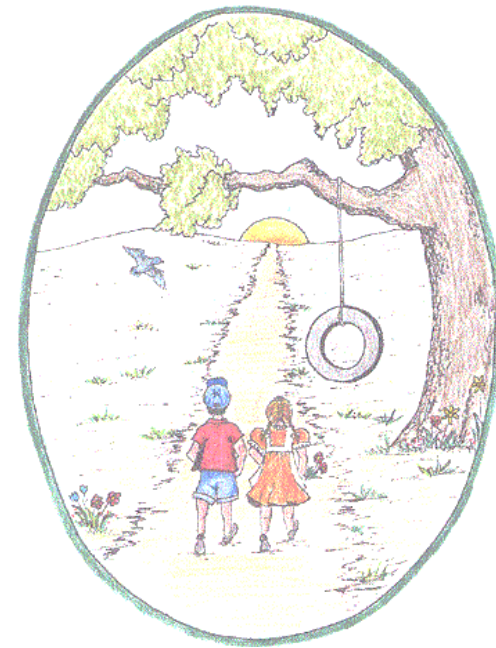


Acres of Discovery

Child Development Center

Parent-Student Handbook



Acres of Discovery Child Development Center

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Plant a seed today for the future

Revised 8/17/09

Dear Parents,

We would like to welcome you and your child to Acres of Discovery and thank you for trusting in us.

Our school's objective is to prepare your child for future educational success. We are tailored to stimulate all aspects of the individual as well as the age-related development of your child through developmentally appropriate educational practices. We hold high expectations for our students and recognize that for children to reach those expectations they must be given concrete, real and relevant opportunities for learning.

Our school is implemented with multiage classrooms made up of mixed aged children (2, 3, 4 and 5 year olds). Emphasis is given to children's learning by doing, imitating, observing, exploring, examining, experimenting, and questioning in activities and experiences planned according to their interests and home experiences.

Our program is also aimed toward developing and maintaining a rich relationship with families. Opportunities for parents to participate range from volunteering in the school, chaperoning field trips, to being an active participant on our Building Blocks Committee. This is a committee made up of parents and staff who work together to create new supportive ideas to maintain our quality of education for students, parents and staff.

Our school is designed with large classrooms, a child receiving and care area, 3 large outdoor learning areas, a kitchen and cafeteria. We are the only center in our area equipped with audio and video monitoring services to ensure the safety and well being of your child. We are licensed by the South Carolina Child Care Licensing Services. We are locally owned and operated and prepared to provide you and your child with a learning experience that will **"Plant a seed today for the future"**.

Thank you for trusting in us,

Angela Tanner Hicks
Owner/Director

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I. Educational Philosophy

Our purpose is to provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development of young children through developmentally appropriate practices.

We believe that early childhood education is an important part of the young child's growing life, and an important link in the transition from informal to formal learning. We strive to provide endless opportunities for each child to observe, discover, and interact with their expanding world. We recognize that each child learns in many different ways and have planned our program with this in mind. We believe that play is the mode in which children learn during the preschool years; thus, we have designed our experiences to be educational yet fun!

II. Goals and Objectives

WELLNESS:

- * Focus on health, safety, nutrition, behavior, gross and fine motor skills.
- * Large muscle development and coordination in activities of walking, running, hopping, jumping, rolling, bending, twisting, crawling, pulling, and pushing
- * Fine muscle control in activities of cutting, tearing, gluing, drawing, painting, play dough, folding, fingerplay, pasting, and puzzle construction.

SOCIAL:

- * Learn to get along with other children
- * Solve problems in a respectful
- * Learn to respect the rights of others
- * Work cooperatively in a group setting

EMOTIONAL:

- * Positive guidance to enhance feelings of self worth
- * Praise and encouragement are used to build and maintain confidence

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT:

- * Christmas and Easter stories
- * Christian living
- * Prayer
- * Non-discriminatory against religion, ethnicity, or gender

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT:

- * Communicating with peers and teachers
- * Sharing information in a group setting
- * Listening to others
- * Role playing and pretend
- * Fingerplay, songs, and story telling

EXPRESSIVE:

- * Introduction to a variety of media for self-expression

- * Foster an appreciation for the creative efforts of others
- * Rhythm instruments, musical games, songs, and records

DISCOVERY:

- * Science experiences (animals, plants, weather, seasons, and senses of the body, cooking, process of growth)
- * Social science experiences (family, emotion, transportation, community helpers, holidays and birthdays)
- * Math experiences (shapes, colors, size and weight comparisons, one-to-one correspondence, number recognition, counting, classification, measuring)
- * Computer experiences (science, math and reading skills)

COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and the school is vital. Parents can contact the school by phone during opening hours. An answering machine is available to leave messages during closing hours. An emergency number is provided to contact the director or assistant director as needed.

A Bulletin Board is displayed for parents to read newsletters, memo changes, menus and calendars.

Students will be required to bring a book bag to school each day. A folder will be issued to each student. Parents are asked to check folders and book bags daily for notes, memos, projects, student's work, tuition notices, etc.

Parents are encouraged to visit their child's school when possible. Children love to show off their work and this is also a good way to keep open communication between school and home.

Parent and Teacher conferences will be scheduled bi-annual and as needed. Parents can communicate with teachers each day when dropping off or picking up their child.

ASSESSMENT

Assessments of student's performance will be conducted on a regular basis. Methods of assessment will be; observation, check lists, anecdotal records, and testing instruments. Other assessment instruments used are writing journals, behavior charts, portfolios, and reading logs.

Progress reports will be sent home bi-annually to inform parents on how his or her child is performing and areas that may need extra attention, if any.

LAP-D Screen will be administered as needed or when requested by parents. This is a testing instrument used to help identify developmental skills using chronological age of child.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

Our school staff recognizes that every child is different and learns in different ways. It is our responsibility to our students to correct undesired behavior in least disruptive manners. Communication is always the key to encouraging desired behavior. The following methods are used in the order listed;

1. Modeling, Verbal redirection, prompting to follow rules, and positive reinforcement for desired behavior.
 2. Time out in a designated area for limited time (3 to 5 min. isolated from group/ discuss consequences for breaking rules).
 3. Child may lose free time or activity he or she enjoys.
 4. Call parent if negative behavior continues.
 5. Parent conference requested.
 6. Child is unable to return to school if disruptive behavior continues.
- * Corporal punishment will not be a form of discipline!

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Each child will have a designated area to store personal belongings. An emergency set of clothing is requested to be kept in the book bag. The clothes should be labeled with the child's name.

INJURIES

If a child incurs a minor injury while at school, action will be taken to comfort the child and apply basic first aid (no medical products will be applied to the wound). An explanation will be sent home in writing.

If a child incurs an injury that requires medical attention, the parents (or Emergency person listed) will be notified immediately to seek medical attention. An accident report will be filled out and sent home.

In an obvious emergency situation such as broken bones, unconsciousness, severe bleeding, head injury followed by dizziness or vomiting, etc., the Berkeley County EMS will be contacted along with parents (or emergency person).

* **Staff members are required to be trained in first aid and CPR.**

* **Make sure all phone numbers are accurate and updated in case of emergencies.**

FIELD TRIPS

Special trips will be taken during the year. Permission slips will be given and must be signed before a child can participate in any trip off school grounds.

Transportation will be provided by Acres of Discovery on the bus.

PHOTOGRAPHS & Video Taping

Throughout the school term, there are times your child will be photographed and video taped participating in events and activities in and out of the classroom. Photos will be displayed in the school. A consent form will be given to parents with the option of signing. A school photographer will be scheduled to take individual and class pictures

during the school year.

RELEASE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Personal information is kept confidential by the staff members and is used solely for the well being of the child when planning for the child's education. Personal information will not be released unless approved, in writing, by the parents or if a security code is given.

III. Registration Procedures and Requirements

An **INTERVIEW AND TOUR** of the school with the parents and their child is necessary prior to enrollment.

Decide on the **PROGRAM AND CHILD CARE** (if desired) that you want for your child.

A **SOUTH CAROLINA CERTIFICATE OF IMMUNIZATION** for attendance must be submitted during the first week of attendance. This form lists the dates of your child's immunizations. It is obtained from your child's physician.

A **STATEMENT OF HEALTH** is required and must be submitted during the first week of attendance. This is a DSS Form provided to you by our school.

A **COMPLETED APPLICATION** must be submitted for our records.

A **BIRTH CERTIFICATE, SOCIAL SECURITY CARD AND PROOF OF RESIDENCY** (Drivers License) is to be copied and kept on file.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

* **All** students must be at least two years of age.

* Complete all applications and background history.

* Parents must read this handbook, sign a **CONSENT FORM** and return it to school prior to attending the program.

IV. Arrival and Dismissal

All programs are Monday through Friday. The preschool morning program begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 12:00 p.m. The full-day preschool & kindergarten programs begin at 9:00 p.m. and end at 2:30 p.m. Parents should be prompt both in bringing their children to school and picking them up. All students are required to arrive to school by 9:00 a.m. each day. If your child is tardy in excess of 10 times during the school year, your child may be dismissed from the program.

Child Care is available for Preschool and School Aged Students. The school will be open at 6:30 a.m. and will close at 6:00 p.m. Pick up and Drop off arrangements must be made prior to receiving child care for your child.

When a child arrives at school, he or she must be accompanied by a parent to their assigned area and presented to a staff member. Your child must be signed in and out

each day. A sign in sheet is located at the reception counter.

Parents will be issued a security code to enter the building. Do not allow any unauthorized person to use your code for this could lead to your child being discharged from the school.

Picture identification will be required before releasing a child into anyone's care. A copy of the ID will be taken and kept on file at the center. All pick up persons must be on the child's pick-up list. Any parents calling in to inform staff of a new person picking up will be required to have the child's security ID#.

A Late Pick-up Fee will be charged when a child is not picked up by 6:00 PM. Parents who pick up children after 6:00 PM will be charged a late fee of \$10.00 (per child) for the first 10 minutes and \$1 per minute (per child) after that. The late pick-up fee will be added to the child's account.

V. Tuition And Fees

Annual **REGISTRATION FEES** are required at the time of enrollment. School Registration Fees are \$85.00 per school term and \$60 for After School (NON-REFUNDABLE). The fee goes toward books, supplies, and materials. Throughout the school year you may be requested to pay for your child's field trips, T-shirts and other extra curricular activities that may take place during the school term (dance, swim, music lessons, etc...).

TUITION: \$55.00 per week for Half-day Programs 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
\$85.00 per week for Full-day Programs 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM
\$110.00 per week Full-Day Programs / Child Care (6:30 AM - 6:00 PM).
\$10.00 per week will be discounted for siblings (full-day/child care only).

PAYMENTS are due on a weekly basis. Payments are required every Monday morning for that particular week. You may choose to pay on a bi-weekly or monthly basis, as long as your payment is received in advance. A **\$10.00 LATE FEE** is charged if the payment has not been received by 9:00 am on Wednesday. If tuition remains unpaid for more than two weeks, your child will be discharged from the school and a **\$65.00 reinstatement fee** will have to be paid in full prior to returning to the program providing space is still available.

A \$35.00 CHARGE WILL BE ADDED FOR RETURNED CHECKS.

At least ten **HOLIDAYS** will be scheduled throughout the school term. Full tuition will be due on those weeks. School will be closed on major holidays. A list of holidays and the schedule will be posted.

Discounts will not be given on a daily rate.

In times of **BAD WEATHER** the school will be closed on the same schedule as Berkeley County School System. Messages will be left on the answering machine at AOD. Full tuition will be charged for these days.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL & GRIEVANCES

Parents are required to give a two week written notice when planning to withdraw a child. If a two week notice is not given a bill for the two weeks of tuition will be mailed. Any grievances will need to be discussed with the Director.

VI. Policies and Procedures

ILLNESS

Any child who becomes ill will be isolated promptly with continuous supervision. Parents of the ill child will be notified immediately when a child has a fever exceeding 100° or other symptoms requiring exclusion from others; diarrhea, vomiting, extreme congestion and/or other signs of a bad cold, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, rash, pink eye, scabies, ringworm, lice or chicken pox. A note from a physician will be required to return to school.

Parents must make arrangements to pick up or have his or her child picked up immediately. When anyone other than a parent is picking up a child, the staff must be informed before the child is released.

If a child is sick and unable to attend school, parents are asked to call to inform the staff of the child's absence. A child can be dismissed from the program if out for two weeks without calling to inform staff of child's illness.

MEDICATION

No medication will be administered without a Physicians Prescription. Medical slips will be provided on request at the reception counter. Medical slips must be completed with; child's full name, Physician's name, medication name, dosage, time and date to be given, and the signature of a parent. Prescription drugs must be in the original container and clearly labeled with the child's name, dosage schedule and directions for administration of medication. No over the counter medications will be administered by our staff (No Exceptions). Please be sure there are no medications left in the child's book bag as the book bags are accessible to the children.

QUIET TIME

A quiet time will be required for students each day. During quiet time your child will be allowed to have his or her own pillow and blanket. These items must be small in size. They will be sent home on Friday to be washed and returned on Monday. All items must be labeled with your child's name.

*** The school will not be held responsible for any items lost, stolen, or damaged during the school term.**

*** No stuffed animals or toys are allowed unless requested by the school.**

FOOD AND SNACKS

We will serve breakfast from 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. and lunch will be served at 11:00 a.m. Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are provided by the school. Students will not be allowed to bring snacks or meals to school without prior approval from the school. If a child has allergies or any special dietary needs parents will be responsible for providing meals.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Birthday Parties are allowed if arranged in advance. If Parents wish to bring in cakes or other types of food, please make sure find out about any children with allergies in the classroom.

If you wish to send out Birthday invitations to selective students in your child's class please arrange to get home addresses. We will not be responsible for handing out invitations. This often causes many uninvited students to get hurt feelings when they do not receive an invitation.

VII. School Schedule

6:30 am	9:00 am	Before School Child Care
7:00 am	7:30 am	Breakfast (students must arrive before 7:20 to receive breakfast)
9:00 am	12:00 pm	Preschool Program (students are to arrive before 9:00 am)
9:00 am	2:30 pm	Full Day Preschool and Kindergarten
11:00 am	12:00 pm	Lunch
11:45 am	12:00 pm	Dismissal for Morning Preschooler
2:30 pm	6:00 pm	Afterschool Child Care

VIII. Parent Involvement

Parents are an extremely important part of their child's educational experience. Parental assistance is encouraged in acting as chaperones on field trips, reading to students and sharing special talents through classroom visitation.

Parent-teacher conferences are held throughout the term to discuss and plan for each child's developmental process.

Parents are invited to be an active participate on the **Building Blocks Committee**. It is made up of parents and staff who come together to create new ideas that will help to improve our school.

IX. Summer Camp

Summer programs will be planned for the months of June through August. Educational activities and trips will be planned for the warm summer weeks. Some activities planned may be swimming, indoor and outdoor sports, trips to the beach, museum, zoo, aquarium and much more. Details will be available at a later time.