



Parent Handbook 2024-2025



FBC Allen
DISCOVERY DAYS
201 E. McDermott
Allen, Texas 75002
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Dear Parents and Guardians,

I want to welcome you and your children to Discovery Days! We are deeply indebted to the members of First Baptist Church Allen who have sacrificed time and finances to provide such a wonderful facility to house this ministry. Also, we are so blessed to have our director, Leslie Meil and such a gifted, dedicated, caring teaching staff. They are an amazing staff and I'm thankful for each of them.

My own kids, now young adults, were blessed to be a part of Discovery Days. What we experienced then is still true today—Discovery Days is a ministry of First Baptist Church Allen that ministers, not just to children but to families. Thank you for allowing us to partner with you as we minister to the whole child, encouraging growth spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially through developmentally appropriate lessons and activities for your child. The Bible tells us, "*Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man*" (Luke 2:52). Those are our church goals for every child. We count it a privilege to care for your children and realize the great responsibility we have for every child the Lord brings our way.

Our church offers a variety of ministries for children and their families. Even if you are actively involved in another local church, you are welcome to participate with us at FBC Allen as it would meet your needs. Most importantly, let us know if there are ways that we can minister to you and pray for you.

This handbook will serve you well. Please read this information thoroughly and keep it for future reference. Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve your family.

Blessings in Christ,

Jimmy Smith
Generations Pastor

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

Discovery Days Staff

Discovery Days Director
Records Coordinator
Assistant Director

Leslie Meil
Lisa Broce
Catherine Hathaway

FBC Allen Ministerial Staff

Generations Pastor
Online Pastor
Student Pastor
Minister of Children
Business Administrator

Jimmy Smith
Chris Jones
Hayden Walsh
Lezah Maitland
Rodger Teaff

Purpose

The Discovery Days program teaches the "whole child", meeting not only the physical and mental development, but also emotional, social and spiritual development. The program extends the ministry of FBC Allen by providing well trained teachers who care about the education of each child. We strive to assist each child in developing positive feelings and attitudes about himself/herself and his/her world. We will offer opportunities for the child to explore his/her environment, develop skills, and stimulate his/her creativity. Our program will provide experiences that will assist the child in becoming aware of God's love. All of this is to be accomplished by providing developmentally appropriate activities and guidance for each child 18 months through five years of age.

Organization

The Discovery Days program is a ministry of FBC Allen Preschool Ministry and is administered by the Business Administrator, the Minister to Preschool Families, Discovery Days Director, and the Records Coordinator. The program is designed for children 18 months old to attend two days per week, two year olds to attend one or two days per week, three year olds to attend two days per week, four year olds to attend two or three days per week, and Kindergartners to attend four days per week.

Families enrolled at Discovery Days understand FBC Allen believes The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God. It is the basis for our sincerely held beliefs. The Church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of *The Baptist Faith and Message* as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. *The Baptist Faith and Message* is available for review on the church website and through the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Baptist Faith and Message (2000) does not exhaust the extent of our sincerely held beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of the Church faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the Senior Pastor with the Deacon Leadership Team of FBC Allen, Texas shall function as the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

Enrollment Requirements

Before any child may attend class, the following information must be completed and on file:

- ***Admission Information Form***
 - Updated Immunizations
 - Health-Care Professional's Statement
 - Vision and Hearing Screening (for children age **four** by September 1, 2024)
 - Emergency Medical Facility Information.
- ***Discipline & Guidance Policy***
- ***Paid Registration Fee - The registration fee is non-refundable.***

Registration and Tuition

Registration: Completed enrollment forms and a **NON-REFUNDABLE REGISTRATION FEE** are required for enrollment for the school year. Registration fees are due when the child is placed on the enrollment list. All forms must be completed and properly signed by the first day of school in order for the child to participate. They may be returned before the current school year is over or brought to "Meet The Teacher". Pre-registration for the upcoming year occurs in February. To secure enrollment, the enrollment form must be completed and the registration fee must be paid. Current students must be up-to-date on tuition payments for the current year in order to register for the upcoming school year. Children currently in the program and First Baptist Church Allen members will be given first priority for enrollment. A waiting list will be maintained when enrollment is full. The waiting list is not carried over to the next school year.

Tuition: Tuition is due on the first class day of each of the nine months (September 2024-May 2025). A late fee of \$10 will be charged on the 10th of the month. All tuition payments are due for the month in advance. **(REFUNDS WILL NOT BE MADE FOR ABSENCES.)** A fee of \$20 will be charged for returned checks. If it is necessary to withdraw a child, the parent should notify the director at least two weeks before the date of withdrawal in writing. If two weeks notice is not given, 1/2 month's tuition will be required. The tuition amount represents an average for each month, because all months will not have the same number of school days. A discount of \$15 per month will be given to parents with a second and third child enrolled.

Registration and Tuition

<u>Age</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Registration Fee</u> (one-time, non-refundable fee)	<u>Tuition</u> (Due on the first class day of each of the nine months, September 2023-May 2024)
18 Months	2	\$ 280	\$ 280
Twos	2	\$ 275	\$ 275
Threes	2	\$ 275	\$ 275
Fours	2	\$ 280	\$ 285
Fours	3	\$ 360	\$ 360
Twos/Threes/Fours	4	\$425	\$425
Kindergarten	4	\$425	\$425

Discovery Days school year begins at the end of August and runs through May. Our Preschool and Kindergarten program will observe most of the holidays and emergency closings as the Allen Independent School District. Refunds will not be made or make-up days scheduled. Classes are determined by the age of the child by September 1, 2024. Separate classes are available for children age 18-months, two, three, four and five.

Check-in/Check-out Procedures

Discovery Days offers a drop-off procedure in the mornings. Parents may drop-off their children at designated Discovery Days entrance beginning at 9:20 each morning. Discovery Days staff will escort them safely to their classrooms. Kindergarten/3s AND their siblings will be dropped off on the North side of the building that faces Main St. 4s/2s/18m AND their siblings will be dropped off on the South side of the building by Discovery Days playground and entrance. **SIBLINGS FOLLOW THE OLDEST CHILD.**

Families will be greeted at their assigned drive entrance each morning. Discovery Days Staff will sign each child in each morning. Drop-off begins at 9:20 a.m. and concludes at 9:45. Students arriving late need to enter at the Discovery Days entrance.

Your child may only be picked up by persons listed in his/her file. No child will be released to anyone not authorized by their parent. We must have written authorization for any changes. We will need to see a DRIVER'S LICENSE for any person not listed in his/her file. If you need to pick your child up at a different time, please ring the bell by our front door or call us at 972-727-7241 to notify us an any departure changes.

Discovery Days front door will be open at 1:45 each afternoon for pick-up. Please sign out your child each day at pick-up. Teachers will begin opening their doors at 1:55. The teacher will call for your child to come out to you. The artwork, backpacks, and Discovery Days information will be on the mat outside the classroom door for you to take home.

KINDERGARTEN AND THEIR SIBLINGS WILL BE DISMISSED ON THE MAIN ST. SIDE OF THE CAMPUS. Parents, please have your car tag visible for the teachers. Students will be in place each afternoon by 1:55 p.m.

CELL PHONE USAGE: Proper communication between teacher and parent is a priority at Discovery Days. In order to have optimum communication, we ask parents to refrain from using their cell phones during drop off and pick up.

Health

- Fever
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Any symptoms of childhood diseases such as scarlet fever, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough
- Common cold-from onset through one week
- Sore throat
- Croup
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infections-boils, ringworm or impetigo
- Pink eye or other eye infections
- Green or yellow discharge from the nose
- Any communicable diseases
- Lice

In order to provide the safest and healthiest environment for all children and teachers, please keep your child at home if he/she shows any symptoms or signs of illness. The children will not be taken outdoors on extremely cold days. **If your child is too sick to play outdoors, please keep him/her at home.** We are not able to keep a child in

another class while his/her class is on the playground. If he/she becomes ill at school, he/she will be cared for in an isolated area. If a child has any of the below symptoms, a parent will be contacted to pick up the child. The Committee for Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that a child should not leave home when any of the following symptoms exist:

We ask you to follow these guidelines and that a child be free of fever **for 48 hours** before coming to school. Thank you for your cooperation as we seek to insure a safe and healthy environment.

Procedures For Dispensing Medications

It is Discovery Days' policy not to dispense medications except under certain situations; in which case, prior arrangements are made with our Discovery Days office and an **Authorization For Dispensing Medication Form** is on file in our office. Medications dispensed in Discovery Days must follow these guidelines:

- The medication is in the original container labeled with the child's full name and the date brought to the child-care center.
- Medication is administered in amounts according to the label directions or as amended by a physician.
- Medication must include the times child-care employees are to administer each medication according to the label directions.
- Medication is administered only to the child for whom it is intended.
- Medication can not be administered after its expiration date.

Immunization Requirements

Forms for immunization records and emergency authorization are included in the Admission registration forms. **The shot record form must be signed by the doctor and include the following statement listed on the admission form: "I have examined (name of child) within the past year and find that he/she is able to take part in the day care program."** The State requires that on your child's fourth birthday, he/she must have OPV and DPT immunizations. Please notify the school office when your child has received these immunizations so that our medical records are kept current and in compliance with the State. Effective August 7, 2003, parents of four and five year olds need to show proof of having the fifth DTaP immunization, unless the fourth dose of DTaP was given on or after the fourth birthday.

As of August 1, 2000, all children attending a licensed childcare facility are required to be vaccinated against Varicella (Chickenpox). The Varicella vaccination is listed on the Immunization Record on the Discovery Days Health Form. *If a child has had the Chickenpox Disease, the parent can fill out a statement on the Health Form verifying that the child has had the Chickenpox Disease.

ALL FOUR YEAR OLDS must have a vision and hearing screening. Documentation should be provided on the child's Health Record.

Discovery Days does NOT require staff members to obtain vaccines such as flu, hepatitis A and Pertussis.

Food

Each child should bring a lunch of finger foods and a drink. The licensing guidelines require that we monitor what children eat while they are at Discovery Days, and see that the children are receiving 1/3 of their daily nutritional needs. Your child's lunch needs to contain a minimum (1) item **each** of the following food groups:

- (1) MILK: Milk, cheese, yogurt
- (2) VEGETABLE AND FRUIT: 1/4 cup (fruit juice included)
- (3) PROTEIN: Meat, eggs, beans, and poultry.
- (4) GRAIN: All breads and crackers

We may occasionally send home a reminder note, if needed. Because of the problem with leaky thermoses, we ask that the children **do not bring carbonated drinks (either in thermos or cans)**. Please label the lunch with child's name. **We ask parents not to send candy in their child's lunch.** A morning **peanut free** snack will be provided. Thank you for your cooperation. If you would like to bring a special treat or snack for your child's class (during holidays or birthdays), please check with your child's teacher.

Allergies

In recent years, we have seen an increasing number of food allergies. If your child has a known food allergy that has been diagnosed by a health-care professional, you **must** have a food allergy emergency plan in your child's file at the school. The food allergy emergency plan **must** be prepared by your child's health-care provider and signed and dated by the health-care provider and the parents. The food allergy plan must include:

- (1) A list of each food the child is allergic to;
- (2) Possible symptoms if exposed to a food on the list; and
- (3) The steps to take if the child has an allergic reaction.

Toileting

Although we anticipate toileting accidents, we expect children three and four years of age to be potty trained. Children should be able to tell the teacher, go to the restroom and care for their restroom needs by themselves. Please dress your child in clothes he/she can manage himself/herself. Elastic waistbands is one example. Snaps and buttons are often difficult for the children to manage alone. Each child who is not completely potty trained and not wearing underpants should wear pull-ups. *No diapers please.* If your child will be wearing pull-ups, please bring extra pull-ups and wipes to school each day. For 18-month and two year olds, please send plenty of diapers and wipes to school in their backpack.

Clothing

Because of the learning activities in which children will be involved, you are requested to dress them in washable play clothes and shoes. Please send them in clothing that they can manage themselves at restroom time. All outer garments should be labeled with the child's name. **Every school day, each child should bring in their backpack a change of clothing enclosed in a zip-lock bag (shirt, pants, socks).**

Please keep in mind that we play on the outdoor playground as much as possible. Please dress your child appropriately, ensuring that a light coat or jacket is available as the weather turns colder. **For the safety of the children, closed-toe shoes are highly recommended for the outdoor playground areas.** Children will be kept indoors on red ozone days, as well as days when the wind chill factor is below forty degrees.

Water Activities

A water table may be used in the classroom as one of the learning centers. In the spring, a small wading pool with 3" of water is used for the children to "fish." All activities are monitored by Discovery Days staff.

Rest Period

All children (except four-year olds and Kindergartners) will be expected to participate in a rest time. We request that each child bring some type of mat, rug or towel. We use this as a brief (20 minutes) transition time between the morning and afternoon activities. Any tote bag your child may bring to carry his rest mat and lunch in each day must be able to fit into an 11" x 15" cubby.

Guidance

All guidance is done with a positive encouraging approach. Children are given choices and are allowed to learn by natural consequences. Children are taught four basic rules to help, respect and love at church and school. Teachers discuss the four ways to show respect and remind children of these during the day.

- Respect God... by being sincere during prayer and worship, and taking care of church property.
- Respect Adults...by obeying right away, and expressing feeling with kindness and honor.
- Respect Others...by not hurting with actions or words and harming their belongings. Allow others to learn and have fun.
- Respect Yourself...by playing safe and doing your best.

A Discipline and Guidance Policy Form must be read and signed by the parent and kept in each student's Discovery Days file. (A copy of this policy is in the back of this booklet.)

Animals

Every fall, Barnyard Friends visit Discovery Days. Children will be able to see and touch animals that live on the farm. All animals have had the proper vaccinations.

Parent Participation

Parents participate at Discovery Days through our activities. During seasonal parties, you may sign-up to help with your preschooler's parties. Parents are welcome to observe their child's classroom at any time. Parents are asked to check in at the office first.

Parent Notification and Policy Changes

When a policy changes, parents will be notified in writing. If a child is ill or needs to be sent home for another reason, the parent will be called. In the event we cannot reach a parent, an approved person on the enrollment form will be called. In the event a parent wishes to change an approved pick up person, they must come to the Discovery Days office and make the change in person.

Please contact the Director, Leslie Meil, at 972-727-7241 to discuss any questions or concerns regarding the policies and procedures at Discovery Days. Parents will be notified in writing of any policy changes.

Conferences

Please feel free to request a conference with the teacher, Director or Minister of Preschool regarding any questions you may have. Since teaching begins promptly at 9:30 a.m., the teachers will not be able to visit with you about your child at this time. If you will drop her a note in the morning requesting a conference, she will be glad to get back with you that afternoon. If the teacher, Director or Minister of Preschool feels the need to discuss any matter concerning your child (behavior, participation, attitude, etc.), you will be contacted.

Open House

Discovery Days will have an Open House in April. Friends and family are invited to attend.

Reviewing Operational Policies For State Guidelines

Parents may review the State's Minimum Standards by asking any Discovery Days office staff for a copy. The most recent licensing inspection report is posted on the wall outside our Discovery Days office.

Parents may contact the local licensing office 1-800-582-6036, Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) child abuse hotline 1-800-252-5400, and PRS website www.dfps.state.tx.us.

Child Abuse

No one likes to talk about abuse, but it is a real issue and it happens to children. Everyone has been made aware of the issue of child abuse in centers and you can be assured that the teachers who work at our school have been carefully screened with the state. We also conduct training every year on the warning signs of abuse and how to report. Childcare centers and staff members are required by law to report suspected child abuse, neglect or sexual abuse to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and the local police. Failure to report by the staff or center is a Class B Misdemeanor. Aside from the legal implications, the failure to make a report would mean neglect on our part to protect children in our care. We will not knowingly fail to protect children in our care. The Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County located in McKinney is a local resource available to assist with counseling, family assistance programs, and resources for ways to keep your children safe. Their number is: 972-632-3910.

Gang-Free Zone

The Texas Penal Code indicates that any area within 1,000 feet of a child care center is a gang free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to higher penalty.

Discipline and Guidance Policy for Discovery Days

- ◆ Discipline must be:
 - (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
 - (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
 - (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.
- ◆ A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:
 - (1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
 - (2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
 - (3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
 - (4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.
- ◆ There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:
 - (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
 - (2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
 - (3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
 - (4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
 - (5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
 - (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
 - (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
 - (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
 - (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.
- ◆ If a child is an endangerment to himself or others at Discovery Days, parents will be notified that their child may be removed from attending our program. Each situation will be reviewed by Leslie Meil, Director, and Rodger Teaff, Church Business Administrator, to make sure that the child is safe and is not negatively impacting the safety of our other students. Parents/guardians will be notified of any concerns that may be present and the potential for removal from the program.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES PLAN

Discovery Days is committed to providing a safe environment for children and staff. Severe Weather Drills and Lock Down procedure drills are performed 3 times a year. Fire drills will be performed each month. Emergency maps and emergency information are posted in each classroom. In the event of an emergency, we follow the procedures described below:

FIRE: The fire alarm/smoke detectors automatically notify the fire department when sounded. Each classroom will follow the evacuation map and procedure plan labeled and assigned for their classroom. Classroom teachers carry their classroom sign in/out sheet whenever they leave their room. The sign in/out sheet includes parent name, phone number and 2nd point of contact.

BAD WEATHER: In the event of severe weather, classroom teachers and children will move to designated shelter locations as noted on the evacuation map and procedure plan assigned to their room.

RELOCATION PROCEDURES (EVACUATION PLAN): In the event Discovery Days needs to evacuate the building due to an emergency (such as a gas leak or water main break) and leave the property completely, our plan is listed below:

- An announcement will be made over the intercom that teachers need to evacuate the building just like we do for fire drill and/or evacuation plan.
- Teachers will take their sign in/out sheets which include parent name, phone number and 2nd point of contact.
- Teachers will lead children to the assigned location designated on the evacuation map and procedure plan. In the event we must leave the property, teachers and students will relocate to The Curb on the east side of campus.
- Teachers will begin contacting parents to alert them we have evacuated the building and pick up will take place at this alternate location. Each parent will be required to sign the sign in/out sheet before they leave with their child from the alternate location.
- An email will be sent out from the director of Discovery Days alerting parents to the evacuation with details explaining the evacuation process.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES

Discovery Days will never hesitate to call 911 for an illness that requires immediate attention by a health care professional.

These are the steps Discovery Days will take *in case of emergencies*:

1. Leslie Meil will contact emergency medical services
2. The child will be given first-aid treatment or CPR when needed
3. Lisa Broce or Catherine Hathaway will contact the parent
4. Lisa Broce or Catherine Hathaway will contact Rodger Teaff or Steve Wade in the church office.
5. Leslie Meil will contact the physician or other health care provider identified in the child's record.
6. Leslie Meil will contact Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

