

General Policies and Information

Curriculum

Our curriculum has a strong foundation in language and cognition. We strive to teach children *how* to learn by focusing on communicating with adults and peers, problem-solving alone and as a member of a group. Age-appropriate concepts and play skills are targeted within each classroom. Pre-literacy and early math skills are embedded in our activities. We use a combination of approaches to teach skills and concepts, including movement and hands-on activities, because we realize every child learns his or her own way. Our curriculum was developed in the center and is carried out using a team approach. Teachers plan and work together to ensure activities integrate skills and are functional and age-appropriate.

Staggered Start

The week of Labor Day, parents and children will be asked to come for one day only. The parents will meet with Kathy and Terry for an orientation meeting while their child spends time getting to know their teachers and peers. This "staggered start" will allow children to ease into the routine.

Hours of Program

Our school day runs from 9:00am-12:00pm (Kindergarten Readiness) and 10:00am-12:00pm (*Grow Baby Grow*). Our Preschool operates on a 10 month public school calendar, September through June. We follow a similar vacation/holiday schedule as the surrounding school districts. Parents will be provided a copy of our school calendar in their Welcome Packet mailed home prior to the start of the school year. Our Calendar will be posted on the website as well.

Snow Days

Discovery Place Learning Center, LLC will be closed when school is closed in the *East Greenbush Central School District*. If East Greenbush CSD is on a delay, Discovery Place Learning Center will be open at 10:00 am. On these days, please use your judgment to decide if it is safe to transport your child. We have our own television listing and will update our Facebook page as well. *We assume there will be three to five snow days throughout the school year, so please account for this accordingly.*

Drop-off and Pick-up

We use curb side drop-off and pick-up for Kindergarten Readiness children. *Grow Baby Grow* parents park and their teacher will greet them at the parking lot and walk the children into school. A written copy of our drop-off and pick-up policies will be provided in your Welcome Packet and reviewed at Orientation.

Late Pick-up Fee

A late pick-up fee of \$5.00 will be charged for each day that you pick up your child after 12:10 pm. The fee should be paid in cash on that day upon your arrival to pick up your child. If this occurs more than 3 times during the school year, it could result in your child being un-enrolled from the program. Because we are not a day care facility, OCFS regulations do not allow us to have a child on the premises for more than 3 consecutive hours.

Health

We are committed to providing your child with a healthy learning environment. A healthy snack, including juice and water, will be provided daily. We require documentation from a Licensed Physician or Nurse Practitioner that your child's immunizations are up to date and that he or she has had a physical within the last year. Once reviewed by our faculty, you should **retain this documentation for your own records**. It is our practice to sanitize/disinfect toys and equipment weekly using environmentally friendly and non-toxic cleaners as much as possible.

Illness

Your child should not attend the learning center if he or she has:

- a temperature of 101.0 degrees or higher without medication within 24 hours prior to start of class
- vomited or had diarrhea within 24 hours prior to the start of class
- not been acting typically (i.e., lethargic, irritable) or is symptomatic of the onset of illness
- head lice (until cleared to return by the faculty not a physician)
- an illness requiring antibiotics until he or she has taken the medication for at least 24 hours

If your child is sick or will not be in class, please e-mail or call the center at soon as possible. We track certain illnesses and notify other parents if a child who recently attended classes contracted a contagious illness, such as chicken pox or strep throat, so other parents can watch for symptoms.

Snack Time

Our daily schedule includes a family style snack time for our Grow Baby Grow learning groups. Social conversation and using language to request items from teachers and friends is a big part of our snack time routine. Your child will also have the opportunity to learn how to pass napkins, plates, and cups to his or her peers and to practice scooping and pouring skills. He or she will be encouraged to drink from an open top cup. We also encourage parents and caregivers to practice using an open top cup, with their child, at meal times.

******Please do not send bottles, sippy cups, or straw cups to school******

Our daily snack routine for Kindergarten Readiness classes encourages independence and self-help skills. Snack is pre-portioned and set out for the children to serve themselves. A visual picture schedule is provided to guide them in following the routine of: hand washing, serving, eating, and cleaning up.

Celebrating Birthdays at School

If you choose to celebrate your child's birthday at the learning center, please contact Terry or Kathy at least one week prior. Birthdays will be celebrated during your child's snack time. You can purchase a snack or bring something homemade; however, all snacks must include a list of ingredients. The staff will check the ingredients for allergens before you bring them into the building. **REMINDER: We are always a NUT FREE center!!!** Additional allergies may need to be accommodated for. You will be notified when you contact us.

Parents, a special friend or family member are welcome to celebrate their child's birthday when a special snack is provided. Parents may also provide birthday themed items such (e.g., hats, plates, napkins...) if they wish.

Toilet ("Potty") Training

Your child does not need to be toilet trained to enroll in our *Grow Baby Grow* or Kindergarten Readiness learning groups. We encourage potty training at home and we support each child at their level of comfort in the training process. We enforce a "one child at a time" rule while using the bathroom. However, if some parents would like their child to have the opportunity to see and learn from other children who are using the toilet we will accommodate for that. Boys and girls will not be in the bathroom at the same time.

If your child needs a change of clothing, diaper, or underwear, we will assist your child in that process while encouraging as much independence as possible. We will send home any soiled clothes in a sealed bag to be laundered and replaced at the center.

Toys from Home

Many children like to bring toys and other objects from home into the center. Unfortunately, these items often turn into a source of conflict, as children do not want to share "home" toys and parents become upset if toys are lost or broken. If your child asks to bring a toy to school to help with the transition from home, please remind him or her that the toy needs to be put in his or her back pack upon arrival and must remain there until classes have ended.

Safety

The center is locked at all times. A door bell can be located on the wall to the right of the door. Please be patient when waiting for entrance. Only authorized individuals will be permitted in our center and/or classrooms when children are present. If someone other than a parent will be picking up your child, we will need to see photo identification before we release your child to that individual. If the person picking your child up is NOT listed on the emergency form, you need to give your child's teacher written permission (via note or email) for that individual to pick up your child. Photo ID is required.

Communication

It is extremely important that parents contact the center via phone, note, or email if your child is experiencing any changes in behavior or something occurred that may affect his or her behavior or cooperation during the school day. If you'd like to meet at any time to discuss your child's developmental progress or you have any concerns please contact either Kathy Arduini or Terry Duncan. A conference with both owners will be scheduled at the earliest mutual convenience. Any immediate concerns can be addressed via phone before or after class or email. It is difficult to discuss your child's skills at drop-off or pick-up times, but you are welcome to contact us with questions about his or her time at school. Should there be a matter of importance at school, your child's teacher will contact you to discuss the concern. A "Highlights Newsletter" will be emailed to parents describing the activities completed and the skills targeted in your child's classroom each month. You will also be given a Curriculum Summary, which outlines our themes and educational goals for the year.

Progress Reports and Conferences

Progress reports are sent home 2 times per year. Assessment of your child's developmental growth is ongoing using a team approach. Our lesson plans are guided by the progress reports and our curriculum is aligned with NYS learning standards and common core curriculum. We have scheduled conference dates for our Kindergarten Readiness II groups (4/5 yr olds) in the spring of each school year, in order to help parents make plans for Kindergarten. Parents will be asked to sign up ahead of time. A conference can be scheduled on an "as needed" basis for any child. Please let your child's teachers know as soon as possible if you want to schedule a conference. If you are unable to meet on a conference day, your child's teachers will schedule a conference at a mutually convenient time.

Administration Fee

Enrollment in Learning Groups: A non-refundable Administration Fee will be collected at the time of enrollment. This fee will be reduced for the next school year when you pre-register a currently enrolled student or his or her sibling prior to our yearly Open House in March.

Tuition/Payments

Monthly payments are based on our 10 month school year tuition (September-June). For this reason, your monthly payment is the same, even in months that contain holidays and/or breaks. Based on the yearly tuition rate, September and June should not be considered "partial" school months. You are still responsible for tuition even if you take an extended vacation.

Upon enrollment, the Administration Fee and 1st month's tuition (Sept.) are due. Then you will "pre-pay" by one month, making payments September through May.

Tuition may be paid in two partial payments (Sept.-Dec. and Jan.-Jun.), or in ten equal monthly payments. Monthly payments are due September 15th then the 1st school day of each month October through May. Late payments will be charged after a one week "grace period". (Please refer to the financial agreement for the details). Checks should be made payable to: **Discovery Place Learning Center**. Please write the child's name and the service you are paying for (i.e., Month of tuition, early drop-off, classroom drop-in, etc.) in the Memo. Statements will be sent at the beginning and end of the school year *unless requested* monthly for reimbursement purposes or if a family has incurred charges for additional services.

Early Withdrawal from Program

It is expected that your child will remain enrolled for the duration of the school year. The quality programs provided by Discovery Place Learning Center are directly funded by your tuition. Please understand, that we are not able to rely on grants, tax incentives, or outside funds of any kind due to being a small, privately owned business. We will also never ask you to do fund-raising programs in addition to your regular tuition payments.

Our programming budget is based on tuition from all children enrolled and therefore is directly impacted by a child being withdrawn from our program during the school year. Please carefully consider the withdrawal process outlined below:

- a. If you decide to remove your child from the program, the following month's tuition (which has been pre-paid) will not be refunded. (ex. If you withdraw your child any time between Jan. 1st and Jan. 31st, February's pre-paid tuition will not be refunded.) This policy allows for us to have adequate time to re-fill your child's spot through the enrollment process.
- b. If you remove your child after May 1st, you will be expected to pay tuition for the remainder of the school year. Your child's spot will not be able to be filled at such a late date.

We understand that there may be extenuating circumstances for withdrawing your child from our program. Therefore, each family situation will be reviewed by Discovery Place Administration for any exceptions.

*Thank you for your cooperation in following the Policies and Procedures of
Discovery Place Learning Center, LLC*

