



Family Handbook

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Welcome!

You have enrolled your child into a wonderful, supportive and family-like childcare center. DK staff are knowledgeable and dedicated to working with you and your child to make your experience with us smooth and worry-free.

Discovery Kids is licensed by the New York State Office of Children & Family Services (NYSOCFS) and offers care for young children from infancy through school-age. The Center is a not-for-profit organization, administratively managed by a volunteer Board of Directors. DK is housed in The Summit Center building and receives administrative support from the agency.

This Parent Handbook will help answer questions you may have about DK. If you have more questions, please contact us, and we will be happy to assist you.

We hope that you and your family will feel that this is your "home away from home." Thank you for becoming part of our family here at Discovery Kids!

Mission Statement

The mission of DK is to prepare children for life success in an inclusive, collaborative, and open environment. Our aim is to provide quality childcare and early education in a secure and loving atmosphere where each child can develop socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively to his or her fullest potential.

Families as Partners

It is vital that DK staff and families maintain open lines of communication to ensure the health and well-being of the children. These are some instances when we appreciate you notifying us: Someone other than a parent is picking up your child, your child is ill, you are going on vacation and your child will be absent from the program, you have a family emergency, there is a change in family structure (e.g., separation, death, or birth of a sibling).

If we know of these kinds of changes, we can offer additional support and attention to your child while he or she is in attendance.

Parent Communication Portal – “Tadpoles”

Tadpoles is a portal that enables communication between families and the DK team. This software allows you to stay connected to your child’s development by sharing photos, video, and notes. Tadpoles use email as the primary form of communication. Each DK room has one or more iPads that staff can use to snap a picture of your child’s day and send it to you. Through Tadpoles email, staff can also send

you a daily report. You can download the Tadpoles app at Google Play (Android) or the Apple App Store (iPhone).

Admission and Enrollment

DK is open year-round, Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. We serve children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age; your child's age and development determines his/her classroom placement. Enrollment is open to all families. Full time (Monday - Friday) full-day, and part time schedules (2 or 3 days a week) can be accommodated.

Protecting Your Child's Privacy

To protect the privacy of those who use our services, DK cannot provide information regarding a child currently or previously enrolled in the program to anyone other than a custodial parent or guardian. The only exception to this policy would be for an official DK representative to provide information required by court order/subpoena.

Registration

Parents/guardians must submit a completed enrollment packet and security deposit to DK at least two weeks prior to the expected date of admission. DK will review the packet and consider placement based on several variables including availability. For new children, before the first day of enrollment you will be expected to pay an enrollment deposit equal to 2 weeks of your child's monthly tuition applied to your last monthly invoice. This enrollment deposit will be refunded provided that your child remains continuously enrolled for 6 months or more. The following registration materials **MUST** be completed and can be found at www.DiscoveryKidsLearningCenter.com under Parent Resources.

Required Registration Forms:

- DK – 0001 – Registration
- DK – 0002 – Release Authorization
- DK – 0003 – Enrollment Agreement
- DK – 0004 – Credit Card Authorization Form (only if something has changed)
- DK – 0005 – Enrollment Fee (\$75 re-enrollment fee)
- OCFS Form – 4433 – Child in Care Medical Statement

Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum, a philosophy for children's growth and development, is implemented for infants and preschoolers at varying levels. The Creative curriculum has four main areas which will be touched upon daily through hands-on learning materials, activities, and centers. The areas include cognitive development, physical development, language development, and social/emotional development/growth.

Cognitive development is stimulated through simple construction materials like hardwood blocks, Legos, natural materials like clay or sand, and imaginative games and activities. Children are encouraged to think, reason, question, and experiment by participation in individual and group problem solving experiences.

Physical development is enhanced through regular use of the Summit Center's gym space and equipment. Our outdoor playground is used daily, weather permitting. Indoor active play equipment includes large balls, hula hoops, riding toys, and more!

Language development is stimulated by our print-rich environment. Using books with children of all ages, teachers share stories and poems, facilitate group language experience stories, and encourage children's emerging interests in writing as they scribble, draw, and trace. Word and letter recognition games and dramatic play activities stimulate communication skills among the children.

Social/emotional growth is realized as children learn to be positive members of their peer group as they listen to others, take turns, follow directions, complete tasks, and cooperate with other children and adults. Activities are designed to foster a positive image and provide opportunities for children to see and realize the impact they have on others and their environment.

The Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) is implemented in our Kindergarten-Ready Classrooms. This is the same curriculum used in the Williamsville Central School District UPK classrooms. CKLA is a comprehensive English language arts curriculum designed to teach foundational language and literacy skills. Engaging, developmentally appropriate ideas and academics are incorporated into activities throughout the day.

CKLA is divided into seven domains/concepts which include: All About Me, Families and Communities, Animals, Plants, Habitats, Classic Tales, and Important People in American History. CKLA includes two instructional strands: Listening and Learning Strand and Skills Strand, which instill both background knowledge and foundational skills.

The Listening & Learning Strand builds children's knowledge and vocabulary while they are learning to read and is crucial for long-term success. At the heart of this strand are fiction and nonfiction books that teachers read aloud during story time. These books are grouped into academic domains that create interactive opportunities to question, discuss and share ideas, centered on the story. This Strand ensures

students are well prepared when they transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.”

Accommodating Children with Special Needs

DK wants to do all that is reasonable to accommodate children with special needs. If a disability is suspected, the team will meet with the family and gather information that will inform their approach. Working and planning with parents, the team will develop goals specific to the child’s ability level and family expectations. The following are examples of adaptations at DK:

- Provide toys and materials at the child’s developmental and physical age.
- Modifying the physical environment to accommodate a physical disability (motor, sight, hearing).
- Teach skills that will help all children play together and respect each other.
- Use language that is at the child’s ability level.
- Differentiate learning activities so that children at various levels of ability can participate.
- Provide a range of physical activities so those with limited motor skills can participate.
- With the help of families, we meet individual dietary requirements.

Occasionally a child in our care demonstrates significant behavioral concerns that place the individual or others at risk. We address this concern in the following sections.

Emotional Development

Our approach is to optimize learning and build regulate emotions by providing consistent, positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviors. We consider the developmental stage of the children and his or her individual social and emotional needs.

Our Goals Are To:

- Encourage each child to be responsible for his or her behavior.
- Teach mutual respect between children and teachers.
- Help children understand and express feelings that contribute to their behavior.
- Encourage good behavior through modeling appropriate behavior and praise.
- Structure the environment to help prevent inappropriate behavior.

Classroom Rules

Classroom rules and the daily schedule are posted and reviewed with children daily. While each room has rules specific to the age of the children, here are some common ones:

- Stay in your area — children will not leave the teacher-defined area for the duration of the given activity.
- Use nice words - children will not engage in yelling, teasing, bullying, swearing, etc.
- Body parts to self - children will not hit/ kick, bite, scratch, pull hair, grab, trip, poke, shove, etc.

- Use things nicely - children will use materials/objects as directed by the teacher.
- Listen to teachers - children will follow instructions, comply with requests, etc.

Classroom rules are first applied in the infant rooms for children ages 9 to 18 months (also referred to as our Waddler Program), except for "stay in your area." Rules are re-phrased in simple language that very young children can understand, such as "hands down" for hitting, and "put your feet on the floor" for climbing. As children progress from infants to Toddlers, the rules are expressed in phrases which more closely resemble the rules as stated above. By the time children transition from Toddler to Preschool, they are familiar with the program's rules and expectations.

Interactions Between Teachers and Children

- Staff strive to make interactions with children positive (tone of voice, body language, positive gestures such as thumbs-up, high-fives, etc.).
- Staff provide students with choices whenever appropriate.
- Staff use pictures, textual cues, or hand signals to supplement verbal directions, as necessary.
- Staff provide transition warnings before requiring students to move between locations/activities.
- Staff provide reminders of what students should do instead of what they should not do ("hands and feet to self" instead of "no hitting").
- Instructions are given in a neutral tone of voice.
- Instructions are phrased as statements rather than questions ("Time to go in" rather than "Are you ready to go in?").
- Staff plan engaging classroom activities to meet the needs of students.
- Teachers will prompt/require children to use appropriate communication.

Consequences

When children are frustrated, angry, or sad, teachers offer them a break. Children begin learning the concept of a break in the Toddler program and it follows them into preschool. During breaktime, they can play with a toy, sit quietly, or read books which offer suggestions for coping with strong emotions such as taking deep breaths, counting to 10, or asking a teacher for help. At the end of their break, children are supported by teachers in completing the activity which frustrated them. Learning how to effectively use a break is a skill that will serve children well throughout their lives.

Addressing Persistent Behavior Problems

Our goal is to provide a safe learning environment for all the children attending DK. A parent may be called to pick up a child if he/she is having a particularly difficult day and is not returning to a normal state of calmness.

In the case of persistent behavior problems that are threatening to the health and safety of the child, other children, or staff (e.g., hitting, tantrums, biting, climbing on furniture, running away), we will address the issue first by increasing the frequency of our communication with the parents. If there are consistent problems requiring further action, the child's parents will be asked to participate in a conference with the teaching staff and DK Director. DK staff will collect information on the form, frequency, and intensity of

the problem behavior. Together with parents, the DK team will develop and implement a plan. A behavior plan will outline specific strategies to reward positive behavior and effectively respond to the behavioral challenge.

If it is determined the child is unable to participate in activities within the child-student ratios, exclusion from the program may be considered. In toddler/preschool rooms, normal participation means the child:

- Participates in unstructured activities without frequent redirection from adults.
- Sits for a structured group activity.
- Does not engage in dangerous behavior such as climbing on tables or running away from staff.
- Does not intentionally harm self or others (e.g., biting, throwing objects, and pulling hair).
- Does not require more care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children (medical or behavioral concerns).

Staff Qualifications

Lead Teachers at the Preschool level are required to have an associate's degree or higher in Early Childhood, Child Development, or related field; or a Child Development Associate Credential; or 9 college credits in Early Childhood Development or a related field with a plan leading to a Child Development Credential plus two years of experience related to caring for children.

Lead Teachers at the Infant and Toddler level must meet the above requirements plus one year of specific training and/or experience in infant or toddler care which may be demonstrated by obtaining an Infant Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.

DK emphasizes professional growth and development for its staff. According to the NYS Office of Children & Family Services, all classroom staff must receive 30 hours of in-service training during a licensing period. Our staff has received training from the American Red Cross in infant-child CPR, choking procedures, and standard first aid practices.

In addition to holding regular staff meetings, we provide opportunities for training on various topics including developmentally appropriate curriculum, children with special needs, positive behavior management and discipline, recognition of child abuse and maltreatment and the reporting procedures, and health and safety issues.

Infant Program - Wigglers (6 weeks – 18 months)

The infant program at DK is staffed by specially trained, caring individuals. We maintain a 1:4 caregiver-to-infant ratio and provide the love and nurturing a baby requires, creating a special bond and trust between infant and consistent caregiver.

Infants enter our program as early as 6 weeks after birth and are cared for in the infant program until they reach 18 months of age. We follow your newborn's preferences for eating and sleeping. Babies are held for feeding and rocked to sleep. There are many opportunities for tummy time and floor play throughout

the day. Once your baby is beginning to cruise or walk, is actively exploring the environment, beginning to take one nap per day, etc., he or she transitions gradually into the older infant room. There, they will have daily opportunities for active play, art and sensory experiences, and family-style meals.

We encourage parents to be "in touch" during the day, calling to see how their infant is doing, stopping by for a short visit at lunchtime, etc. We understand the need for strong communication between parents and caregivers. Feedback is shared each day to inform parents of the care provided to their infant.

Please remember that anything coming into the center **MUST** be labeled with your child's **FIRST** and **LAST** name.

Items to bring from home:

- Disposable diaper supply
- Wipes, ointments, lotions
- Blanket and sleep toy, if used
- Pacifier, if needed
- Filled bottles of formula and/or breast milk (glass bottles, if used, must have a silicone cover)
- Baby food
- Changes of clothing
- 24-hour supply of single-serve formula packets & non- perishable baby food to be kept on hand in case of emergency

Items we supply for you:

- Crib sheets
- Bibs/burp cloths
- Dishware, utensils
- Mobiles on cribs
- Table food
- Milk for cups
- Frozen teething rings

Note: Accommodations will be made if a mother wants to nurse their child at DK.

Toddler Programs – Waddlers (18 months – 3 years)

In the toddler program at Discovery Kids, a qualified and caring teaching staff plan learning activities for each day including circle time, language learning, gym play, art, music, and movement, and lots of opportunities for self-directed play. All the activities are designed with an emphasis on the child's social skills, learning to share, playing with other children, language development, as well as independence and self-help skills.

As your child approaches the time to transition from Toddler I to Toddler II, you will have an opportunity to meet with your child's current teacher and new teacher to share information about the transition. You will have the same opportunity to meet with teachers when your child transitions from Toddler II to Preschool. The children are supervised by teachers who get to know each child and are

most in tune with individual accomplishments.

We maintain a 1:5 caregiver-to-toddler ratio and provide individualized attention to your child.

Items to bring from home:

- Diaper supply
- Wipes/ointments
- Small blanket
- Change of clothes (seasonally appropriate)

Items we supply for you:

- Naptime cot
- Cot sheet
- Morning snack
- Lunch
- Afternoon snack

Preschool & Kinder Ready Programs (Ages 3 – 5 years)

The Partnership Between DK and Summit Academy

Discovery Kids has a unique relationship with The Summit Center and its school, Summit Academy. Summit Academy serves students with autism and related disabilities and integrates into four DK preschool rooms. Through this relationship, half of the students in each preschool classroom are classified as disabled and half are presumed to have no disability. Summit Academy students are placed by their local school district, and they come with their own specialized team.

In these rooms, the students with disabilities can engage with the typical children and experience normal social and language models. At the same time, children without disabilities learn more realistic views about people with disabilities and develop positive attitudes toward others that are different from themselves.

Items to bring from home:

- Pull ups/diapers and wipes (if needed)
- Change of clothes (seasonally appropriate)

Items we supply for you:

- Naptime cot
- Cot sheet
- Morning snack
- Lunch
- Afternoon snack

School-Age Children (5 – 12 yrs.)

Before and After School Programs

DK provides quality before and after school programming for school-age children from 5-12 years of age. As per NYS regulations, the staff-to-child ratio in the classroom is maintained at a minimum of one teacher for every 10 children.

Before & After School Care for Williamsville Central Schools Students

Before School (7:00 a.m.- 8:30 a.m.)

After School (2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.)

DK services are provided on most school half-days, holidays, and during extended holiday breaks, at an additional charge when the Summit Center's school, Summit Academy, is not in session. Please review the Holiday Schedule on our website to know which days DK will not be in operation.

To arrange for bus transportation to Discovery Kids, call the Williamsville District Office at 716-626-8390 and ask for a BUS TRANSFER. The Williamsville School District will only bus children to and from our location on a 5 day/week basis.

Program features:

- Homework help
- Art exploration & craft projects
- Indoor & outdoor active play
- Playground enrichment activities

School-age care is not available during normal school hours when the Williamsville Schools are closed.

Summer Camp at DK (6 – 12 years)

Summer Camp at DK is a program of fun-filled adventures, new experiences, meaningful learning opportunities, and lots of summer fun!

Our air-conditioned facility, small peer groups, theme focused activities, numerous field trips, outdoor water play, intergenerational activities, and special events will turn long, hot summer days into fun, meaningful experiences for your child.

General Information

Meals and Snacks

During the school year, DK provides plentiful and nutritious snacks and lunches prepared by the Sweet Home School District. Children enjoy nutritionally balanced lunches, in addition to morning and afternoon snacks, all served with milk as the beverage.

The lunch menus are approved by certified nutritionists and are sent to families and parents to choose what their son/daughter is served. You can access the menu through the Sweet Home CSD website using the following link. Click on the *Private Schools* tab and then select *Summit Central*.

<https://sweethomeschoolsnutrition.org/index.php?sid=2604132131481242&page=menu>

During Sweet Home Central School District's holidays and breaks, an outside catering company provides DK with nutritious lunches.

If you would like your child to eat breakfast at Discovery Kids, please send in a healthy breakfast that your child enjoys. The staff will be more than happy to help the children with their breakfast.

Allergy Awareness

- We are an "allergy sensitive" building. You will see "allergy alert" signs posted on classroom doors. This helps staff throughout the building easily identify life-threatening allergies.
- If you plan to provide breakfast, lunch, or snacks for your child, please do not send in foods that contain peanuts and/or tree nuts.
- If your child requires a medically controlled diet, has food allergies, or for some other reason, cannot eat the meals provided as per the menu, please notify the Director.

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable, durable play clothes that will withstand an active day. Clothing should be free of complicated fastenings and be easy to remove and put on. Rubber-soled shoes or sneakers are safest for active play indoors and outdoors. As the seasons change, make sure your child has appropriate outerwear (hat, mittens, boots, sunscreen, etc.) so he/she can participate in all activities. Smocks will be provided for art and water play activities. Please do not expect your child to be clean at the end of the day! We plan many inside and outside activities which may make your child seem disheveled at day's end; to us, that's a sign of healthy fun, exciting exploration, discovery, and learning!

Nap Time

NYS licensing regulations require a mandatory rest or quiet period during your child's day. Children will not be forced to sleep but are given this time for their bodies and minds to rest. After a designated period, teachers will provide children who did not fall asleep with quiet activities to play with on their cot until rest time is over, so as not to disrupt those who are sleeping.

Outside Play

In accordance with NYS regulations, all children will participate in outdoor activities (playground fun or neighborhood walks) daily except under extreme weather-related conditions. Keeping this in mind, your child should come to DK with seasonally appropriate outerwear. Every healthy child can benefit from a breath of fresh air. If your child is not healthy enough to participate in outside activity, he or she should be kept at home until feeling better.

Birthdays and Celebrations

Your child's birthday is a special occasion, and we welcome the opportunity to celebrate it in whatever way your family wishes. Please plan for celebrations with your child's teacher in advance. If you would like to bring in a special treat for the children to enjoy, please be advised that we may have children in the classrooms that have food allergies or dietary restrictions.

A Note About Asking DK Staff to Babysit

Because of the trusting relationships that develop between children, their families, and the staff, parents often want to hire DK staff members to provide babysitting services in the evenings and/or on weekends. DK strongly discourages this practice because it may create a conflict of interest for our staff. Should you choose to enter into a private arrangement with a DK employee, please be aware that Discovery Kids, its staff, and Directors must be held harmless for any claims, demands, and actions.

Arrival and Departure

Arrival

Upon arrival at DK, please use the phone provided in the vestibule to call your child's classroom. At no time should you leave your child alone in the vestibule. Please wait for a staff member to come out and escort your child to their room.

As a courtesy, please call the center or notify the staff through the Tadpoles app, if your child will be absent from the program for the day.

***Note:** DK will soon issue electronic swipe badges to parents that can be used to enter the DK facility.*

**When entering the building, parents must go directly to their son's/daughter's room. Parents are not allowed to enter any other areas of the facility unless escorted by a DK staff member. Once issued, do not give your badges to anyone else to use. Notify the DK director immediately if your badge is lost or stolen.*

Goodbyes

Children sometimes arrive at daycare happy and excited to get started; other days they may cry and struggle to stay with you. The thing that makes the most difference for a child is the parent's attitude. If parents linger in response to their child's tears, children interpret this as "They don't want to leave me here; I AM NOT SAFE HERE." The biggest gift you can give your child is to say with conviction, "I know that saying goodbye is hard, AND I know that you will have a good time while I'm gone. I love you so much, and I am leaving you in the best of hands." Then, give a final quick kiss and hug and remind your child

that you will be together again at the end of the day.

Learning to say goodbye is a process for both you and your child. Stay with it, and your reward will be a happy, self-confident child who feels safe and secure with his teachers!

Departure

A parent, guardian, or individual authorized in writing on the Release Authorization Form are the only people permitted to pick up a child from DK. If someone other than those authorized will pick up your child on any given day, please notify the Director about your alternate arrangements. Because these people are unfamiliar to us, please remind them to bring their Driver's License for photo identification purposes. Regulations require that all substitute drivers be at least 18 years old to pick up a child.

Health Policies

Physical Examinations and Immunizations

Your child's pediatrician must complete a medical exam before your child can be accepted at Discovery Kids, and annually thereafter. The required Medical Report Form (OCFS 4433) is available on our website www.DiscoveryKidsLearningCenter.com under the Parent Resources tab. All immunizations must be up to date; please submit your physician's documentation of immunization updates as they occur.

Pandemic and Environmental Warnings

Masks are not required unless there is a requirement by a state or federal agency in response to a serious environmental or pandemic situation. Although rare, our staff wear masks if there is an outbreak of COVID or related health risk. We reserve the right to *encourage* children over the age of 2 years to wear a mask indoors if the health risk persists.

Preventing the Spread of Illness

Infectious diseases and their potential for transmission among children and staff are genuine concerns for all of us at Discovery Kids, now more than ever before. We do our best to stop the spread of illness and disease.

The staff washes their hands:

- Upon arrival to the program
- Before preparing or serving food
- Before feeding children
- After diapering or assisting children with toileting or nose wiping
- Whenever they are soiled

The children wash their hands:

- Upon arrival to the program
- After diapering or toileting
- After playing outside
- Before and after all snacks and meals
- When transitioning into a different room

- Whenever they are soiled

In addition to hand washing:

- Soiled clothing is placed in plastic bags
- Sheets are laundered weekly
- Cots are sanitized after each use
- Crib mattresses are regularly sanitized
- A cleaning service thoroughly cleans classrooms and bathrooms
- Carpets are cleaned and sanitized quarterly
- Health concerns are addressed at regular staff meetings

Daily Health Checks

To keep all children healthy, the staff conducts a visual health check of every child as they enter the program each day. Any symptoms of illness or concerns will be noted on the daily health check form and will be discussed with the parent.

Illness and Exclusion from the Program

DK follows the guidelines of both the American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics regarding a child's exclusion from the Center due to illness. Please keep your child at home if any of the following pertain to your child. If your child enters the program and any of the following occur, they must remain home for the period noted below:

24 hours:

- Any illness which prevents your child from participating comfortably in all DK activities
- An oral temperature of 100°F or greater (axillary (armpit) temperature of 99°F or greater)
- Persistent abdominal pain
- Vomiting (1 or more instances)
- Loose stools/diarrhea (1 or more instances)

72 hours:

- Persistent and/or uncontrolled coughing
- Difficult breathing and/or wheezing

After determination and documentation from the physician noting that the specific ailment is noncontagious, and the child is healthy enough to return to daycare:

- Undiagnosed rash
- Open sores

Other:

- **Conjunctivitis (pink eye)** - the child may return once all yellow or green drainage, excessive redness, and tearing has subsided, OR 24 hours after antibiotic treatment is started.
- **Scabies, Ringworm, Pinworm, or another infestation** - the child may return with a doctor's note 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- **Head lice** - child may return after treatment has started and successful elimination of lice has occurred.

- ***Strep throat or another Streptococcal infection*** - child may return with a doctor's note 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun.
- ***Chicken pox, Shingles, and Hand, foot & mouth*** - child may return to the Center once all sores have dried and crusted.
- ***Impetigo*** - child may return with a doctor's note 24 hours after treatment has begun.

A child without fever who shows mild symptoms consistent with the common cold shall not be excluded from childcare if he/she can participate fully in all program activities including outdoor play.

When Your Child Becomes Ill at DK

Should your child become ill while at DK, we will call and ask you to pick up your child within 90 minutes. Although we recognize the inconvenience this may cause for you at work, we are NYS mandated to remove sick children from the environment. If you fail to pick up within 90 minutes, you will be charged a fee of \$25.00.

You must provide us with phone numbers where a parent or guardian may be reached during the day. We also ask for two additional- emergency numbers if we are unable to reach a parent or guardian.

Accidents

Active young children sometimes acquire bumps, bruises, scratches, etc. while playing with their friends. Through appropriate supervision, we do our best to minimize injuries. If your child gets hurt, the injury will be documented on an accident report form and forwarded to you for signature. It is our policy that if your child's injury results in any significant mark or bump on the face or head, your child's teacher will notify you by telephone. Also, if a child is bitten and the skin is broken, you will be notified immediately in addition to receiving the accident report at the end of the day.

NOTE: DK reserves the right to refuse admittance to, and exclude from programming, any child who, in the judgment of a senior staff member, appears ill.

Please contact the Center if your child is staying home due to illness. For the protection of others at DK, notify the Director if the illness is contagious. Please remember that it is a good idea to have backup arrangements for times when your child must remain at home due to illness.

Medication Policies

As per NYS Office of Children & Family Services, medication may be administered only upon written permission (required forms available from the office and on our website) of the parent or guardian and with written instructions from a health care provider stating that DK may administer such medication or prescription and specifying the circumstances, if any, under which the medication or prescription must

not be administered. Medication will be returned to the parent or guardian when it is no longer required by the child.

Medications must be kept in the original labeled bottle or container. Over-the-counter medication must be kept in the originally labeled container and be labeled with the child's first and last name.

Prescription medications must contain the original pharmacy label that lists:

- Child's name
- Authorized prescriber's name
- Pharmacy name and telephone number
- Date prescription was filled
- Name of the medication
- Dosage
- How often to give the medication
- Date the medication shall be discontinued, or length of time, in days, it is given.
- Pharmacy sheet on side effects

If medication must be given on an ongoing, long-term basis, the authorization and consent forms must be reauthorized at least once every six months. Any changes in the original medication authorization shall require new instructions written by the licensed authorized prescriber and a change in the prescription.

If a parent or guardian requests that we administer a prescription or orally administered over-the-counter medication but does not furnish us with written instructions from a health care provider or licensed authorized prescriber, we may administer such medication or prescription with the oral approval of the parent or guardian and upon obtaining verbal instructions directly from the health care provider or licensed authorized prescriber for that day only. If the medication must be administered on subsequent days, written instructions must be provided by the health care provider.

Please do not put medication in bottles or in food. NYS Child Daycare Regulations specifically prohibit us from these practices.

DK may administer over-the-counter topical ointments to children 18 months and over, including sunscreen lotion and topically applied insect repellent, upon the written instructions of the parent or guardian.

Safety Policies

Parking Lot

Please be careful when driving in and out of the Discovery Kids /The Summit Center parking lot. The speed limit has been posted at **5 mph** to keep everyone safe. Your adherence to the speed limit and other posted parking signs is appreciated.

Emergency Closings

The safety of children and families, as well as DK staff, is important to us. If there is a travel ban in place for the town of Amherst, DK will be closed. In addition, on rare occasions, leadership of DK may close

in situations when current or projected reports indicate that traveling could cause undue danger for our staff or if there is a wide area of closures that make it difficult to staff the center fully and safely. Parents will be contacted by telephone and via Tadpoles. Closing information will also be available on local TV/Radio stations. If a travel ban is declared during the day, parents will be called to pick up their children within 90 minutes.

*DK does not issue credits for closures due to inclement weather or other emergency closings.

Emergency Drills

Shelter-in-place drills are conducted twice annually and provide DK teachers and children with an opportunity to practice emergency procedures that will safeguard the health and well-being of your children. Fire drills are conducted regularly to help children and staff practice emergency evacuation procedures.

Emergency Supplies

A 24-hour supply of food and milk is on hand in the cafeteria should the need arise for your child to stay overnight at the Center. For those children too young to eat table food, we ask that you provide a 24-hour supply of formula or frozen breast milk for use in such an emergency.

Tuition Fees, Payments, Vouchers & Holidays

Sick/Vacation Time Policy - Credit Vouchers

DK provides credit vouchers for each child equivalent to the number of days enrolled in a 1-week period and prorated based on date of enrollment (the full enrollment period is September through August). For instance, if a child is enrolled 4 days a week, families will receive 4 Credit Vouchers per year. To receive credit for days missed due to vacation/illness, Credit Vouchers must be given to your child's teacher with the dates of absence filled out. They will then be applied to the following month's bill.

DK needs to plan on consistent revenues because our cost of doing business remains the same regardless of attendance level. Therefore, no credit will be given for days missed beyond the number of Credit Vouchers issued at enrollment; or for the holidays/staff development days on which the Center is closed.

Holidays and Staff Development Days

A schedule of observed holidays and staff in-service days when the Center is closed can be found on our website.

Payments

VISA, Discover, MasterCard, and Check/Money Order are accepted forms of payment. We cannot accept post-dated checks. We will accept payment from one party only; exceptions will be made when legal documentation is provided.

Payments are due on the 5th of the month (monthly payment schedule) or on Monday (weekly payment schedule).

All families must adhere to the payment schedule. If your childcare is reimbursed from your dependent care account, please submit documentation of your account claim form in advance with authorized signature to the Director. If a check is returned by your bank, your credit/debit card is declined, or if payment is received late (after the 5th of the month, or after Monday of the current care week), a \$35.00 fee per month will be imposed. DK reserves the right to mandate a change from a monthly payment schedule to a weekly schedule when a family's payment is routinely late.

Failure to Pay

After 45 days of non-payment, your child's enrollment at DK will be terminated until the account balance is paid.

Note: Depending on capacity limits, there is no guarantee of space for your child should you decide to return after 45 days.

Attendance

Enrollment will be considered terminated if any child is absent for more than two weeks without written notification.

Penalties for Late Pick Ups

If you are late picking up your child (after 6 p.m.), your account will be charged a \$15.00 fee for every 10 minutes or part thereof. This money is used to compensate teachers for their overtime.

If you are late in picking up your sick child (90 minutes), your account will be charged a \$25.00 fee.

Discounts

For families with children enrolled full time (5 full days weekly), a 10% discount will be applied to an additional sibling.

Withdrawal

Two weeks' written notice of withdrawal is expected. A refund on the balance after two weeks' notice will be given on the monthly tuition schedule. Therefore, once the written notice of withdrawal is received by the director you will continue to pay up until the two-week notice period is over.

Change in Enrollment Status (Including Add-a-Day Requests)

Adding a day to an existing schedule must be made in writing and approved by the Director **at least 48 hours in advance**. Advance notice is required to ensure that we have space available and sufficient staffing to accommodate your request. Any request less than 48 hrs. will be denied. The request form is available on our website or ask the Director or the teacher for a copy. Temporary switching of days is **Not Allowed**, e.g., enrolling Mon-Wed-Fri and asking to switch Monday to Tuesday for one week.

Summer Enrollment Change Requests

If you decide to temporarily discontinue enrollment for the summer, the Center will not guarantee space for your child's readmission in the fall. Families often ask to reduce days or hours during the summer. If your child's normal schedule is three, four, or five days per week, you are permitted to drop one day per week during July and August while maintaining your child's usual days of the week schedule and hours. If your child's normal schedule is two days a week, there is no option to reduce days or hours during the summer.

Policy Changes

In the event of unforeseen circumstances (i.e., pandemic, act of God, natural disaster, etc.) Discovery Kids reserves the right to change its policies at any time. Parents will be given written notice of such changes. By attending Discovery Kids, you consent to follow any changes to policies that occur.