

**Discovery Children's Centre
Parent Policy**

**Revised
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Table of Contents

Philosophy, Goals & Objectives	3
Curriculum Statement	4
Inclusion Philosophy	4
Children & the Learning Process	4
Staff	5
Parents	5
Board of Directors	6
Program Highlights	6
Behaviour Management Policy	8
Suspension Policy	9
General Policies	9
1) Children Accepted	10
2) Mixed Age Group Plan	10
3) Infant Toddler Space	10
4) Hours of Operation	10
5) Fees	12
6) Registration	17
7) Key Fobs	18
8) Tailgating	18
9) Withdrawal	18
10) Fundraising	18
11) Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures	19
12) School-age Children Arrival Policy	20
13) Extracurricular Activities (School-age)	20
14) Health and Medication	21
15) Supervision of Children Who Leave Without Permission	23
16) Indirect Supervision	23
17) Transportation	24
18) Accidents	25
19) Naps	25
20) Bed Bugs	25
21) Field Trips	26
22) Birthdays and Other Celebrations	27
23) Anaphylaxis Policy	27
24) Safety Charter & Code of conduct	27
25) Harassment & Violence Prevention Policy	27
26) Privacy Policy	28
27) Child Abuse Procedure Reporting Procedure	28
Summary	28

PHILOSOPHY, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

At Discovery Children's Centre Inc., we believe it is our task to help prepare our children for life. Therefore, we provide an environment designed to facilitate learning experiences that will better help our children deal with themselves and the future.

The future, as we all know, is very unpredictable, however, three things are guaranteed: it will involve change, uncertainty and challenge. In recognition of this, we have set a priority of helping children gain the qualities that will help them survive and thrive in the future. These qualities include Courage, which enables a child to try, fail, and try again; Self-Esteem, which aids children in succeeding at challenges, learning from failures, and taking advantage of future opportunities; Responsibility, which involves making choices and accepting the consequences of those choices; and Cooperation, which helps unlock the magic of teamwork and the interdependent skills that are so necessary in our society.

Let it be understood that we have no desire to hinder a child's desire or ability to learn in the cognitive (intellectual) area. It is our belief however, that information will be of little interest or help to a child whose emotional, physical, or social needs are not being met.

Every facet of the Centre encourages development of the whole person (in order of importance)

1. Physical Needs

Including security, rest, nutrition and adequate movement for health, muscle coordination and ability.

2. Emotional Needs

Fostering the feeling of being loved and teaching respect for both adults and children. We will also help the children to understand their emotions and learn appropriate ways of dealing with them.

3. Social Needs

Developing acceptance by the peer group. Firsthand experiences with adults and children will facilitate this. The child will be assisted in problem-solving techniques involving inter-personal differences.

4. Intellectual Needs

We will help children enjoy their learning experience. The child will be encouraged to learn to his/her potential.

5. Spiritual Needs

"Grace" will be said prior to snack, lunch, and dinner times. Those children wishing to participate will be encouraged to do so.

CURRICULUM STATEMENT

Discovery recognizes that play is essential for optimal development and learning in every young child and for that reason we offer a play-based, developmentally appropriate, and responsive curriculum. Play fosters all aspects of a child's development. In honoring child's play, we honor the whole child (see the full Curriculum Statement on our website).

INCLUSION PHILOSOPHY

Discovery is committed to the inclusion of all children (regardless of their disabilities or needs) into our program. Where additional staffing is required to help include these children into the program, it will always be utilized according to the goals of inclusion, namely:

1. Provide as little assistance as is needed to maximize independence and develop self-confidence.
2. One-on-one time with a child will not be provided except under very rare conditions.
3. Small group learning while in the classroom will be the most frequently used model of teaching those skills that are not easily learned through other methods.
4. Every attempt will be made to normalize the child's stay at Discovery. This will include the sharing of any extra tasks, as required, by all staff in the Unit.

A more detailed copy of our Inclusion Philosophy is outlined on our website.

CHILDREN & THE LEARNING PROCESS

Children learn through play. By providing "hands on" experiences, expanding on their interests and encouraging exploration of new concepts or ideas, the Centre is able to contribute to the development of the "whole child".

Research in brain development and school readiness suggests 10 guidelines that can help parents and caregivers raise healthy, happy children and confident, competent learners. Six of these guidelines relate specifically to adult/child interactions and include:

- 1) Be warm, loving, and responsive.
- 2) Respond to your child's cues and clues.
- 3) Talk, read and sing to your children.
- 4) Establish routines and rituals.
- 5) Use discipline as an opportunity to teach.
- 6) Recognize that each child is unique.

These form part of the knowledge base used by the Centre in developing best practices and in selecting, training, and keeping highly trained staff.

STAFF

Scientists involved in brain research are finding that the kind of care, surroundings, nourishment, and stimulation a young child receives has a dramatic and specific effect on how the brain develops intellectually, socially and emotionally. More and more, we are discovering that the quality-of-care children receive from their caregiver has lifelong effects. Research tells us that well paid, educated, and dedicated early childhood educators are a key component in quality day care programs.

Almost every aspect of our program hinges on the staff and their relationship with you as parents, and your children. If we are not effective with you as parents, our time with your children will not be very effective. Staff is selected based on level of qualification (two-thirds of all staff are educated at the E.C.E. II or III level), experience and ability to teach and love children. Discovery also encourages and supports continued education.

Discovery Children's Centre has a goal of attracting and keeping the best Early Childhood Educators in Winnipeg. We know this is the only sure way to maintain the high quality that parents expect and children deserve. Any effort that you as parents and families can put towards the support and appreciation of our high-quality staff is much appreciated.

Staff at Discovery Children's Centre (including substitutes) have all submitted to a "Criminal Records" check and have been checked against the [Child Abuse Registry](#). We make every effort not to have substitutes alone with a group of children, until they are very familiar with our Centre, the children, and the parents. This, along with the fact that all staff is trained in First Aid and C.P.R., helps ensure a healthy and safe environment for your child.

PARENTS

Discovery Children's Centre is a non-profit, community-owned Centre and you as a parent are an integral part of the team. Although staff has been hired to do much of the work of caring for and educating your children, many opportunities are available for you to participate in making the Centre a great place. Involvement can take the form of being an active member on our board, assisting with special projects such as fundraising, or simply responding to requests from your child's unit for such things as recyclable items, outgrown clothing etc.

Since we are family centered and strongly believe that this is *your* center, if you are interested in volunteering or visiting, please make arrangements with your child's Unit Leader. Parent input is always appreciated and any suggestions that you may have to enhance the Centre are welcomed.

All persons who have applied for membership and are parents/guardians of a child(ren) attending Discovery Children's Centre will be recognized as active members and as such are entitled to vote at business meetings on matters presented by the Board.

Parents should feel free to direct complaints or concerns to their child's staff or Unit Leaders. A solution to the problem will be worked out. Discovery Children's Centre Inc. is always looking for ways to improve.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Discovery Centre is a Not-for-Profit organization which is owned by the community. Each year the members (parents of Discovery) elect a Board of Directors who oversee the organization on behalf of the broader community. Their primary function is to set goals, policies and to oversee the financial health of the organization. Board meetings are held about 6 times per year and are open to the public.

1) Financial Accountability

- a) The finances of the Centre are controlled by the Board of Directors on behalf of the rest of the members (parents) of Discovery Children's Centre Inc.
- b) The Budget for the Centre is developed from March to June of each calendar year, at our regularly scheduled Board meetings. All parents are invited to attend these and any other Board meetings. The Budget is then submitted to the Province of Manitoba for approval. A copy of our latest "approved" Budget is available to all members (parents) upon request.
- c) Audited Financial Statements for the past year will be distributed to all members attending our Annual General Meeting and are available on request to anyone requesting them.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Discovery Children's Centre has a unique range of services that include:

1) Infant Program

- a) 12 weeks to 24 months are accepted.
- b) Children attend five (5) days per week.
- c) HOURS: 7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

2) Preschool

- a) Two- to five-year-olds (2 – 5).
- b) Children attend five (5) days per week (Monday through Friday)
- c) Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

3) Christian Preschool

- a) Two- to five-year-olds (2-5).
- b) Children attend five (5) days per week (Monday through Friday)
- c) Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

4) Flex Program

- a) Two- to twelve-year-olds (2 - 12) whose parents work part-time or in shifts, including evenings or Saturdays.
- b) Hours: 6:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. (midnight), Monday to Friday and 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Saturday

5) Nursery School AM

- a) Three- and four-year-olds (3 & 4) are accepted (must be 3 years old by Dec. 31 in the year they begin Nursery School Program)
- b) Children attend 2, 3 or 3 partial days per week (Tuesday/Thursday or Monday/Wednesday/Friday) 8:50 a.m. to 11:20 a.m.
- c) Programs run from mid-September to mid-June each year.

6) Nursery School PM – Nature Based Programs

i) Field and Forest Nature School

- (1) 3 ½ and 4-year-olds are accepted (must be toilet trained).
- (2) Attend Monday/Wednesday/Friday afternoons 12:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- (3) Each Wednesday this class meets at Living Prairie Museum.

ii) Nature Nursery School

- (1) 3- & 4-year-olds are accepted (must be 3 years old by Dec. 31st in the year they begin Nursery School).
- (2) Attend Tuesday/Thursday afternoons 12:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

7) School-Age Program

- a) Six- to twelve-year-olds (6 – 12) in Grade 1 to Grade 6
- b) Children attend five (5) days per week on both school and non-school days.
- c) Hours: School Days 7:00 a.m. to 8:40 a.m., 11:40 a.m. to 12:40 p.m. and 3:40 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- d) Hours: Non-school Days 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Children moving from Preschool to the School Age Program:

There are a limited number of spaces available in our school age program. Having your child enrolled in our preschool program does not guarantee they will be moving into our school age program. Every attempt will be made to give notice to the parents in June (if space is not available). Priority is given to children who attend Stevenson School or Ecole Assiniboine School. Space availability will be determined on a first come first serve basis.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Discovery Children's Centre Inc. has a Behavior Management Policy including the following:

- 1) When appropriate (to the situation and the age of the child), the children will have an opportunity to have a voice in the affairs of the Centre.
- 2) In giving children these choices, the Centre relies heavily on natural and logical consequences as a means of teaching responsible decision-making.
- 3) Children will be encouraged to solve their own problems and resolve their own conflicts.

In accordance with the licensing standards for day care, the Centre will “not permit, practice, or inflict any form of physical punishment, verbal or emotional abuse, or denial of physical necessities for any child in attendance”.

For the Centre and family to operate in harmony, if a child goes home complaining about any disciplining action, please follow this procedure:

- 1) Realize that your child's reporting is emotionally biased (his side of the story) and usually without all the information, so please give the Centre the benefit of the doubt.
- 2) Please, do contact the staff involved for all the facts.
- 3) Realize that we do have reasons for all the rules and that they are enforced without favour.
- 4) Please support the administration, as a united front with consistent application the Centre rules can provide your child with a much-needed sense of security.

We recognize the varying developmental capabilities of children and understand that it is normal for children to display inappropriate behavior at times for a variety of reasons. The developmental capabilities of each child will always be considered when determining both expectations for appropriate behavior and consequences for inappropriate behavior.

In the Infant/Toddler Program, we are we are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment, in which young children are allowed the freedom to grow, develop, play, and socialize. Behaviour management techniques including diversion, demonstration, communication, repetition, and positive reinforcement will best achieve this and are in keeping with the child's developmental level of learning, understanding, communicating and memory.

Biting is a common issue, particularly with young children. No one likes to think that their child may be bitten in daycare, or that their child might be a biter. However, biting is a common toddler reaction and may be due to the child's experimenting, teething, frustration, feeling threatened or experiencing the need for control.

The aim of caregivers is prevention but in the event of a bite parents of all involved children will be informed. The child who was bitten will be given 'T.L.C.' and the bite will be cleansed with soap and water and a cold compress will be applied. Caregivers will calmly acknowledge the

feelings of the biter while letting them know that biting hurts and is not allowed. Depending on the situation the biter may be encouraged to assist their friend by helping to apply the cold compress and/or may be given acceptable items to bite (i.e., teething rings).

In the case of a persistent biter, parents will be encouraged to co-operate with caregivers to find reasons for and solutions to the child's biting behaviour.

SUSPENSION POLICY

Any action, either physical or verbal by a child or an adult, that threatens the safety and well being of another child or staff at Discovery Children's Centre, will be dealt with in the following manner:

- 1) A written explanation will be issued to the parent and a discussion will take place to establish a co-operative plan of action between the family and the daycare.
- 2) A second such incident may, at the discretion of the Unit Leader in consultation with the Executive Director, result in a suspension from care for a designated period.
- 3) A third such incident may, at the discretion of the Unit Leader in consultation with the Executive Director, result in a permanent suspension from care at Discovery Children's Centre. The Board of Directors would be involved in this decision.

PLEASE NOTE: Depending on the circumstances and nature of the incident, the Unit Leader in consultation with the Executive Director maintains the right to suspend care immediately, without written notice. At such a time the parent would be contacted and expected to pick their child up as soon as possible.

When a child is suspended from school, care will not be available at Discovery Children's Centre during regular school hours.

GENERAL POLICIES

Discovery Children's Centre Inc. has several policies, which must be accepted and adhered to by parents. A parent-elected Board of Directors has established all these policies. If there are problems regarding these policies, please see the Director or the Board Chair. The Board of Directors also reserves the right to change policies at any time. These changes will be made public in our news blog or posted bulletins prior to coming into effect.

1) Children Accepted

Children aged 3 months to twelve years (grade 6) are accepted into the programs at Discovery. Our regular day programs prioritize children who attend five days per week. Discovery Children's Centre will not accept Kindergarten children in our program if they require childcare services during the morning (9-11:30) time slot.

2) Mixed Age Group Plan

a) Flex Program

- We have preschool children with school-age children before and after school (6:30 am -8:30am and 3:30pm-close) as well as all day on Saturdays (6:30am-7:30pm).
- The furnishings and material used for play experiences in the classroom are age and developmentally appropriate for both age groups. All choking hazards are removed.
- The school-age children have a designated space in Room #8 for games activities. On in-service days the Flex school-age children are cared for in our school-age rooms with the regular care school-age children
- Ratios:

	PS	SA		PS	SA
1:8	8	0	2:16	16	0
	7	1		15	1
1:9	7	2	2:17	15	2
	6	3		14	3
1:10	6	4	2:18	14	4
	5	5		13	5
	4	6		12	6

b) Infant/Toddler & Preschool Programs

- School-age children who have requested to be a part of our leadership program: SWAT (Students Who Assist Teachers) join the infant/Toddler and Preschool play spaces between 4:00-5:30pm.
- School-age children play with the infant/preschool children and help staff with light duties around the classroom. This is a way of recognizing the need for more independence and responsibility in older school-age children.
- The facility practices evacuation procedures and all staff on breaks and out of classrooms are required to return to classrooms to help evacuate children.
- All office staff go to infant spaces to help evacuate infants. Ration is not affected as "helpers" visit rooms when preschool or infant children have gone home.
- Outdoor play often has preschool and school age children playing in the same spaces.

- This arrangement of mixed age groups is more family like and affords the opportunity for the older children to help the younger children and is beneficial for the sake of inclusion.
- Our goal is to help children become the best that they can become, and mixed age groups provide the best opportunity to encourage developmental growth in a natural family like setting.

3) Infant/Toddler Space

- the full written plan regarding the infant/toddler program can be found in the Infant/Toddler Program Overview

4) Hours and Days of Operation

a) **Regular Day Program:** 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Our Day staff will be responsible for a child only until 5:30 p.m. After that point, if we have not received a call and are unable to reach the parent, we will move your child into our Flex Program. If the child is still in attendance by 9:00 p.m. and we have been unable to reach any of the approved “pick up people” we will call Child and Family Services to report a child in need of care.

b) **Flex Extended Hours Program:** Flex Room hours are Monday – Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. (after midnight) and Saturday from 6:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Evening Flex Care Program children must be picked up by 12:30 a.m. If the child is not picked up and the Centre has not received a phone call or the Centre is unable to reach the parent(s), the Centre will then call Child & Family Services to report a child in need of care.

Use of the Flex Program is primarily for working parents with evening shifts or students with evening classes (i.e., after 6:00 p.m.). Exceptions to this are at the discretion of the Director or Unit Leader. Parents of the Flex Program will be given priority if their work hours change to day shifts and if they should require a spot in the Day Program. However, the Centre cannot guarantee a space on a two-week notice.

The Centre is open Mondays to Saturdays on every working day of the year except for civic holidays, statutory holidays, and other declared holidays (see our website calendar for Centre Closure Days).

(i) **Scheduling for Flex Room Care (Flex Program Only)**

- All hours and days requested need to be put on a calendar and handed in before 4:30 p.m. on Thursday for the following week. Calendars can be submitted in person in the Flex room or via e-mail to flexschedules@discoverycc.com. At this point, the staff will make up the schedule of who receives care for the upcoming week.

- Requests coming in after this deadline will be handled on a first come/first-serve basis
- Parents will be notified if their requests for care cannot be accommodated. These calls will be made on Friday. If there is no answer or voice messaging system in which to leave a message, the staff will attempt to call again on Monday morning.
- Priority will be given based on the amount of care requested by each family. Highest priority will be given to children requesting 5 full days per week and down from there.

i) Closure Days

The Centre is open Monday to Friday every working day of the year except for civic holidays, statutory holidays, and other declared holidays (see our website calendar for scheduled closures) as well as every Saturday for the Flex Program only.

- (1) The Centre will close one day per year, as permitted by ELCC, to be used at the discretion of the Executive Director. This day will take place on Easter Monday or another day in lieu of Easter Monday. A minimum of 6 weeks' notice will be given to parents regarding the date of the closure. Regular parent fees will be applied for this day.
- (2) The Centre will close at 1pm four times per year and one full day for staff professional development. These dates will be posted on the website calendar.
- (3) The Centre will close on December 24th at 2:00 p.m. and December 31st at 5:00 p.m. (All programs)

5) Fees

a) Regular Care Fees Infant & Preschool (includes Kindergarten age)

- 4-10 hours \$10.00
- 10+ hours \$15.00

b) Regular Care Fees School-age

- 2 & 3 Periods \$10.00/day (Refers to school days)
- 0 – 10 hrs \$20.80/day (Refers to Non-School Days including Centre Closure Days)
- 10 –10.25 hrs \$25.80/day (20.80+5.00)
- 10.25 – 18 hrs \$31.20/day (20.80 + 9.40)

c) Flex Care Fees Preschool

- Half day rate (0-4 hours) * \$5.00
- 4-10 hours \$10.00
- Extended rate \$15.00

d) **Flex Care Fees School-age**

- Half Day Rate (0-4 hrs.) * \$10.40
- Full Day Rate (4-10 hrs.) \$20.80 (non-school day rate including centre closure days)
- Extended rate (10-18hrs./day) \$31.20/day (\$20.80 + \$10.40)
- School-day rate 1 period \$6.15
- School-day rate 2&3 periods \$10.00
- All fees are based on scheduled care or actual care hours whichever is greater.

*0-4-hour care applies to mornings and evenings **ONLY** and may **NOT** be requested between 12:00 noon and 6:00 p.m.

The registering and/or custodial parent (the one who has primary care and control of the child) will be considered as the person who is entering into the childcare service agreement. (i.e., the **ONLY** person authorized to add or remove persons from the pick-up list, and is the **ONLY** person responsible for the payment of fees, etc.) It is the custodial parent's responsibility to let the Centre know if changes occur in living arrangements or custody documents.

e) **Registration Fee**

- A \$50.00 registration fee is required to reserve a space and confirm an enrolment date. This fee is not refundable if you change your mind, and your child does not start at the predetermined start date (as decided upon by the Director of the centre).
- A \$25.00 registration fee is required from families with proof of subsidy approval.

f) **Program/Facility Fee**

- The program/facility fee will be \$25.00 per child per billing period for all children attending a full-time program. The fee for Nursery School and Flex-Regular will be \$12.50 per child per billing period. The program/facility fee charge will show as an additional fee on your invoice and will be receipted for tax purposes.

g) **Late Pick-Up Fees** \$10.00/ Child for every 15 minutes (or any part thereof) will go into effect after the scheduled pick-up time has passed. This is above and beyond any fee changes (i.e., Extended (10+) hour rate).

h) **Meal Charge**

- If a child comes to the Centre without a lunch, we will provide a lunch for \$4. This charge will be added to the parent's account.

i) **Failure to Notify of Absence After School (School-age Only)**

Parents are asked to call the Centre before 3:30pm if their school-aged child will be absent after school. Please ensure that you speak to a staff member in person as opposed to leaving a voice mail or email as we cannot ensure these messages will be reviewed prior to the children's expected arrival time. In the Centre's effort to cut down on repeated occurrences, the following procedure will be implemented:

- **First time** we need to look for your child - we will contact you and remind you to contact the centre before 3:30 pm when they will be absent.
- **Second time** we need to look for your child - we will contact you and we will remind you that the next time we need to look for your child you will be charged a \$5.00 fee per child.
- **Third time** we need to look for your child – we will contact you and charge you a \$5.00 fee on your account. A \$5.00 fee will be charged each time we are not notified thereafter.

j) **Late Payment Fees**

- While Enrolled at the Centre

Payments received after the "Due Date" will be considered a late payment, and your account will have the following charges added. Please see Discovery's website for billing dates.

- Week 1**- no extra charges
- Week 2**- no extra charges
- Week 3**- (Monday 8:30 am) \$10.00 Late Payment Charge
- Week 4**- (Monday 8:30 am) \$10.00 Late Payment Charge an e-mail will be sent to the parent requesting a written payment plan at this time.
- Week 5**- (Monday 8:30 am) \$15.00 Late Payment Charges will be added weekly after this date until account balance = 0

Failure to live up to the agreed upon payment plan (i.e., NSF, missed or short payments) is considered grounds for immediate withdrawal of service.

- After Withdrawal from the Centre

If a parent has an outstanding balance when their child(ren) is withdrawn from the Centre, the following steps will be taken:

- A 2% Interest Charge will be added monthly to the balance. Arrangements with the Director in writing can be made to waive the interest charge with minimum acceptable monthly payments. There will be a 4-week time limit to make these arrangements.
- After this time, a registered letter will be sent to the parent, informing them of our next steps. These steps will include a 40% administrative charge added to your account, sending your account to our Collection Agency, and a final date (approximately 2 weeks) by which full payment will prevent these last steps from coming into effect.

iii) If no response is received in 2 weeks, then the account will be sent to a collection agency. After this time, the parent(s) are requested to make payments/arrangements with the collection agency.

k) Subsidized Fees

Parents are welcome to apply for childcare subsidy to the Province of Manitoba. Subsidy is given to parents according to income and need. Application forms for subsidy are available from our office and need to be submitted to Early Learning and Child Care, 102-114 Garry St., or on-line at: www.gov.mb.ca/childcare on or before the start date at Discovery. New families to Discovery who are subsidized will be required to submit a subsidy approval document.

Subsidy is an agreement between the Province of Manitoba and the parent, as such, subsidized families are responsible to keep track of subsidy expiry dates and renewal dates. Discovery Centre does not inform parents of subsidy expiry dates. When a subsidy expires, it is the parent's responsibility to submit a subsidy re-application and ensure that their childcare fees are paid on time and in full. If a subsidy re-application has been submitted to the subsidy office and Discovery has not received the new subsidy approval, parents will be billed the full fee for childcare.

Subsidized families will be expected to make arrangements with the Subsidy Office if they are planning to use more than 10 hours of care per day. Also, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the subsidy office of any changes to their personal information (i.e., address, marital status, co-habitation, income, reason for service, termination of employment and/or education status) during the subsidy approval period.

l) Fee Procedures & Cycles

i) Regular Day Programs

Program Fees are invoiced every four (4) weeks in advance except for the Extended Hour Program. The billing periods do not follow a monthly schedule (see our website for Billing Dates). The date of the current billing period is posted just outside the office door. The amount is due on the first day of each billing period.

ii) Flex Program Only

If prior to drop off, a parent does not confirm that childcare is available in the Flex Program, then a 50% surcharge will be incurred even if the child can be accommodated. If ratios do not allow the child to remain in the program, contact will be made to pick up the child, in the following sequence:

1. Parents
2. Emergency Person
3. Child & Family Services

Flex families will fall into one of three categories and may request care and be billed accordingly.

(1) Regular Flex Users

- These families will be registered as Regular Flex Care users. They need/use evening care between Monday – Friday which will include care after 6:15 pm at least one day per week.
- Will receive priority by the Centre when confirming care arrangements.
- Will be billed between 8 and 20 days in advance based upon their usual/typical schedule (see our website for Parent Fees Billing Date). This amount will be set aside and applied to the final invoice when the child is withdrawn from the centre.
- Will be billed for a minimum of two (2) days per week (even when the family is on holidays, etc.).
- In addition, these families will be billed for all “Centre Closure Days” (see our website calendar for Closure Days).
- Fees billed for each week will include all hours/days scheduled by Friday of the previous week plus any additional hours/days requested and approved by the Flex Unit Leader

(2) Casual Flex Users

- These families will be registered as casual users and will book care by submitting a calendar indicating care required by Friday at 4:30pm of each week, however, care will not be guaranteed.
- Should space be unavailable on any requested day, the Unit Leader will contact parents to deny care by Friday in the late afternoon (Parents are encouraged to maintain an alternate caregiver in the event that the Centre should be full).
- Casual families will be billed in advance an amount equal to 8 days of care. This amount will be set aside and applied to the final invoice when the child is withdrawn from the centre.
- In addition, at the end of each 4-week billing period, families will be billed for all days that the child was scheduled for care.
- Flex casual families will be charged for all centre closure holidays (Statutory holidays & centre closure dates) in addition to all days that were booked for care.
- Flex casual families will be required to book a minimum of 1 full day per week to remain enrolled at Discovery. Failure to meet this threshold will result in termination of service.

(3) Saturday Only Care Users

- Saturday only care may be accessible upon availability for children ages 2-12 years 6:30am-7:30pm.
- Will be billed between 2 and 4 days in advance based upon their usual schedule. This amount will be set aside and applied to the final invoice when the child is withdrawn from the centre.
- Fees will be billed for all care booked.

m) Fee Payments & Receipts

Discovery Centre accepts the following forms of payment:

- (a) Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) - this is an agreement with the centre to pull funds from our parents' accounts.
- (b) E-transfers- parents can initiate an e-mail transfer of funds directly from their financial institution's website or cell phone app. E-transfers should be sent to Discovery Children's Centre at payments@discoverycc.com.

Receipts will be issued and sent via e-mail. An official tax receipt for childcare services will be issued once a year and will be sent via e-mail. We would be happy to supply you with one hardcopy upon request. The cost for a second copy of the tax receipt is \$5.00 per copy.

n) Holidays and Illnesses

Fees will be charged based on 20 days per billing period. Children being absent due to illness, vacation, or centre closure days will not affect fees charged. Fees will commence upon enrolment and cease only when appropriate notice is given, and the child is withdrawn from the program.

School-Age children that are on vacation on a "non-school day" will be charged the non-school day rate of \$20.80. If the child is on vacation on a "school day", the family will be charged the school-day rate of \$10.00. Centre Closure Days will be classified as "non-school days" or "school days" according to the status assigned by the Provincial Subsidy Office.

"School days" are those days that a school-age child's school has classes in session both in the a.m. and p.m. (approximately 190 days per year).

"Non-School days" are those that a school-age child's school is not in session or in session for only the a.m. or p.m. (approximately 70 days per year).

6) Registration

All forms are to be filled out before a child begins at Discovery Children's Centre. All parents are required to read the Parent Policy and Program Overview which is posted on our website (www.discoverycc.com). A registration Fee of \$50 is required to confirm a date of entrance into a program at Discovery Children's Centre. Parents will be responsible to keep all information accurate and current. Any changes must be reported

immediately to the office in writing so that vital information can be updated in your child's file and reported to your child's room.

All other pertinent documentation (copies of separation agreement, court orders, custodial and noncustodial pick-up arrangements) will need to be provided to Discovery upon registration.

7) Key Fobs

We are a secure building with our doors being locked at all times. All parents will be given two key fobs upon registration. Additional key fobs are available to purchase for \$10. (You can purchase as many as you want) Your key fob will be active from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Should you need to deactivate a key fob for any reason (loss or change in relationship with someone who has a device) just let us know and we will deactivate it right away. For those who do not have a fob (someone on your pickup list who only comes periodically) there will be a "password" they need to use. Please ask your child's teacher or office staff what the "password" is as it will change every 6 months (Sept. & Feb.

8) Tailgating

Caution will be required by all staff and parents to not allow "tailgating". When entering the building with your key fob, do not hold the door open for any other persons except those in your party. We need each person to be entering the building with our knowledge or approval. A safe person today may be a person with a restraining order tomorrow.

9) Withdrawal

There is a mandatory two-week (2) notice for withdrawal for all programs except Nursery School which is a four-week (4) notice. This is to be given to the office in writing. If parents fail to give written notice, they will be billed for 2 weeks past (4 weeks for Nursery School) the day the Centre became aware that the child was not returning. Subsidized families will be billed for full rate of care less the amount subsidy will pay when this happens.

10) Fundraising

Discovery Parent Board typically does two (2) fundraisers per year (one in the Fall and one in the Spring). We ask all our parents to help raise funds. These funds are used to help enhance the quality of our program for all areas of our Centre with funds going towards new indoor equipment, toys, playground equipment as well as field trips. All parents are asked to participate in this effort but if for some reason you cannot do so then we request that you make a \$25.00 donation per campaign (to a maximum of \$50.00 / year per family to the Centre). Please specify when you make this type of donation so it can be receipted to you as a donation used for Income Tax purposes.

11) Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

It is the responsibility of parents to accompany their child (children) directly into the Centre. (This includes all School Age children.) Children will not be buzzed in if there is not an adult present. Children are not to have the key fobs on their person at any time.

- a) Discovery staff is only responsible for a child after the following two (2) procedures have occurred:
 - i. A drop-off person has signed in the Child.
 - ii. Drop-off person has clearly communicated the arrival of the child to an on-duty staff of their child's Unit.
- b) The child remains in the care and control of the Centre until the following two (2) procedures have occurred:
 - i. Pick-up person has signed out Child.
 - ii. Pick-up person has clearly communicated their arrival to an on duty-staff in their child's Unit.
- c) Parents are also responsible for picking up children directly from the Centre. If a child is to be picked up by someone other than a parent (even if that person is on the pick-up list), staff should be informed in advance. If the person picking up a child is not on the pick-up list, written authorization must be received in advance.
- d) All children are the responsibility of the parent(s) from the time they are brought into the Centre until the time they are signed in on the attendance sheet and a staff is advised that the child has arrived. A child should not be allowed to go to the locker area, down the hall, or outside when the parent is not accompanying the child. The Centre is concerned about loss, injury and public reputation (i.e. child outside without adult present). The Centre needs parents to be consistent with Centre limits when a child is in parental company inside the building or outside on the playground.
- e) Identification (by staff) may be required at any time. Any person picking up a child or children **need to carry Photo I.D.** This also includes parents as we sometimes have substitute staff that may request I.D.
- f) If a registering parent requests the Centre to release their child (via the telephone) to some unlisted person, it will be done, providing the identity can be confirmed by returning that parent's call to a phone number listed in the Centre's files (work or home).
- g) If the registering parent has any objections to visits to their child from another person, a written request should be filed with the Director. The staff of Discovery Children's Center Inc. will acknowledge and enforce this request.
- h) When dropping off and picking up children from the Centre parents are encouraged to use street parking on Hampton or the parent parking stalls located along the back lane. For safety reasons, we urge all parents to make a concentrated effort to train their children to always enter and exit vehicles from the curbside of a vehicle. We also ask that all parents be extremely cautious and anticipate that young children may dart out from between parked vehicles. Never leave your purse or an unattended child in your car when picking up as the Centre

has experienced incidences of stolen vehicles during child pick-up times.

12) School-Age Children – Arrival Policy

The following is a clear description of how and when staff will become responsible for school age children who arrive at the Centre without adult supervision. This includes the routine for children who come to daycare either from school or from home.

The Centre will only be responsible for school-age children after they have arrived in a supervised area of the Centre.

- For school aged children who have not been to school that day and are arriving on their own (i.e., AM arrivals), the Centre will assume responsibility for the children ONLY after they have entered their Unit (room) and announced their arrival to a staff member.
- For school-aged children who have been at school and are arriving at lunch or after school, the Centre will assume responsibility for the child(ren) ONLY after they have entered the day care property and have been signed in by staff.
- The centre no longer assumes responsibility for your school-aged child once they leave the centre to go to school.
- For school aged children leaving for school, we will not assume responsibility for the child(ren) once they exit the building.
- If your school aged child does not arrive during the designated time (while school patrols are on duty), then we will:
 - Contact the school to see if they know the whereabouts of your child.
 - If this is unsuccessful and the information from the other school aged children does not result in tracking down your child, we will call to inform the parents.
 - If staffing allows, we will continue to search for your child.
 - NOTE: We do not assume responsibility for your child at this point!
 - NOTE: We have frequently spent 30 – 45 minutes looking for children who have been picked up early from school with no notification to Discovery Centre. If you are changing your pattern of, drop off & pick up in any significant way, you must inform the Centre.
 - NOTE: We need to have reliable phone number/s where we can reach the parent especially around the noon hour (11:30 am – 12:30 pm) and again after school (3:45 pm – 4:30 pm)

13) Extra-Curricular Activities (School-Age)

We require parents' written permission to allow your child/ren to attend supervised activities (choir, intramurals, patrol etc.). We cannot release children from our care unless this is completed and a DCC staff has confirmed these activities with the school.

All children participating in Intramurals at Stevenson School must have written permission from parents to participate. In extreme weather conditions (-28 Celsius) children will not be permitted to attend. The weather will be determined at 12:05 (Airport weather).

14) Health & Medication

Discovery Centre follows the “Well Beings” guide (published by the Pediatric Society) on issues regarding Physical Health, Safety and Emotional Well-Being of Children in Child Care Centres and Family Day Care Homes.

Children cannot attend day care if they are too ill to participate in the program (including outdoor activities). Parents are requested to notify the Centre if a child will be absent (as well as giving the reason for absence). A child is considered ill and not able to participate in our program if he/she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- a) Vomiting,
- b) Diarrhea,
- c) Any undiagnosed rash or sore, or
- d) Severe upper respiratory infection (i.e., cough plus nasal discharge yellow or green in colour.)

At the discretion of the Program Supervisors, parents will be called to take a child home if any of the following occurs:

- a) Vomiting or diarrhea occurs twice in a two-hour period,
- b) Abnormal temperature and exposure to communicable disease, or
- c) Excessive listlessness, drowsiness, sleepiness, or lack of interest in surroundings.

If a child becomes ill at Discovery Children's Centre Inc., the parent will be notified and must be prepared to take the child home. If the parent cannot be reached, the alternate care person will be contacted.

a) **Medications:**

- (i) A child on medication may return to day care if they are able to participate in the program activities (including outside play). If your child requires medication while they are at daycare, Discovery will provide a medication form to be filled out which must include the doctor's name, phone number and specific directions as to the time and amounts to be administered. Please note staff members cannot administer medication, including homeopathic medications, unless it is prescribed by your child's physician/nurse practitioner/homeopath. The Centre will not administer prescribed medication by a physician/nurse practitioner/homeopath if they are out-of-date or in a container other than the original. Parents are also requested to have the pharmacist make up each prescription in two (2) bottles - one to be left at the Centre and one for home.
- (ii) Tylenol/Advil for fever in infants (only). All parents of infants/toddlers will sign a Tylenol/Advil Authorization form before their child begins in the Infant/Toddler Program at Discovery Children's Centre. If you can not be contacted this form gives staff permission to administer an age-appropriate dose if your child's temperature rises above 38.5 C. It is the parents' responsibility to provide Tylenol or Advil for their child, at the

daycare. This medication must be handed to a staff so that they may safely store it until it is required for use.

Given that it is difficult to assess the condition of infants who are less than 6 months of age, a physician should evaluate a fever, in an infant, as soon as possible ('Well Beings': Canadian Paediatric Society, Second Edition. 1996). You will be expected to make any necessary arrangements to pick up your child (if less than six months) in an expedient manner.

b) Inoculations:

If a parent wishes to have information regarding their child receiving inoculations, the Public Health Nurse is available to parents to make arrangements. See list of Communicable Diseases and summary of incubation and/or isolation as follows:

Summary of Regulations for the Control of Some Common Communicable Diseases

DISEASE	ISOLATION OF CASE	GUIDE FOR RE-ADMISSION TO SCHOOL
Chicken Pox	If severe, then 5 days or blisters have crusted. If mild, then no exclusion required.	Child can participate in regular activities and has no fever
Diphtheria	A suspect must be isolated until case is confirmed or disproved. Case isolated until cultures fail to show presence of Diphtheria Bacilli in tow cultures taken no less than 24 hours apart after cessation of antibiotic.	Clearance from Attending Physician or Health Officer after isolation period is completed
Infectious Mononucleosis	Isolation not required.	Clearance from attending Physician or Health Officer
Red Measles (Rubella-Mandatory Immunization)	Isolation for at least 4 days after appearance of rash	4 days after the rash appears or until asymptomatic (whichever is longer).
German Measles (Rubella)	Isolation for 2 – 3 days until rash and symptoms have disappeared.	7 days after onset of rash and symptoms have subsided
Scarlet Fever	Isolation until patient has been under appropriate antibiotic treatment for 2 days	Clearance from Attending Physician/Public Health Nurse when asymptomatic
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Isolation for 3 weeks after onset of disease or 1 week after commencing appropriate antibiotic therapy.	Exclude until 5 days after start of antibiotics or 2 weeks if no treatment given. Contacts may need antibiotics or vaccine
Scabies	Until treated appropriately	Exclude until treated. Treatment of contacts may be necessary to control outbreaks
Pediculosis (Head Lice)	Until adequately treated and all nits removed. (See Head Lice Handout for complete details)	After appropriate treatment and removal of all nits
Ringworm	Until under treatment.	Exclude from gyms, swimming pools and activities involving bodily contact until healed.
Impetigo	Exclude from school until under treatment.	On appropriate antibiotic for 1 day (24 hours).

Conjunctivitis	Exclude from school until under treatment (24 hrs) if purulent, until discharge cleared.	On appropriate antibiotic for 24 hrs. or if purulent – until discharge has cleared
Mumps	Isolation until swelling has disappeared	Exclude 9 days unless mild case and swelling subsided. Child must be able to participate in program

15) Supervision of Children Who Leave Without Permission

If your preschool or school aged child becomes upset and leaves their supervised group, the Centre will remain responsible for providing the best supervision that is possible under the circumstances. If we are unable to locate your child or convince your child to return to the group, we will call the parent and expect them to come and take responsibility for their child's safety.

NOTE: The Centre is unable to provide care (on an ongoing basis) to children who will not stay with their supervised group.

16) Indirect Supervision of Children

Staff shall directly supervise children at all times, with the following exceptions being possible:

- When children go to the bathrooms located off the main hallway
- When Preschool children are coming in from front playground, they will go to Preschool 1 or Preschool 2 to use the bathroom
- When School Age 2 children (Grade 2 and up) are coming in from the front playground, they will go to the School Age 2 wing to use the bathroom
- When Preschool and School Age children are in the back Adventure Playground, they will use the bathrooms right off the back yard
- When children are bringing things to, or getting things from their lockers in the main hall

Indirect Supervision will occur only when the staff believes the child is mature enough to handle this responsibility, and when the staff has given specific permission for that specific occasion. Staff will be required to do periodic checks (at least every ten minutes) while indirect supervision is occurring.

The following represents the times and conditions under which the Board and Staff of Discovery Centre have agreed to exceed the prescribed group size or teacher/student ratio.

i. Transition from inside to outside

For all children, the ratios may be exceeded at times as children who are ready to go out are released to a staff who already is outside. The overall ratio will be maintained at 1:8 or 1:15 based on the ages of the children, but they may for

example be 10 children outside with one staff for a short time as the other unit staff continues to dress the other 6 children.

ii. Sleep time

12:00pm – 2:30 p.m. & 9:30 p.m. – 12:30 a.m. – During sleep time either in the afternoon or at night the ratios may exceed the required ratios. At the time that all children are asleep or quietly resting on their beds, the ratios may reach 1:16 at a maximum. This is required to allow for the lunch breaks of the staff and to keep the costs of care down during the nighttime hours. We would always have staff in the building, at a 1:8 or 1:15 ratio as required, who would be available to assist with emergencies of any kind.

iii. Nap Room Indirect Guidance (Infant/Toddler Program)

In the Infant/Toddler nap room –Children who nap in playpens only; a staff will stay in the room until children fall asleep. When all children in the nap room area are asleep, there will not be a staff present in the nap room. With the use of a baby monitor indirect supervision will be used. There will always be a staff present in the Infant/Toddler room while children are sleeping, and children will be checked on when they are heard using a monitor or every five (5) minutes.

iv. School-age Transition

- 08:30 – 08:45 am – For kindergarten children who are being walked to school (which is directly across the street). Children will be walked by one staff and group size may exceed 10 children but will never exceed 16 children. The children will walk in pairs. School Patrols are on duty at the time that we cross Silver Avenue.
- Children signed up for extracurricular activities (lunch & before/after school) will be allowed to come and go from the centre on their own (Only if written permission from parents.)
- 11:40 – 11:50 am- For kindergarten children returning from Stevenson-Britannia School. One staff goes to the school to get the children from the “teacher” and releases the children to go outside and join the other school children in the process of crossing the street on the way to Discovery Centre. The second staff is in the kindergarten classroom at Discovery Centre awaiting their arrival. The numbers will range from 10-20 children.
- Children Grade 1 and up will be allowed to come and go from Stevenson School and the Assiniboine School bus by themselves. A staff member will be standing at the cross walk waiting for them.

17) Transportation Policy

For children who are transported to and from school via school bus, the Centre will assume responsibility for the children only after they have entered their Unit (room) and announced their arrival to a staff member. The centre does not assume responsibility for your child once they leave the daycare grounds (to the perimeter of the centre’s property).

(i) School Bus Procedure (School-age)

7:50-8:00 a.m. School Aged children who are taking the school bus will be walked to the bus stop and supervised until they get on the bus.

12:50 p.m. Kindergarten children who arrive at the centre by school bus will be met at the bus and supervised into the centre.

3:50 p.m. A staff member will be waiting for the Assiniboine and George Waters bus at the end of the day. Children will then cross Silver by themselves.

18) Accidents

It is the policy of the Centre to report, to the parent/guardian, any head injury other than a minor bump. This is to be done by the Director or Program Supervisor as soon as possible. In case of emergency (i.e., accident), a child will generally be taken to Children's Hospital unless other circumstances prevent this (i.e., field trips - location). If the Centre calls an ambulance, the Centre will cover up to \$300.00 of the parents' portion of costs. Parents' insurance must initiate maximum coverage under their policy, while Discovery Children's Centre will cover any shortage of coverage to a limit of \$300.00.

Other accidents that would result in your child coming home with a mark on them should be explained to the parent through a written Accident Report.

19) Naps (Preschool)

Brain research indicates that rest and nutrition influence brain function. Children need restful sleep at night, and they need daily naps. Research shows that the brain uses sleep time to do its housekeeping and to reorganize it.

Each pre-school child has his or her own cot and blanket which the Centre provides. The blankets will be laundered once a week.

Many of the older pre-school aged children are not required to sleep. They have a quiet time on their beds (30 min.) and can get up and play after their rest.

20) Bed Bugs

To prevent the spread of bed bugs, we do not allow blankets, pillows, or stuffed toys, to be brought to the centre from home. We will consider exceptions for children in the Infant/Toddler room if stuffed toys/blankets are deemed necessary. These stuffed toys/blankets will stay at the centre and are not transferred between the home and the Centre.

All children must come to daycare in clothes they did not sleep in.

If a child is suspected of having bed bug bites the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately to make them aware.

Parents of the child will be asked:

- i. to bring a set of clean clothes (just come out of the wash/dryer) in a Ziploc bag.
- ii. to change their child into this clean set of clothes when the child arrives at the Centre.
- iii. to place the clothes on the child into the Ziploc bag and place the bag into their child's locker.
- iv. to continue this procedure until the evidence of bed bugs has ended

The centre will not be washing clothing or any other articles belonging to the child unless live bugs are found.

21) Field Trips

Field Trips are a way of exposing children to the community. Excursions will be taken on foot, public transportation, school bus or chartered buses. Some trips may include locations outside of the city limits (i.e. corn maze, Birds Hill Park etc.) Excursions requiring motor vehicle transportation will be posted 48 hours in advance so that parents have the time needed to consider their child's participation. Mode of transportation and details of excursion will be listed on the notice. There is a possibility that parents will be asked to pay an extra minimal fee for field trips or excursions.

Should a child arrive after their group has departed, the parent will be expected to report to the office when arriving at the centre with their child. The Director (or designate) will make arrangements for care that will best suit the situation.

22) Birthdays & Other Celebrations

If parents are planning to celebrate their child's birthday by having a special event or snack at the Centre, we would like parents to check with the Unit Leader in their program. In the past, parents have arranged for clowns, magicians, or special snacks at the Centre. We are certainly encouraging parents to continue to do this type of thing, but it is necessary to check with the Centre first.

The Centre would also like to make it clear that gift giving will not be allowed at any such events or occasions held at Discovery. Any parents wishing to give gifts to other children are asked to make arrangements for this to happen away from the Centre. It would also be appreciated if invitations to outside events or celebrations were done outside of the centre. This helps avoid any hard feelings if not all children are invited. Parents should ask their child's teacher for assistance.

23) Anaphylaxis Policy

Discovery Children's Centre has established an Anaphylaxis Policy that describes the roles and responsibilities of all persons attending the centre. Our goal of ensuring the safety of children with a known risk of anaphylaxis, in a community setting, depends on the cooperation of the entire community. To minimize risk of exposure, and to ensure rapid response to an emergency, parent/guardian, children, and program personnel/providers must all understand and fulfill their responsibilities. The interrelatedness of these roles is vital, failure of any group to respond appropriately will negatively impact everyone.

In general, all persons must:

- (a) Be aware of what an allergen is and what allergies are identified within the Centre.
- (b) Be aware of the appropriate steps to avoiding an anaphylactic reaction through such things as proper hand washing, safe food handling, label reading, education, and training of concerned parties etc.
- (c) Be aware of the steps to deal with an anaphylactic occurrence including availability and use of an Epi-pen or auto-injector, emergency contacts and procedures etc.

The Centre will make every effort to provide a safe environment for children at risk to anaphylaxis through proper training and education of staff and children (developmentally appropriate) to provide an inclusive and accepting atmospheres. (A more detailed copy of our policy is available upon request).

Upon registration, Discovery will request information about your child's medical health and the need to complete a United Referral Intake System (URIS) application, if applicable.

All children who have an anaphylaxis allergy must have all of their lunch containers and bags labelled with their names.

24) Safety Charter & Code of Conduct

Discovery Children's Centre has a Safety Charter which includes **Enhanced Safety Plans** and a **Code of Conduct**. The enhanced safety plans deal with the way we keep children safe and healthy. The Code of Conduct describes expected behavior from parents, Board members, staff and any group associated with our centre. A copy of these documents is posted on Discovery's website.

25) Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy

Discovery Children's Centre Inc. believes every worker is entitled to a workplace free of abusive conduct, harassment, and violence. Any act of abusive conduct, harassment or violence committed by or against a worker or member of the public is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any worker engaging in abusive conduct, harassment or violence will be subject to a range of disciplinary procedures up to and including dismissal. Similarly, management personnel (including Unit Leaders) who are aware of abusive

conduct, harassment or violence that is occurring but who fail to take appropriate action may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination for cause.

26) Privacy Policy

Discovery Children's Centre has adopted a Privacy Policy which outlines principles and guidelines for the collection, use, disclosure, and retention of personal information. (See Privacy Policy on our website.)

27) Child Abuse Reporting Procedure

Each staff at Discovery Centre, as a professional in the Early Childhood field, has several obligations thrust upon them. These "legal requirements" outline for the staff what must happen on those rare occasions when a child is suspected of being a victim of abuse or neglect.

If a staff member suspects abuse and neglect, not if they can prove or know it for a fact, they must report this information to the child protection authorities, as well as to the parent(s) or legal guardian of the child. The child protection agency will then determine whether an investigation is warranted or not.

In certain circumstances, our obligation will be to report to the child protection agency, first. The parent(s) or legal guardian will be notified on a timely basis. At Discovery Children's Centre, we strive to work with families, in partnership, to provide them with the best possible support we can, however, if the disclosure centers on the parent or guardian as the source of the abuse, we are legally unable to call the parents/guardian first.

Since children are vulnerable and unable to protect themselves, we as adults and especially those professionals in the educational and medical fields along with parents are asked to guard the safety of our young children and to ensure others are not harming them. If any of the above is unclear or makes you feel uncomfortable, please discuss your reactions with the Director.

SUMMARY

The policies in this booklet are the existing policies of Discovery Children's Centre Inc. They are in place to meet and satisfy the needs of the children, the parents, and the staff.

Policies help to promote and sustain the efficient running of the Centre. Changes in policy occur from time to time. Policy changes are discussed and decided on at the monthly Board of Directors meetings, which are open to all parent members. New policies will come into effect after parents have been notified of changes.

Last Changes Made: 11/03, 11/11, 12/10, 14/06, 20/01, 20/07, 22/01, 22/06, 22/11, 23/07

