovery years has an Emergency Preparedness Plan created and available upon request to cover each type of emergency, should one arise. Teachers are trained to implement these plans and drills are conducted regularly to ensure a smooth process during an actual emergency.

Discovery Years will contact parents as soon as the immediate threat of danger is over to discuss reunification. Please tune in to local TV and Radio Stations and/or contact the local law enforcement office in the event of an emergency.

Inclement Weather:

Discovery Years follows the schedule of the Cy-Fair School District in the event of inclement weather. Tune in to local TV and radio stations, or log into our social media accounts for more information. (TRS)

Emergency Evacuation Plan:

In the event of an emergency and we must evacuate the facility, we will relocate to our other location. Our two locations are as follows:

Location #1

Discovery Years, Inc.
6847 Addicks-Satsuma Rd.
Houston, TX 77084

Location #2

Discovery Years, Inc.
7020 Fry Rd.
Cypress, TX 77433

PARENT INFORMATION:

Parent Communication and Participation: (CCR6 & TRS)

We strive to keep our families as informed as possible through a variety of means. Immediate matters and emergencies will be handled by phone. Information from the child's teacher can be obtained at drop off or pick up time, however, it is important to inform management if you wish to speak to your child's teacher due to the supervision of the children in care. For lengthy conversations, please request a parent/teacher or parent/director conference. Various other means are through the Parent Resource Area, newsletters, postings, social media and notes being sent home, which will be found in the lobby.

Monthly calendars will be sent home throughout the year as a means of communication between Discovery Years and your family.

Periodically, parents will be notified about opportunities to participate in school activities. Events like Open House, Festivals, Holiday Parties, and Graduation are some of the various events we hold at Discovery Years throughout the year. (CCR21)

Another very important way our parents can participate in the success of our school, is by completing surveys of the center. Your feedback is important to the success and ongoing improvement of our center. (TRS)

Our Parent Handbook policies are reviewed annually and updated when necessary to reflect changes. You will be notified of any changes made to the handbook. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the policies or procedures of Discovery Years Early Learning Center, you may request a conference with the Director at any time. (CCR13 CCR20 & TRS)

Challenging Behavior Process:

Our staff is dedicated to making Discovery Years a safe and nurturing environment for each child enrolled. We will make every attempt to work with behavioral issues, including but not limited to, behavior plans, conferences, probation, etc. created through collaboration between the parents, teacher and Director. In the event our facility becomes unsafe for the child or other children, or there is no cooperation by the family to address the concerns, Discovery Years may or may not offer a probation period before dismissal of a student. Discovery Years reserves the right to terminate enrollment of a child at its sole discretion. (TRS)

Withdrawal and Separation: (CCR8 & TRS)

Written notice is required to be submitted to the Director two weeks in advance of disenrolling a child from the program or changing a child's scheduled days.

Instances of non-payment or gross misconduct towards the center could potentially result in Discovery Years terminating your child care services. Please discuss any issues that may arise with the Director.

All avenues regarding challenging behavior will be explored in order to find the best solution for your child, however, if extensive steps are taken to work with your child and behavioral challenges are becoming harmful to the other children and staff, your child care services may be terminated at the discretion of the director.

REGULATION AND MANDATED REPORTING:

Texas Health and Human Services Commission: (CCR 22&23)

We are inspected and mandated by Child Care Regulation to comply with the Texas Minimum Standards guidelines for Child Care Centers. The Texas Minimum Standard Guidelines and more Information regarding Child Care Regulation can be found online at the website below:

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/protective-services-providers/child-care-regulation>

Under “Protective Service Providers” and the Child Care Regulation Link

or can be obtained by calling our local licensing office:

713-287-3238

Located at: 1330 E. 40th Houston, TX 77022

A copy of the Texas Minimum Standard guidelines and our most recent inspection report are available for review.

Child Abuse and Neglect: (CCR26)

Our staff members are required to receive annual training on recognizing warning signs and factors that may mean a child is at risk. The training also addresses mandated reporting and what an employee should do if they suspect a child is being abused and neglected.

Resources addressing warning signs, factors that may mean there is risk, prevention techniques, and information for community organizations who help with abuse and neglect, are located within the Parent Resource Area or can be provided upon request. Assistance with connecting to community resources can be provided if necessary.

If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, please call the Texas Abuse Hotline at 1 800 252 5400 to make a report. For less serious concerns or more information, you may go to the Texas Abuse Hotline Website and at the link below:

<https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx>

As always if you or your child are in immediate danger, please call 911 or local law enforcement.