

Policies and Procedures



26545 Maple Valley-Black Diamond Rd SE

Suite K-150

Maple Valley, WA 98038

425-437-0001

www.discoveryplaytown.com/playcare

admin@discoveryplaytown.com

Welcome

What a privilege it is to welcome your family to Discovery Playtown Playcare. We are grateful for the opportunity to join with you in the education of your child.

The purpose of this handbook is to facilitate your understanding and involvement in the education of your child at Discovery Playtown Playcare. It is important that parents review the policies and practices in this handbook so that your child will have the full benefit of his/her experience with us.

Mission and Philosophy

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

“At Discovery Playtown, we provide a gathering place for young children and their families where imaginative play and educational experiences allow them to grow as individuals and to develop relationships.”

OUR CORE VALUES

1. **PLAY** – We believe in playing, being playful, and promoting play
2. **SERVICE** – We believe in serving our customers, children in our care, our co-workers, and the wider community.
3. **PRESENCE** – We believe that being present to the people and events in front of us is what allows us to live out our core values.
4. **JOY** – We believe in finding the joy in all we do.

Our Philosophy

Our mission is to provide every child with a quality early childhood experience. Our staff views education as a partnership between parents and teachers. We strive to create a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment that promotes social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth, as well as a love of learning. We believe that children learn best through play and hands on experiences. We believe in empowering children by offering them opportunities to make decisions and solve problems. It is our goal that children will possess confidence in their abilities and establish lasting relationships with teachers and peers.

Hours of Operation

Playcare classes are offered from 9:00am to 4:00pm. Students must sign up for a minimum of 2 hours per day and can stay for a maximum of 4 hours per day. Classes start on the hour. Your child may be dropped off any time after their scheduled start time and picked up any time before their scheduled pick-up time. Late fees will be strictly assessed. See Tuition and Fees below for more information.

Playcare Curriculum

Our Playcare curriculum closely aligns with the learning targets used in our Preschool program. The curriculum is designed for children ages 2 ½ to 6 years of age.

The children are introduced to activities which develop large and small motor skills, cognitive abilities, cooperation, sharing and other social skills. Children are immersed in a language rich environment that introduces them to many pre-academic skills, such as letters, numbers, colors, shapes, and vocabulary development. The daily schedule includes circle time, free choice play, arts and crafts, dramatic play, snack, story time, and indoor games.

Our curriculum is centered around monthly themes. Our current schedule of themes is as follows:

2017	November	Opposites, Family, Thanksgiving
	December	Countries, Holidays, Cultural Diversity
2018	January	Quilts, All About Me, Winter
	February	Friends, Valentines, Community Helpers
	March	Dr. Seuss, Frogs, St. Patrick's Day
	April	Spring, Earth, Farm
	May	Mother's Day, Plants and Seeds
	June	Rocks, Father's Day, Summer
	July	USA, 4 th of July, Ocean
	August	Beach, Fairy Tales, Transportation
	September	Back to School, Apples, Fall
	October	Colors, Outer Space, Pumpkins
	November	Family, Five Senses, Thanksgiving
	December	Countries, Holidays, Cultural Diversity

Our typically daily schedule is as follows:

9:00-10:00 – Free Choice time in the Playtown

10:00-10:30 – Opening Circle (calendar, meet and greet all students, songs/finger play)

10:30-11:00 – Art Project

11:00-11:30 – Music and Movement

11:30-12:00 – Snack/Lunch

12:00-12:30 – Story Time

12:30-1:30 – Free Choice time in the Playtown

1:30-2:00 - Opening Circle (calendar, meet and greet all students, songs/finger play) and snack

2:00-3:00 –Centers (fine motor, academic, sensory)

3:00-3:30 – Art Project or Science Activity, Closing Circle

3:30-4:00 – Free Choice time in the Playtown

Staff

Each staff member is dedicated to the growth and well-being of your child as they guide them to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically. All staff members have /CPR and first aid training and a current Washington State Patrol background check on file.

Owner/Playcare Director

Beth Peterson

Lead Teachers

Beth Peterson and Haley Mount

Calendar/Holidays

Playcare will be closed for certain holidays and school breaks, including but not limited to:

2017

November 23 – Thanksgiving

December 24-25 – Christmas

December 31 – New Year's Eve

2018

January 15 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

February 19-23 – President’s Day and Mid-Winter Break

July 4-6 - Independence Day

September 3 – Labor Day

November 22 – Thanksgiving

December 24-25 – Christmas

December 31 – New Year’s Eve

Any other closures will be announced at least 2 weeks in advance.

Class Size

The maximum number of children in a Playcare class is 12 with a teacher/student ratio of 1:6.

Communication

Updates to our themes, special activities and school closures will be regularly posted to our website: www.discoveryplaytown.com/playcare

Arrival/Pick up

All students must be signed in and out at the front desk. Do not enter the play area until you have checked in at the front desk.

All children in playcare will be given a bracelet and a name tag to be worn during playcare. If someone other than you will pick up your child, write their full name as it appears on their driver’s license in the note section of the sign-in sheet. It is the parent’s (or other authorized adult’s) responsibility to make sure the child hangs up his/her coat in the classroom. The teacher will greet you and welcome your child into the class at the classroom door.

When picking up a child from playcare, parents or other authorized adult must sign out at the front desk. A staff person will check your photo ID. Children will only be released to the person authorized by the parent, which is assumed to be the parent unless parent notifies us at drop-off. If your plans for pick-up change, please call our front desk.

After you have signed your child out, the teacher will be notified by walkie-talkie, and the child(ren) will be brought to the front desk to meet you there.

Separation Anxiety

The process of separation from a parent as the child enters and attends preschool is one of the most important accomplishments of the preschool child. Some apprehension in new surroundings is normal for children as well as parents and separation can be difficult. The process requires much parental patience and consistency. Be assured that the staff will be positive and supportive as you and your child adjust to the start of school.

Prepare your child and tell them what to expect. Remind your child that you love them, they will be safe, they will have fun, and that you will be back to pick them up. (Note: If this is your child's first drop-off experience, you may want to bring him/her in to play before the first drop-off to allow him/her to become familiar with our facility.)

Our staff suggests the following guidelines regarding separation anxiety:

1. Place emphasis on what the child will be doing at school, rather than what your activities will be while he/she is in school.
2. See that your child is involved in a specific activity or is in the hands of a teacher before you leave him/her.
3. Tell the child when you are leaving. Do not sneak off.
4. Avoid prolonged good-byes. It is best to say a loving "good-bye" to a tearful child and then leave. You will be called if your child does not stop crying within 30 minutes.
5. Ask the teacher for help in separation. The staff has experience in calming children who are upset. If you think your child might run after you, let the teacher know and they will make sure your child stays safe while you leave.
6. Do not peek in the classroom or stand in the hall to see how your child is doing. If your child sees you he/she will likely start crying all over again. You are welcome to call the Discovery Playtown at 425-437-0001 to find out how your child is doing.

It is important to point out that sooner or later after the initial successful adjustment to school is made, many children want to test the limits of not going to school. Expect lapses from time to time and feel free to ask for help when needed.

Tuition Policies

Tuition payments will be made at the time of registration. Our rates are as follows:

\$45 annual family registration fee (\$25 for members). Due at the time of the first registration. Due annually with the first registration received after 365 days past the previous registration fee. We will waive this fee for the first visit only for an additional \$2 per hour per child.

\$10.50 per hour for the first child with current annual family registration fee

\$6.50 per hour for siblings with current annual family registration fee

All class registrations are non-refundable. Register at least 12 hours in advance (or by 8pm the evening before, whichever comes first). Cancellations received with at least 12 hours' notice will receive credit for a future session. Day-of cancellations or no-shows are non-refundable, with one exception: If you wake up with an ill child, inform us by 8:00am by emailing: admin@discoveryplaytown.com. At management's discretion, we will offer a credit toward a future class if you email or drop off a doctor's note.

Your pre-reserved class time starts at the arrival time, and there are no credits for early pick-ups.

Day-of registrations will be accepted as space allows. Call our front desk starting at 9:00am to check on daily class sizes. If we do have room and times that work for you, you can register and pay at drop-off. All children must have a prepaid registration to attend classes.

Late fees and snack fees must be paid at pick-up. Failure to do so will result in a charge to the credit card used for the original reservation. Charges under \$5.00 will incur a \$0.50 service charge.

Late Pick-Up Policy

It is important that you are on time to pick up your child(ren). For safety and legal purposes, it is important that we maintain a proper teacher to child ratio. When you are late, it can affect our teachers' ability to attend to the children in their care and take proper lunch and rest breaks. It can also be stressful for your child if you do not arrive when he/she is expecting you.

If you are going to be late, call Discovery Playtown at 425-437-0001 as soon as possible. This is reassuring for your child and helps the teacher to know that you are on your way.

If you are late picking up your child, we will charge \$1 per minute that you are late, payable when you pick up your child.

Extendable time – If you reserved for 2 or 3 hours and find you need to extend your time (keeping to the 4 hour maximum) simply call us before the end of your time and your time can be extended at regular rates without penalty if space is available.

Snacks

The children will be served a snack each day they attend preschool. You may bring food for your child or purchase snacks from us. We carry a selection of kid-friendly snacks at our front desk. Students that do not have a snack will have a snack fee of \$1.50 added to the tuition for the day.

If your child will need lunch during their time here, please send enough food for the meal. We are working on a partnership with nearby restaurants, but do not offer an option to buy lunch at this time.

We are a nut-free facility. Please do not send any food that contains nuts (including peanut butter). Food containing nuts will be sent home.

Toilet Training Requirements

All students must be working on toilet training or fully toilet trained. The staff understands that younger students require extra encouragement while making the transition into school. Staff members are sensitive to this issue and are supportive of the children in this area. Due to health, safety and legal concerns we will encourage your child to be as independent as possible in their bathroom needs. Please assist us by taking your child to the restroom before entering the classroom and dressing them in clothing that they are able to manage independently.

We do not expect children to be completely accident-free. We realize that developing this control is a process. Even potty-trained preschoolers occasionally have accidents or experience regression in this area at times. We ask that all preschoolers wear underwear or a pull-up. If an accident occurs, a staff member will assist your child in cleaning up and you will be notified when you pick up your child. As much as possible, we will encourage your child to be independent (removing their own wet clothes, wiping off with a wet wipe, getting dressed in dry clothes). If your child is still in the learning phase, please send extra clothes (including underwear or pull-ups) for your child.

Health Policies

Your child's health is important to us. It is vital that the Preschool have your child's health history and current emergency contact information on file. It is also helpful if your child's teacher is aware of any special situations concerning your child. You can notify the teacher during drop-off or by leaving a note on the sign-in sheet.

An emergency medical care agreement must be on file before your child is left in our care. You may download this form during your registration process, or fill it out at the front desk when you arrive.

Illness

For the protection of your child and others in Playcare, keep your child home when they exhibit signs of illness. If your child is sick and will be absent, call Discovery Playtown at 425-437-0001 to let your child's teacher know. Visibly sick children will not be admitted to Playcare classes.

Children should be kept home if any evidence of the following is present:

- Fever: Please wait a full 24 hours after the fever has broken to let your child return to school.
- Vomiting or Diarrhea: Child can return to school 24 hours after the last symptom.

- Sore Throat
- Any Unexplained Rash
- Symptoms of Eye Infection
- Symptoms of Childhood Disease: If your child has a communicable disease such as whooping cough, strep throat, measles, chicken pox, pink eye, etc. notify the Preschool as soon as possible. This will allow us to inform the other parents as soon as possible.

If your child becomes ill during the class time, and in our opinion should go home, we will contact you by phone and ask you to pick them up as soon as possible. For this reason, it is very important that we can always reach you or your emergency contact person during school hours.

If a child is too tired and exhausted to participate in the normal daily routine, we will ask that you come and pick up your child.

If the child has a constant cough, we will ask that you come and pick up your child.

If your child has an excessive runny nose and the teacher has to wipe their nose more than three times within one hour, we will ask that you come and pick up your child.

If your child is vomiting or has diarrhea, they will be sent home and may not return until they have gone 24 hours without symptoms.

If your child has a communicable disease, we would like to communicate that information to other parents as soon as possible. Your child will remain anonymous in that communication. It can be extremely important for some families to know if their child may have been exposed due to more serious health concerns in their family. Your help in communicating with us in a timely manner is appreciated.

Medications

If your child takes medications daily, we ask that your doctor prescribe morning and/or evening dosages, so that you can give your child his/her medicine. If your child is ill enough to need over the counter medication administered throughout the day, it is an indication that they should be kept at home.

If it is absolutely crucial...written permission from your child's doctor/pediatrician/dentist must be obtained prior to administering any medication, including over-the-counter medicines. We must also have written permission from you to administer medications. Prescription medication must be brought in its pharmacy container, appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or per with prescriptive authority. It must also note the dosing/administering directions.

Hand Washing

Sinks are located in each classroom and the bathrooms. Warm water, soap, and single use paper towels are provided for hand washing. We will all wash our hands:

1. Before preparing and serving food
2. When hands are visibly dirty
3. Before eating food
4. When hands come in contact with bodily fluids (i.e. runny nose, saliva)
5. After using the bathroom
6. After coughing or sneezing
7. After playing with sand or playdough
8. After assisting a child in the bathroom

Hand sanitizer is always available when we cannot immediately get to a sink.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

We are committed to providing a clean and healthy environment. Carpets will be cleaned once or twice a year. The carpet will also be spot cleaned and sanitized immediately when an area is visibly soiled or contaminated.

Tables, chairs and countertops will be cleaned throughout the day as needed. They will be cleaned and sanitized a minimum of once per day. In addition, tables will be cleaned after each meal.

Toys are washed on a scheduled basis. Items put in or near a child's mouth will be immediately removed from the play area, and then cleaned and sanitized before it is placed back in the play area.

Safety Policies

The staff at Discovery Playtown will make every effort to ensure the safety of your child while in our care.

Accidents/Injuries

From time to time, minor injuries occur. In the event of a minor injury that does not require medical attention, you will be notified by phone, in person, and/or by a written injury/incident report.

In the event that your child is seriously injured, we will call 911, then notify you immediately. If we are unable to contact you, we will make every effort to contact the persons you have authorized to make medical decisions for your child. In the event that we are unable to reach

you or the individuals you have authorized to make medical decisions, the teacher will seek medical care as needed.

All medical bills, including ambulance fees, become the sole responsibility of the parents or legal guardians.

Staff will perform basic first aid when needed. Staff are also certified in child/adult CPR.

Contact/Family Information

If you should move or change your phone number and/or address, you must notify your child's teacher in writing to prevent any delay should we need to contact you.

It is helpful for our teachers to know when family situations change such as separation, divorce, remarriage, a new baby, serious illness, etc. These changes may affect your child's mood or behavior at school and the teachers can help your child more effectively when informed. All such information will be kept confidential and only be shared with staff members who work with your child and need to know.

Custody

In most cases, when parents are separated or divorced, both parents continue to have equal rights where their children are concerned.

If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent, a copy of the court order must be on file at Discovery Playtown. It must be understood that Discovery Playtown cannot legally prevent a biological parent from picking up their child unless a court order states otherwise.

Emergency Procedures

The Preschool periodically schedules and practices emergency drills. Each staff member is trained with a plan of action in the event of emergency situations. Emergency supplies are kept on site.

Severe Weather

The decision to close the school for any reason is for the safety of the children and drivers traveling to and from school in adverse weather conditions. In the event of severe weather, listen to your radio or television for an announcement pertaining to the Tahoma School District. You can also find this information on the internet at www.tahomasd.us

If Tahoma School District is running 90 minutes late, Playcare for the AM classes will begin at 10:00 am and end at the regular time.

If Tahoma School District is closed for the day, the Playcare is closed for the entire day.

All prepaid registrations for the day will receive a credit for any hours Playcare was not in session to be used for a future session.

Biting, Hitting, and Tantrums

Biting is a very common behavior among young children. It can be a very challenging behavior for both parents and care takers to address. There are many different reasons why children bite. We will do everything possible to reduce biting in daycare, but unfortunately, biting does happen. In the circumstance that a child is going through a biting stage, we will work together with the parents to find strategies and to keep all children safe. Parents will be asked to pick up their child if it's a repeated issue throughout the day.

Hitting and tantrums are a common behavior for toddlers as they learn to express emotion. Our first response with these behaviors is to allow the child to 'cool down' in a safe environment where they will not be able to harm themselves or others. By ignoring tantrums, children usually realize that the behavior does not help them get their way and eventually begin to use other communication skills. When a child's aggressive behavior becomes a safety issue, the child will be separated from the other children and their parents will be notified.

Discipline

It is our belief that when the curriculum is exciting, the environment stimulating, and the structure organized, there is usually little need for disciplinary action. However, some intervention may be needed in order for a child to obtain maximum benefit from our program.

If a child exhibits unacceptable behavior or attitudes, he/she will be instructed as to what is wrong and then directed to a positive alternative approach or behavior. This usually solves the problem and the child goes off to play again.

If the child persists to the point of disruption again, he/she will be reminded of his/her behavior and how it affects others. If the disruption continues and the child willfully refuses to yield to instruction, he/she will have a short time out on a chair in the classroom.

If a child is out of control crying and screaming, and is upsetting the other children in the class he/she will be removed from the classroom by a staff member until he/she calms down. The child will be supervised by a staff member at all times.

After the time out, the teacher will talk to the child about why he/she was in time out. It is important for the child to understand what behavior led to a time out. If the misbehavior continues the teacher may call the parent to pick up the child early.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

All parents want the best for their children. Sometimes abuse is intentional and sometimes it is not. In any case, the child must be protected. We will try to respect your values and methods of

child rearing within the bounds of safety and responsible child care practices. However, if it becomes apparent that the child is being harmed, we are required by state law to report such cases. You also have the right to report any suspicions or incidents that you observe regarding your child or any other child in Discovery Playtown.

Lost and Found

Label all coats, sweaters, hats and backpacks, etc. with your child's name in permanent marker to avoid mix-ups. The staff will make every attempt to locate and return lost belongings. This task is much easier if your child's name is on the item. There is a lost and found box located in the general public snack area under the microwave, any items that are left behind will be placed here. Discovery Playtown Preschool cannot be responsible for any personal belongings that your child may bring to school.

Nondiscrimination Notice

Discovery Playtown Preschool admits students of any sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, hardship fund and other school administered programs.