



2026-2027

DISCOVERY DAY SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

Director's office phone - 662-234-3371

Director's Cell Phone - 662-550-0719

424 South Tenth Street

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WELCOME TO DISCOVERY DAY SCHOOL!

DISCOVERY DAY SCHOOL is a ministry of Oxford-University United Methodist Church. Established in 1983, DDS provides a nurturing, safe environment in which children feel loved, respected, and valued while they are encouraged to develop to their fullest potential socially, emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually. Children of all faiths and nationalities are welcome.

We believe that each day should be filled with joy in learning, wonder, curiosity, and engaged investigation.

We believe that children need time to acquire play skills so that they can learn to investigate, invent and problem-solve with complexity. **We believe** that the whole child – body, soul, and mind – should be nurtured and challenged. **We believe** that teachers and families working together in partnership provide the highest quality preschool experience.

OUR MISSION

Discovery Day School, a ministry of Oxford-University United Methodist Church, is designed to provide preschool children with a wide variety of experiences that will encourage social, spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual development in a positive, nurturing atmosphere. Discovery Day School operates on the belief that if a child's preschool education is an enjoyable and exciting experience, the child will approach future school experiences with positive expectations.

The objectives of the Discovery Day School program include working with each individual child to:

1. Develop a positive self-concept.
2. Develop natural curiosity and creative potential.
3. Increase independence and self-direction.
4. Develop large and small muscle skills and increase physical coordination.
5. Develop positive relationships with peers and teachers.
6. Increase competence in dealing with emotions and social situations.
7. Increase communication skills.
8. Enlarge the child's understanding of the world through exposure to new experiences, people, and ideas.
9. Experience the loving care of adults whose lives exemplify the values of the Christian community.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Discovery Day School, we believe that effective early childhood education must be based on developmentally appropriate practices. Principles guiding our curriculum planning and classroom management include the following:

1. Children learn as total persons – emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually.
2. Children grow and develop at individual rates.
3. Children learn best when teaching is meaningful, interesting, and useful.
4. Children learn through their senses – hearing, seeing, touching, tasting, and smelling.
5. Children learn through active involvement – exploring, playing, manipulating, and problem solving.
6. Children learn through opportunities to make choices.
7. Children learn through attitudes as well as content. Classrooms should provide a positive emotional climate in which a community of learners can learn in a noncompetitive atmosphere.
8. Children learn through play to create their own meaning and learning schemes. Play is the work of the child.
9. Children learn language through interaction. Opportunities to ask questions, to talk with their peers and to discuss things of interest to them (their art work, projects, ideas) with interested adults are vital to oral and written language development.

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Discovery Day School offers a child-centered curriculum based on teaching age-appropriate skills and concepts through a variety of engaging teaching strategies built on children's interests and natural curiosity about the world around them.

In August 2022, we implemented the Learning Without Tears curriculum, "Get Set for School". "Get Set for School" incorporates emergent writing and reading readiness skills such as letter recognition, phonics and handwriting, in hands-on, play-based activities. Math and science are also components of the curriculum.

Concepts and skills taught in our Junior Pre-k and Senior Pre-k classes are based on the Mississippi Department of Education Early Learning Standards (ELS) for Infants through Four Year Old Children and the ELS Observational and Performance Checklists for three and four year olds. While learning standards and developmental sequences serve as a guide, they are not used as a checklist of "must-sees" to evaluate a child's worth.

Teachers are encouraged to build curriculum based on children's interests, using strategies which strengthen children's identities as thinkers, explorers, experimenters and problem-solvers.

We believe Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences – that children come to us "wired" for different ways of learning. Individual children have unique sets of talents and learning styles with every child having preferred ways of learning new skills and concepts. A child may show a preference for activities in one or more of the following areas – linguistic / verbal, logical / mathematical, musical / rhythmic, spatial / visual, bodily / kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. As educators, our goal is to build on a child's individual learning style, as well as to strengthen all ways of learning through encouragement, enrichment, and support.

The Value of Play- Our philosophical approach is supported by research that shows play is a critical resource for learning and has a strong relationship to future academic success. Teacher-supported play builds many foundational skills and complex cognitive abilities such as memory, successful school adjustment, self-regulation, oral language abilities, and better social skills. Play engages children's senses and encourages active exploration, creativity, imagination, reasoning, negotiation, and motivation. Play is an essential learning tool for young children.

YOU CAN HELP US TEACH YOUR CHILD

- Don't be afraid to say, "No".
- Bring your child to school regularly, and on time, except when ill.
- Make sure your child gets a restful night's sleep and a nutritious breakfast.
- Teach self-reliance and promote confidence by encouraging your child to put away toys, hang up coats, get dressed, eat regularly, and get plenty of rest.
- Limit your child's TV, iPad, and computer time. Encourage creative play and social interaction.
- Limit your own phone time. Take time to listen. Ask questions. Engage your child in conversation.
- Have crayons, paper, and a variety of materials available to your child for art exploration.
- Read to your child each day.
- Take an interest in school and in the work your youngster brings home.
- Help your child become aware of and care for the world we live in.
- Confer with teachers, but not in the child's presence.
- Help your child learn to recognize and verbalize emotions and how to calm himself/herself when upset.
- Let us know what your child is talking about and finding interesting at home.
- If you have a concern, question, or suggestion, please talk with the teacher or director.

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

- 3 years old by September 1 of the enrollment year for Junior Pre-K and fully potty-trained
- 4 years old by September 1 of the enrollment year for Senior Pre-K and fully potty-trained
- ****To be considered fully potty-trained, a child must be able to communicate the need for a bathroom prior to going, and be completely independent - able to pull down pants, lift up a dress, wipe, and redress themselves without assistance.****
- All registration paperwork must be complete, including a registration check and post-dated tuition checks. A computer-generated Immunization Form 121 must be on file before a child is accepted.
- Priority enrollment privileges are given to returning students and members of Oxford-University United Methodist Church.
- When possible, special consideration is given to siblings of returning students.
- Spaces not reserved by priority registrants by the February deadline are immediately available to new students.

2026-2027 CALENDAR

- Discovery Day School begins in August with a **Parent Orientation**, for parents only. At least one parent must attend Parent Orientation before a child may attend Meet Your Teacher or the first day of school. Please respond to the request from your child's teacher with the name(s) of the parent(s) who will attend your child's Parent Orientation.
- **Meet Your Teacher** offers an appointment time for each student to bring one or both parents and meet his/her teachers and explore the classroom.
- The school calendar is posted online and hard copies are available for parents upon request.
- Important dates will also be noted on classroom calendars sent home monthly.

FEES

- The supply fee for Discovery Day School is \$200 and paid at the time of registration. This fee covers all supplies needed in the classroom, DDS t-shirt, tote bags, class picture etc.
- The August tuition pre-payment is deposited on a specified date each spring, approximately 8 weeks following notice of acceptance into DDS. Please refer to your registration packet for the exact date.
- We now have an online payment system through Brightwheel! Please log into your Brightwheel account to view your billing plan and download the app on your phone for easy access and communication with teachers.
- For Brightwheel online payments:
 1. Log into your account and enter your payment information.
 2. Payments are deducted monthly on the first of each month. You will receive an invoice monthly (Sept.-April) one week before it is drafted. If you prefer to pay by semester or annually, please complete the form provided at Parent Orientation.

Payment options for Junior and Senior Pre-K

Class	Monthly September - April	Per Semester September 1 & January 1	Yearly September 1
5 Days/Week (Jr. and Sr.)	\$350	\$1,400	\$2,800
4 Days/Week (Jr. Pre-K)	\$330	\$1,320	\$2,640

- Check payments are only accepted for yearly or semester payments. If you would prefer to make check payments, please arrange with the front office and turn in with paperwork at Parent Orientation Night. Please make checks payable to "OUUMC Preschool Programs".
- There is a fee of \$35.00 for returned checks and denied credit cards.. If you change checking accounts or credit cards, be sure to update your Brightwheel account.

Extended Day Option

Parents may opt to enroll their Discovery Day School child in our Extended Day Program. Extended Day takes place Monday through Thursday from 12:15-2:15 pm each week and was created to help parents that want the benefit of the Discovery Day School experience but need a few more hours of care. Students that opt in will bring a lunch that must meet the MSDH requirements for sack lunches as follows:

- b. Each individual child's lunch brought from home shall be clearly labeled with the child's name, the date, and the type of food.
 - c. All food shall be stored at an appropriate temperature until eaten.
 - d. The food brought from one child's home shall not be fed to another child.
 - e. Children shall not share their food.
 - f. Food brought from home shall meet the child's nutritional requirements and the standards set forth in these regulations.
 - g. If a child's sack lunch does not meet the minimum nutritional standards for child's age the facility shall be required to supplement the lunch with items that meet the nutritional requirements.
 - h. Parents shall be notified in writing if a child's sack lunch does not meet the nutritional requirements for the child.
- The notice shall contain instructions as to what foods are proper for a sack lunch.

In addition to MSDH policy, no nuts, nut butters, gum or candy are not allowed.

Extended Day Payment Options

Extended Day payments will be made through Brightwheel.

Monthly September - April	Per Semester September 1 & January 1	Yearly September 1
\$200 each month	\$800 each semester	\$1600

SCHOLARSHIPS

- Believing that every child can benefit from a quality preschool experience as the basis for future school success and adjustment, DDS offers need-based scholarships.
- For more information on scholarships, contact the Preschool Programs Director.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

ARRIVAL

- One purpose of preschool is to develop strong student behaviors such as arriving on time and remembering to bring a DDS tote bag with all the items which should be included. Parents convey the message that school is important, and that their child is important, when they bring their child to school on time and well-prepared for his or her day.
- Before you leave home, make sure your child is wearing tennis shoes and socks and has a water bottle inside his/her Discovery Day School tote bag. Make sure your child has eaten a nutritious breakfast.
- Please be prompt. Drive through for drop-off is between 8:30 AM and 8:45 AM. A child who arrives late misses out on important social time and early morning activities, and enters a group of children who have already "jelled" into play groups.
- **Complete phone calls before entering the OUUMC parking lot. Our lot and building are cellphone free during preschool hours.**
- If you arrive prior to 8:30, please wait in your car until the administrator and teachers begin unloading cars. Prior to 8:30 AM, teachers and assistants are preparing for an enriching school day.
- While in the car line, please keep your child safe by not allowing your child to hang out the window or sunroof. Keep your child buckled in the carseat until you enter the parking lot. When you pull up to a cone, please put your car in park and be sure your child is unbuckled, standing up and ready to hop out when a staff member opens the door.

- Please be respectful to everyone in line behind you by encouraging your child to be ready to hop out of the car and hold a teacher's hand to walk to the sidewalk where a teacher will be waiting to escort your child to class.
- Please do not drive off until your child is safely on the sidewalk.
- Please put your child's carseat on the side which will allow your child to unload at the curb on the building side. If your car seat must be on the far side, you must put your car in park at the cone and unbuckle your child so the child can walk through the inside of the car and exit on the curb side. Neither teachers nor parents should walk a child between cars or behind a car.
- If someone else is picking up your child at school, please make arrangements to get your child's carseat to that person, as we are not currently able to accept personal car seats in the building.
- Before you pull up to a cone, please have your child put down any food or toy item.
- If your child is reluctant or hesitates to unload, we will ask you to park out of respect for other parents waiting behind you. You may then calm your child and re-enter the car line. We will not forcibly remove a flailing child from a car nor carry a child into the building.
- We only unload at cones, regardless of car line length, because we only unload children onto a sidewalk.
- Please do not leave your car in the drop-off car line.
- Give your child a quick, cheerful goodbye when the teacher opens your car door to greet your child.
- Please turn right as you exit the parking lot to avoid holding up the car line.
- Our car line and OU Methodist parking lot are one way. Please never attempt to U-turn in the parking lot nor exit through the University Avenue entrance.
- If you walk your child to school, please hold your child's hand until a teacher greets your child.
- We complete unloading cars promptly at 8:45 so that teachers may go to the classrooms. If you arrive after teachers go inside but by 9:00, you must park in a space (not under the archway as that blocks the exit for people on church business) and walk your child to the door. Buzz the alarm to the right of the glass doors under the arch, and wait until a staff member opens the door. You will then walk your child to the classroom, help him/her find their coat hook and wait at the classroom door until you are sure your child's teacher sees your child.
- We will be unable to accept any child who arrives after 9:00.
- Please keep your phone on and nearby while your child is at school.

DISMISSAL

(Please make sure everyone on your pick-up list knows these rules.)

- Junior and Senior Pre-K are dismissed from 12:00 until 12:15. If you have both a First Discoveries student and a Pre-K student to pick up, try your best to pick up at exactly 12:00 or park and walk up. Pre-K parents, please do not get in line prior to noon as to avoid blocking the First Discoveries cars exiting the parking lot. We will have to ask you to circle the block while we wait for Junior and Senior Pre-K to dismiss.
- Early check-outs are difficult on the child who is interrupted mid-activity and disruptive to the class, other children, teachers and office personnel. We will be unable to accommodate early check-outs. Please schedule appointments before or after school.
- Please drive up to the cones and stand on the curbside of your vehicle. A teacher will walk your child to you. Please hold your child's hand securely until your child is inside your vehicle. Please load on the building side and please turn right when you leave the parking lot. Left turns out of the lot delay car line movement unless no traffic is in either lane.
- To avoid worrying your child or inconveniencing teachers, please do not pick up your child late.
- Beginning at 12:16 for Junior and Senior Pre-K, **a late charge of \$1.00 per minute for the first five minutes, and \$2.00 per minute thereafter, will be assessed for any student picked up late. Late fees will be added and paid on brightwheel.**

- If your child is not picked up and we are unable to reach either parent, we will call people on your emergency contact list and people who have permission to pick up your child.
- If you are walking your child home or to the Square, they **MUST** hold your hand at all times while on school property. Please do not allow your child to walk on the top of the wall in front of the church even if they are holding your hand.

PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION

- Please make any pick-up plans **PRIOR** to dropping your child at DDS.
- If your child has a change in pick-up plans, we must have a written note from you sent in your child's DDS bag that day, a text sent to your child's teacher prior to 8:10 or a phone call or email to the office before school starts. We will not release a child to an unauthorized person.
- If you send someone other than the usual person to pick up your child, please alert this person that he or she will need to park and walk in, and show the child's teacher or assistant teacher a government-issued photo ID unless your child's DDS name placard is displayed in the front windshield. Please let your teacher know if you need an extra name placard for a regular babysitter or grandparent.
- Never send someone your child does not know to pick up your child.

STAFF

- Our staff are qualified and dedicated professionals who participate in a continuous program of in-service training and professional study.
- Classroom teachers have degrees in early childhood or elementary education, curriculum and instruction, gifted education, or other child-related fields.
- All teachers and teaching assistants are required to attain a minimum of 15 clock hours of professional development each year. Most staff members hold current certification in CPR and First Aid.
- We hope to not have changes in staff during a school year. However, if a change occurs we will make the transition as smooth as possible.
- You will be informed of the change and when possible, we allow the children to say good-bye and the new teacher to meet the class before the previous teacher leaves.

KEEPING PARENTS INFORMED

- Prior to the first of each month you will receive a classroom calendar and note with the special activities and unit themes.
- All newsletters, calendars, field trip information, artwork, & notes are sent home in the DDS tote bag.
- Each classroom teacher will start a group text with the class at the beginning of the school year.
- We will use the Brightwheel app to inform you of any changes in schedule or updates using the "Reminder" and "Alert" feature on the app.

TOTE BAGS

- Each student receives a personalized DDS tote bag. A limited number of replacement bags are available for purchase.
- These bags, our link to home, are used for show and tell items, notes, artwork and the water bottle labeled with your child's name. Show and tell must fit in the tote bag. Please send this bag to school each day and check the bag every night. Please do not attach other items to the bag such as sanitizer or toys.

CLOTHING

- Children must wear **rubber-soled tennis shoes** with socks every day to participate fully and safely in Locomotion and outdoor playtime. Dress shoes, cowboy boots, rain boots, flip flops, sandals, or crocs can be very uncomfortable and sometimes unsafe when children are running and climbing.
- Dress your child comfortably in clothes that unfasten easily to allow for independence in the bathroom.
- All children must wear underwear.

- We play outside and work with glue, paint, and other fun, messy learning materials daily.
- Please send an extra complete change of clothing, including underwear and socks, to be left at school.
- Please send a coat or jacket in cold weather as we will have a short playground time most days. Coats and sweaters should be labeled with your child's name.
- Dress-up clothes from home, Halloween costumes and clothing with skull logos, skeletons, ghosts or witches are not appropriate for school. Classroom dress up clothes are available during free play time.
- We prefer your child not wear jewelry such as rings, or stretchy beaded necklaces and bracelets. These items are choking hazards for young children and easily broken or lost on the playground.
- You are welcome to send your child in jewelry, but please talk to your child first so the child understands that if we notice your child sucking on the jewelry, stretching it, or taking it on and off, we will remove the jewelry to keep everyone safe and give the jewelry to you at the end of the day with a request your child not to return to school with jewelry.

BIRTHDAYS

- Celebrating a birthday is important to preschool children and we encourage you to celebrate your child's birthday with special refreshments. Please send sealed packages for snacks with the ingredients listed. Most children enjoy popsicles for a special treat.
- The teacher will contact you prior to the day we celebrate your child's birthday and invite you to read a book to the class while the children enjoy the birthday snack. One parent or both parents may attend.
- Talk with your teacher to set a date and discuss refreshment ideas which allow for any food allergies / diet restrictions of classmates. We are a peanut-free, tree-nut free facility.
- Please do not send candy, gum, gifts, treat bags, or party favors for children on birthdays or holidays. You may send birthday paper plates and / or napkins if you wish.
- Invitations to birthday parties outside of school may only be given out at school if each boy and girl in the class is included. Invitations will not be given to individual children in other classes.
- Balloons and marshmallows are choking hazards and therefore cannot be brought to Discovery.

HOLIDAY PARTIES

- Please volunteer to help with a class party by providing a special snack. Snacks may be in sealed packaging or fresh fruit. Baked items which are made in a nut-free facility are also an option.
- Snack options will vary class by class so please ask your child's teacher for additional information.
- Unusual party activities, such as visits by live animals and/or location changes, such as off-campus egg hunts, must receive prior approval by both the classroom teacher and the office.

DDS SPECIALS

Every week, Discovery Day School students will participate in a special activity for enrichment. These "Specials" are taught by OU Church Staff, DDS and FD Teachers/Staff and our Lead Chapel Coordinator. The specials are:

- Spanish - students will learn fun and simple songs and words during their Spanish lessons each week.
- Art - students will learn new ways to express their creativity through process art activities.
- Chapel - students attend Chapel, a 20 minute time for songs, Bible stories and Bible verses. At Chapel, we seek to give our students a non-denominational foundation of well-known Bible stories and parables from the Old and New Testament. We believe this foundation in scripture and understanding of Christ's teachings will provide a model for a life-time of decision-making and respect for others.
- Science - students will have "Science Lab" where they will be engaged with hands-on exploration and discovery.

LOCOMOTION

- In addition to our free play recess, Discovery Day School students enjoy "Locomotion", a fifteen minute period of large motor skill development each morning.
- Through organized games, obstacle courses and relays, students develop age-appropriate skills in jumping, running, hopping, kicking and catching balls, balance and coordination.
- For safety and enjoyment, remember to send your child in tennis shoes and socks each day.

HEALTH

- For the health of our students and their families, we err on the side of caution and send home any child who is not feeling well or shows signs of sickness.
- Keep your child home if your child is listless or cranky, has no energy, or has no appetite.
- Notify us if your child has a communicable illness such as flu or strep, or has head lice.
- No medications will be administered to a child at Discovery Day School.
- We wash hands frequently and will provide hand sanitizer under supervision when washing hands is not a reasonable option.
- Please do not send hand sanitizer with your child. We will provide CDC-approved hand sanitizer.

Keep your child home if they have had:

- **Fever** – A temperature of 100 or greater in the last 24 hours. A child must be fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of Tylenol or Ibuprofen.
- **Runny nose / Congestion** – If your child's nose needs to be wiped frequently, regardless of whether the discharge is clear or thick. Please practice teaching your child to blow his/her nose.
- **Coughing** – If a cough occurs more than once every five minutes. Children are not old enough to cover their mouths and, because of this, germs spread easily.
- **Vomiting / Diarrhea** – Either within the last 24 hours.
- **Eye Discharge** – If discharge returns after wiping or if the white of the eye, shows redness.
- **Ear infections** – A child with an ear infection rarely feels well enough to enjoy being at school. Also viruses and bacterial infections can cause ear infections which can be contagious if accompanied by fever.
- **Rash** – If you do not know the cause of the rash, or you know it to be contagious.
- **Flu** - According to health authorities, a person with the flu is *most* contagious 24 hours prior to symptoms through 3-4 days after symptoms. The flu virus is contagious for 5-7 days after symptoms. We will accept children who are fever-free, symptom-free after 7 days have passed since symptoms started.
- **Head Lice** - The presence of head lice is unrelated to personal hygiene. Head lice are commonly spread in schools by the sharing of hats and coats, or by close proximity to someone with head lice. To avoid spreading, a child with head lice must be treated with medicated shampoo made specifically for killing

lice. The child's bedding, stuffed animals and, perhaps other household things, will need to be sealed for two weeks in plastic bags. Washable items should be washed in very hot water. Other family members should be checked carefully and treated. Before the child with head lice returns to DDS, the child and home must be treated and the child must be nit-free. This process is expected to take a *minimum* of 24 hours.

- Notify us if your child has a communicable illness such as COVID-19, flu or strep, or has head lice.

DISCIPLINE

- Discipline is not a synonym for punishment. At DDS, we focus on preventative discipline by re-directing children and teaching positive behaviors. We emphasize logical consequences as opposed to general "time-outs". For instance, if a child throws blocks, the teacher would remind the child that blocks are for building, not for throwing and direct the child to another play area or learning center.
- We believe classroom management works best when a teacher works with an individual child privately and respectfully. Behavior charts, such as stoplight systems, are not in line with our philosophy.
- If we have an ongoing behavioral concern, we will alert parents and enlist their help to correct it.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

- Aggressive behavior includes, but is not limited to, biting, throwing objects at a person, pushing, kicking, and hitting, which is not in retaliation or response to another student's actions and which results in physical injury to any other student or teacher.
- We understand children are growing, learning, and experimenting with many emotions and ways to handle them, but we do not allow continued, aggressive behavior.
- The first aggressive incident will be dealt with in the classroom firmly and the parents will be notified of the behavior.
- Upon a second aggressive incident, the parents will be contacted immediately to remove the child from school for the remainder of the day.
- The child may not return to school following a second aggressive incident until the child's parents, teacher, teacher's assistant, and the preschool director meet to establish a plan to correct the behavior and/or the child may be suspended from the program until the behavior is corrected.
- If the behavior occurs upon return to the program, the director reserves the right to remove the child from the program permanently.

BITING

- For the safety of others, a child who inflicts bruises, leaves a mark or breaks the skin must be kept at home until the biting (or scratching, pinching, etc.) phase has passed.
- Although biting is not an illness, it is a physical hazard to other children and can require medical treatment, and cause scarring.
- If a child bites or intentionally harms a child more than once, we will ask the parent to keep the child out of preschool until the stage is passed.
- Our purpose is not to punish the biter. Just as keeping a sick child at home is to protect others, not punish the sick child, keeping a biter at home is to protect the other children in the class.
- Tuition cannot be prorated or refunded for a child kept at home for biting or illness.

REMOVAL FROM THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

- As we focus on a safe and supportive environment for all children enrolled at DDS, removal from the DDS program will only be considered after all attempts to resolve a situation have failed.
- Removal is a last resort and determined by the Director on a case-by-case basis.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- Discovery Day School will follow all requirements outlined in Mississippi's Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Law.
- Employees of DDS who have reasonable cause to suspect neglect or abuse of a child are required by law to report the suspected neglect or abuse to the Mississippi Department of Human Services. Staff members who report suspicions of abuse or neglect are not subject to expulsion, retribution, or disciplinary action unless the individual reported the claim with the intention to do harm.

NUTRITION

- In accordance with state licensing regulations, children are not allowed to bring breakfast, personal snacks, chewing gum or drinks (other than water) into the building.
- We provide nutritious snacks, taking into account any food allergies in the class, but generally including cereal, fruit, cheese, crackers, or yogurt. We drink water to promote healthy habits. Please send a water bottle, labeled with your child's name, each day in your child's DDS tote bag.
- We make a concerted effort to introduce our students to healthy eating habits and encourage them to try nutritious foods in a variety of colors and textures.

SNACK STARS

- Your child will have the opportunity to be a "Snack Star" one day each semester.
- Snack Stars provide snacks for the class. The snack may be a favorite treat of the child's choice, or relate to a current study unit or upcoming holiday although this is not necessary.
- Please include a fruit as part of your snack.
- Please do not send gum, candy, peanuts, peanut butter, or tree nut products.
- Check with your teacher for other suggestions and specific allergies in the classroom.

TOYS

- We provide a wide variety of manipulative materials and activities for the children.
- Personal toys should stay at home, unless your child chooses to bring one for show and tell. These toys can get lost or broken and are often too "special" to be happily shared with classmates.
- Please do not attach toys, hand sanitizer or other items to your child's DDS bag.

SHOW AND TELL

- "Show and Tell" provides opportunities to build self-confidence as a child becomes the center of the classroom's attention and shares an important item from home.
- Show and Tell also provides numerous opportunities for language development as your child uses vocabulary, descriptive language, and story-telling skills. Classmates practice critical thinking, listening, observing, and questioning skills.
- Help your child choose one item to present to classmates for his or her designated Show and Tell day.
- Show and Tell must fit in your child's DDS tote bag. Show and Tell may not be people or pets.
- No toy guns, knives, or weapons are allowed at school.
- "Science" discoveries such as shells, leaves, seeds, etc., are always welcome.

FIELD TRIPS

- Meaningful, well-planned field trips are a valuable way to provide the hands-on experiences which are an important aspect of early childhood education.
- Field trips will be walking distance and coordinated by our teachers.
- All children must have a signed field trip permission form to attend field trips.

TRANSPORTATION

- All DDS field trips are walking excursions with adult:child ratios appropriate to the age of the children, the length of the walk and the specific activity.

T-SHIRTS

- DDS T-shirts are provided to each child at the beginning of school.
- Please send your child in their DDS T-shirt on the first full morning of school.
- We encourage the students to wear DDS T-shirts for special school activities, every Thursday for Discovery Spirit Day and any other day he or she wants to!
- A limited number of replacement T-shirts may be available for purchase.

SUN SAFETY

- DDS observes sun-safe practices in the location and length of outdoor activities. Parents with concerns about sun exposure are encouraged to apply sunscreen at home as we cannot apply it at school. A large shade canopy has been installed on the front playground so that we can enjoy outdoor classroom activities, in addition to recess.

PARENT CONFERENCES AND COMMUNICATION

- Parent/teacher communication is a vital component of a quality preschool experience. We look forward to sending you weekly updates about your child's week at school with photos of your child and classmates. Please remember these photos are not to be shared on social media.
- If your child will be absent for any reason, please let the teacher or director know as soon as you know.
- We are happy to talk with you about your child at any point during the year.
- All parents will meet with their child's teacher for an individual conference on November 2nd and again in the spring as needed.
- Please make outside child care arrangements for your conference time. Parent-teacher conferences do not take place in the presence of children and children may not be left unsupervised.
- Teachers do not have cell phones during school hours. As a teacher's first responsibility during school hours is to the students in the classroom, conferences are set outside of school hours.
- Please call or email your child's teacher, or the preschool office, to set an appointment.
- The pick-up / drop-off line is not an appropriate time for a conference, even a very brief one.

EVALUATION AND SPECIAL SERVICES

- Our intention is to be in close communication with you.
- If your child has an IEP due to already identified special needs, please provide a copy to the DDS office prior to the start of school and plan to have a conference with the director and your child's teachers to clarify your child's special needs and recommended accommodations.
- If we have concerns about your child's development we will discuss our observations with you. We are not experts in diagnosing, but we are sensitive to emerging concerns.
- We can help you search for answers and guide you to appropriate specialists. We always want to partner with you for the good of your child.

SOLICITATIONS

- DDS does not send home solicitations or advertisements for fundraisers, businesses or home parties.

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY

- DDS offers an extended day option on specific Wednesdays throughout each semester.
- A limited number of spaces are available to students in our DDS three and four-year-old programs. Parents may sign up by the semester on a first-come, first-served basis.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

- We have several programs during the year to which parents and/or other family and friends are invited.
- Parent Orientation this year will be for one or two parents per child. This meeting is your opportunity to ask questions, volunteer for activities, receive important information and meet other parents.
- All family members and friends are invited to attend special events, including a Christmas nativity musical and a spring program at the end of the school year.
- We will have special activities for family members to attend such as Grandparent's Day, Dad's Day, & Mom's Day. Other family events will be our Veteran's Day Special and Back to School Open House Night.

DISMISSAL FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Our program will be dismissed for severe weather if the Oxford City Schools suspend classes or if weather conditions are determined to be unsafe for transporting young children or requiring teachers to be present.
- We will often close if Lafayette County Schools are closed as we have children and teachers in the county district as well.
- The director will send an "Alert" through Brightwheels with school closing information as soon as a decision is made, generally no later than 7:00 AM. Alerts on Brightwheel are set to send a SMS text to the phone number on your account.
- If the public schools delay opening two hours for weather reasons, we will also start late, provided conditions are safe for our teachers to be on the roads.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- Emergency fire drills are held monthly.
- Tornado drills are conducted biannually.
- In an event that would require the evacuation of the school, children will be evacuated by whatever transportation means are available to a designated safe area.
- In the event that an evacuation of students becomes necessary, students will be moved to:
- First Baptist Church (800 Van Buren, 662-234-3517) OR First Presbyterian Church (924 Van Buren, 662-234-1757)
- A copy of each child's emergency contact information is provided for the classroom teacher by the Director and is kept in the classroom and taken on field trips. Information should be updated as needed by notifying the director and updating your Brightwheel account.

PRIVACY POLICY

- All contact information (names of students, parents and faculty, phone numbers, email addresses and physical addresses) is distributed only for DDS-related information and events such as play-dates, birthday parties, and class parties.
- This information is not to be used for marketing purposes.
- Please do not send teachers or parents commercial solicitations.
- No advertising, trading of goods or services, or solicitations of any kind is allowed including invitations or ads for private school fundraisers, festivals or open houses.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Please find our Discovery Day School Facebook and Instagram Pages. These were created to keep parents easily informed and display the wonderful things happening at our school. All photos posted to these pages will be reviewed and approved by the Director.
- When taking group photos on school property, please be considerate and ask permission of parents of any child in the photo before sharing on your personal social media. Some parents have chosen the “no public photos” option at enrollment.
- Teachers and parents are welcome to text school photos to each other. Teachers will use the Brightwheel app to share pictures within the class group.
- You may opt out of media posts by declining permission on the social media photo permission form. You may also opt to only allow photos where your child’s face is not shown in photos. You will receive this form at Parent Orientation Night.

DAILY SCHEDULE

SENIOR PRE-K

8:30 - 8:45	Arrival and Free Play
8:45 - 9:10	Locomotion/Music and Movement
9:15 - 9:30	Morning Meeting/Whole Group
9:30 - 9:50	Specials *Spanish, Chapel, Art and Science
9:50 - 10:00	Bathroom Break/Handwashing
10:00 - 10:15	Snack and Story time
10:15 - 10:30	Literacy/Math Whole Group Lesson
10:30 - 11:30	Learning Centers and Small Group Lessons
11:30 - 11:50	Recess
12:00 - 12:15	Dismissal

JUNIOR PRE-K

8:30 - 8:45	Arrival and Free Play
8:45 - 9:15	Small Group Activities
9:15 - 9:30	Morning Meeting/Whole Group
9:30 - 9:50	Specials *Spanish, Chapel, Art and Science
9:50 - 10:15	Learning Centers/Small Group Activities
10:15 - 10:30	Locomotion/Music and Movement
10:30 - 11:00	Snack and Story time
11:00 - 11:30	Recess
11:30 - 11:50	Show and Tell/Review of the Day
12:00 - 12:15	Dismissal

EXTENDED DAY

12:00 - 12:20	Free Play
12:20 - 12:30	Bathroom and Wash Hands
12:30 - 1:00	Lunch
	Reading and Quiet Time
1:00 - 1:30	Open centers in the classroom
1:30 - 1:50	Recess
2:00 - 2:15	Dismissal

* Schedules are subject to change based on individual classes and school wide events.

DDS HANDBOOK SIGNATURE FORM

Please print this entire handbook and bring it to the August Parent Orientation. You must complete this form and return it before leaving. MSDH, our licensing agency, requires this form for each child before a child attends the first day of school.

I have carefully read and understand the policies and guidelines in the Discovery Day School Parent Handbook. I have clarified any question or concern before signing this form.

PARENT NAME (PRINTED) _____

PARENT'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

CHILD'S NAME _____ TEACHER'S NAME _____

CHILD'S CLASS ☐ FROGS ☐ MONKEYS ☐ PANDAS ☐ SUNSHINES ☐ SUPERSTARS

PERMISSION FOR WALKING FIELD TRIPS

I give permission for my child, _____, to walk with the class to play on the playgrounds at St. Peter's and First Presbyterian, and take short nature walks in the area around OUUMC, weather permitting.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION

I understand that in the event medical treatment is required, every reasonable effort will be made to contact me. If I cannot be reached, I give my permission for OUUMC Preschool Programs to obtain emergency medical treatment for my child.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

PHOTOGRAPHY AUTHORIZATION

I give permission for my child to be photographed and/or videotaped during field trips and school activities for:

Discovery Day School Facebook and Instagram ☐ YES ☐ NO

Publication in a local newspaper or magazine ☐ YES ☐ NO

Church Website and internal lobby screens ☐ YES ☐ NO

Sharing photos with parents in my child's class on a class group text
☐ YES ☐ NO

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

OUUMC PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS STUDENT INFORMATION UPDATE, 2026-2027

MUST be completed and returned at Parent Orientation Night

STUDENT'S NAME: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

WITH WHOM DOES STUDENT RESIDE? _____ HOME PHONE: _____

PRIMARY EMAIL CONTACT: MOTHER / FATHER/ OTHER (SPECIFY) _____

NAME: _____ EMAIL: _____

PRIMARY PHONE FOR EMERGENCY: MOTHER / FATHER/ OTHER (SPECIFY) _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

MOM'S NAME: _____ CELL: _____

OCCUPATION: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

DAD'S NAME: _____ CELL: _____

OCCUPATION: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

List other contacts, should we be unable to reach your primary phone contact. These contacts **MUST RESIDE** in Lafayette County. This is a requirement of our licensing agency.

1. NAME: _____

RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT: _____ PHONE: _____

2. NAME: _____

RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT: _____ PHONE: _____

PICK UP AND DROP OFF AUTHORIZATION FORM

Please list people who have ongoing permission to pick up your child throughout the school year. Include regular carpools, babysitters, local relatives - anyone who may frequently pick up.

NAME

PHONE NUMBER

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

MEDICAL UPDATE

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE AN EPI-PEN?

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

Medical update: Please detail any medical, developmental or other information that has changed since registration to help us provide the best care for your child. Please attach a separate page or an IEP if necessary.

Please list all your child's allergies:

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

OUUMC PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS 2026-2027 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

August

August 13	DDS Parent Orientation Night 5:00-5:30 Junior Pre-K 6:00-6:30 Senior Pre-K
August 17	DDS Meet Your Teacher - 15 minute individual appointment for each child/parent to visit classroom
August 18	DDS First day of school <i>Decorate your vehicle for Car Line Parade!</i>
August 25	FD Parent Orientation Meeting 5:00-5:30 Two Day 6:00-6:30 Four day
August 27	DDS Family Night/Pizza Party 5:00-6:30
August 31	FD M/W Meet Your Teachers

September

Wonderful Wednesday Dates: September 9, 16, 23, 30

**Wonderful Wednesday is an optional program for DDS children.*

Children bring lunch and play until 2:00-2:15. Registration will be open at Parent Orientation.

September 1	FD T/Th, and 4 day classes Meet Your Teacher - 15 min. individual appointment for each child/parent to visit
September 2	FD starts, split morning schedule 8:45-10:00 and 10:30-11:45
September 3	FD T/Th start split morning schedule; FD Four Day - First full day!
September 7	No School - Labor Day
September 8	FD Two day classes first week of full day schedule
September 10	DDS Grandparent's Day Special
September 11	Early Dismissal - 11:45-noon, First SEC Home Football Game
September 18	Early Dismissal - 11:45-noon, SEC Home Football - Ole Miss vs LSU

October

Wonderful Wednesday dates: October 21, 28

October 5-9	Fall Break
October 13	DDS Pumpkin Patch Chapel *TBD by Pumpkin Delivery
October 14	Early Dismissal (OSD) FD - 11:30-11:45, DDS 11:45-12
October 16	Early Dismissal 11:45-12:00 (SEC Football - Missouri)
October 21-22	School Photos (class pictures)
October 30	Early Dismissal 11:45-12:00 (SEC Football - Auburn)

November

Wonderful Wednesday dates: November 4, 11, 18

November 2	Parent Conference Day (no school for FD / DDS children)
November 6	Early Release 11:45-12:00 (SEC Football - Georgia)
November 18	DDS Thankful Parade
November 19	DDS Thanksgiving Feast
November 23- 27	Thanksgiving Holiday

December

December 8,9	End of Fall Semester for First Discoveries
December 9	Sr. Pre-K Ford Center Field Trip
December 10	Christmas Nativity Musical for Junior Pre-K Senior Pre-K <i>**FD teachers, parents and children invited to attend**</i>

Spring Semester

January

No Wonderful Wednesday in January

January 5	OSD Students return
January 5	DDS Faculty/Staff return
January 6	First day Spring semester for students
January 13	2027-2028 Priority Registration (packets sent on Brightwheel)
January 18	MLK, Jr. Day (no School)

February

Wonderful Wednesday Dates: February 3,10,17,24

February 2-5	DDS Parent-Teacher individual conference as requested
February 3	Priority Registration ends; Community Registration open
February 11	FD Valentine's Day (Class Party)
February 12	DDS Valentine's Day (Class Party)
February 15	No School for Students - Professional Development for DDS and FD teachers President's Day (<i>holiday for LSD, not OSD</i>)
February 23	Discovery Art Show for First Discoveries (11:30 early pick up)
February 24	Discovery Art Show for DDS and FD M/W (8:30-9:00 DDS) (11:30 early pick up FD M/W)

March

Wonderful Wednesday Dates: March 3,17,24

March 1-5	Read Across America Week
March 8-12	Spring Break
March 18	DDS Dad's Special
March 26	Good Friday - No School
March 31	Early Dismissal (OSD) FD 11:30-11:45; DDS 11:45-12:00

April

Wonderful Wednesday Dates: April 7,14,21,28

April 22	Earth Day
April TBA	Early Dismissal (Double Decker); 11:45-12:00
April 29	DDS Mom's Day Tea

May

May 7	Early Dismissal (Ole Miss Graduation); 11:45-12:00
May 10, 11	Last day of Second Semester for FD MW, TTH
May 11	Last full school day of Second Semester for DDS and FD Four Day
May 12	DDS Spring Musical at 9:00 am