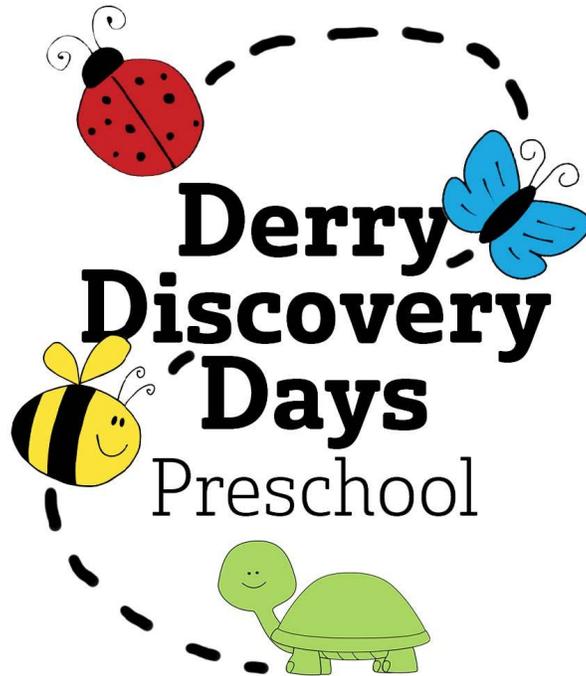


2016-2017 Preschool Policies & Parent Handbook



An outreach ministry of Derry Presbyterian Church

A congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

248 East Derry Road, Hershey, PA 17033

717-533-9667

ddd@derrypres.org

www.derrypres.org

Welcome to Derry Discovery Days!

We consider it a privilege to have your children at Derry Presbyterian Church's Derry Discovery Days Preschool. As your little ones discover the world around them, make new friends, create and play, we hope to surround them with God's love.

Derry Discovery Days operates as an outreach ministry of Derry Presbyterian Church, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Our mission is to provide a values based program which helps children gain positive social, emotional, intellectual and physical experiences in a safe and nurturing Christ-centered environment.

We hope to fulfill our mission by achieving the following goals:

- Employing qualified teachers who have a deep understanding and respect for children
- Maintaining a low teacher-child ratio
- Exposing children to a variety of developmentally appropriate activities to stimulate their natural desire to learn
- Keeping lines of communication open between parents and staff
- Providing support for the program from the church community and Derry Discovery Days Advisory Board
- Developing social skills with peers and adults

DDD is a licensed program which follows and exceed standards set by the Commonwealth of PA. If you have any questions or concerns about our program, please contact me and I will be happy to discuss the program with you.

Blessings,

Kelly Mehaffie, Director

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Information contained in this Parent Handbook is subject to change. Check the Derry Discovery Days webpage at www.derrypres.org for updates, or call the church office.

Revised 7.26.16

Programs and Registration

Derry Discovery Days serves children who are between the ages of 12 months to 5 years old. Children are grouped in classes according to their ages. The program operates Monday-Thursday mornings from 9:00am-11:30am. The 4-5 year old class (and occasionally the 3 year old class) also operates an additional afternoon class Monday-Thursday from 12:30pm-3:00pm. DDD is in operation during the school year from September to May.

Lady Bug, Turtle and Busy Bee children have a 2 day (MW or TTh) or a 4 day (M-Th)/week option. The Butterfly class meets 4 days/week (M-Th).

Lady Bug 1's class (max class size per day = 6): Children 12 months old and walking by September 1st

Turtle 2's class (max class size per day = 12): Children 24 months old by September 1st

Busy Bee 3's class (max class size per day = 15): Children 3 years old by September 1st and potty trained

Butterfly 4's & 5's (max class size per day = 15): Children 4 years old by September 1st and potty trained

DDD will accept applications to enroll in the upcoming school year according to the timeline below. DDD will accept applications on a first-come, first-serve basis as space allows according to the timeline. Class sizes are limited so prompt registration is strongly encouraged.

January: Currently enrolled children and siblings, then Derry Church families

February: Community at large

March and beyond: Children are accepted throughout the school year as space allows

Registration process: Completion of a registration form and payment of a non-refundable registration fee of \$45 (\$25 each additional sibling) is required to hold your child's spot. Once fees and paperwork have been received, you will be contacted by the Director to confirm your child's admission into the program. Please contact the Director ddd@derrypres.org or 717-533-9667 x113 to find out if space is available in your child's age group.

Waiting list: If space is not available in your child's age group, your child's name will be placed on a waiting list. When there is an opening, families will be contacted in the order in which their registration form was received. To be placed on the waiting list parents must complete the registration form found on the DDD website and send it to the Director. There is no fee collected to be on the waiting list. The registration fee would be collected if a spot opens up and your child would still like to attend the program.

Derry Discovery Days is a private preschool that admits children of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to children in the program. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or in any other aspect of this program.

Payment Policies

Tuition:

Lady Bug 1's & Turtle 2's = \$110/month for 2 mornings/week or \$220 per month for 4 mornings/week

Busy Bee 3's = \$105/ month for 2 mornings/week or \$210/month for 4 mornings/week (or afternoons if offered)

Butterfly 4's & 5's = \$210/month for 4 mornings or afternoons per week

Each month's tuition payment is due on the 15th of the preceding month. For example, September's tuition is due on August 15th, October's tuition is due on September 15th and so on. The final tuition payment for the school year is May's tuition which is due April 15th.

Tuition Assistance:

To determine whether a family qualifies for tuition assistance, the Derry Discovery Days Director must receive the application which asks the reasons or circumstances that they feel would demonstrate a need. Tuition assistance applications are available from the Director. Tuition assistance is limited.

Payment:

Please make checks payable to Derry Presbyterian Church notated "Derry Discovery Days". Checks may be handed to the church office (M-F 9am-5pm), dropped in the green mailbox marked DDD located by the Turtle 2's classroom, or in your child's folder. If mailing a check, please indicate "Derry Discovery Days" on the envelope. Cash payments are also acceptable. Unfortunately we cannot take credit card payments at this time.

Late Fees:

Please submit tuition payments in a timely manner. A one-week grace period is allowed, after which time a \$5 late fee will be added to your tuition if your account remains delinquent.

Returned checks:

A fee of \$25 will be charged for checks returned for insufficient funds. Derry Discovery Days reserves the right to terminate services if your account remains delinquent.

Missed Days:

Credit cannot be given for vacation days or days missed due to illness or severe weather.

Withdrawal Notice:

With two weeks' notice of plans to withdraw from the program, the following month's tuition will be returned. Tuition will not be refunded if a child is withdrawn without notice.

Curriculum

Our child-directed program strives to meet the developmental needs of children by focusing on these major areas:

Social & Emotional Development

- Interact positively with peers and teachers
- Learn to share with others
- Play independently, in small groups and in large groups
- Use basic table manners
- Practice self-control
- Develop positive self-esteem
- Foster independence
- Participate in dramatic play

Cognitive Development

- Learn new vocabulary through songs, stories, fingerplays and themes
- Listen and follow directions during class time
- Listen and respond to stories, poems and songs
- Participate in reading, math and science readiness activities such as color, shape, letter and number recognition

Physical Development:

- Respond to music through creative movement
- Play games which develop gross motor coordination
- Manipulate objects to develop small motor coordination
- Begin cleaning up after themselves
- Encourage potty training

Spiritual Development:

- Observe teacher and support staff's love and concern for them
- Learn simple prayers and blessings
- Chapel time: Bible stories and singing songs which relate God's message

A note about discipline: At DDD we use positive reinforcement to encourage good behavior. However, if a child is behaving inappropriately, staff will redirect the child to appropriate behaviors in a loving and positive way. If necessary, staff will meet with the child's parents to help formulate strategies to address this behavior. Teachers and support staff strive to be consistent, acting with fairness and patience. Children are praised for appropriate behavior and teachers and staff model behaviors for children. Physical punishment is never used. Persistent inappropriate behavior which affects the learning, health and safety of the staff and children may result in dismissal from the program on a temporary or permanent basis at the discretion of the Director. The Director may refer parental or other concerns to the DDD Advisory Board for consideration or recommendations. If a child is removed from the program on a temporary basis, payment of tuition must be continued to hold the child's spot in the class. Failure to do so will result in the child being placed at the end of the waiting list.

2016-2017 Calendar

August 31	Meet teachers/visit classrooms 11am-12pm; 6pm-7pm
September 6	First day of preschool for children
September 28 & 29	Picture day with Christy Walker Photography
October 1	Family Fall Festival and Silent Auction (church grounds)
October 10	No classes: Columbus Day
November 8	No classes: Election Day
November 21-28	No classes: Thanksgiving break
December 21-January 2	No classes: Christmas break
January 16	No classes: Martin Luther King Day
February 20	No classes: Presidents' Day
April 10-17	No classes: Holy Week/Easter Break
May 16	Class picnics (weather permitting)
May 25	Last day of school

Up to two in-service days to be determined.

Inclement Weather

Derry Discovery Days Preschool follows Derry Township School District for weather related delays and closings. If Derry Township schools are closed, DDD is CLOSED. Afternoon classes will be cancelled if Derry Township dismisses school early.

If Derry Township schools are on a 1 hour OR 2 hour delay, morning classes will be held 10am-12pm. Afternoon classes will be held 1pm-3pm.

Derry Discovery Days Preschool announcements for closings and delays will be posted in the following places:

- Derry Discovery Days Preschool website HOMEPAGE: <https://www.derrypres.org/education/discovery-days-preschool>
- Derry Discovery Days Preschool FACEBOOK page www.facebook.com/Derry-Discovery-Days-Preschool
- Derry Church website HOMEPAGE: www.derrypres.org
- On-line news channel: www.WGAL.com school closings and delays

Parents are responsible for checking these sites to determine if DDD is closed or delayed. Teachers/DDD staff will NOT be making personal phone calls or messages to parents regarding weather related changes in the schedule.

Parking & Drop off/Pick up Procedures

Parking

Families should enter the church property and park in the area on the right behind the old Session House (the house in glass). Limited additional parking is also available behind the church by the entrance to the Fellowship Hall (golf course side). Handicapped and stroller accessible parking can be found to your right immediately upon entering the church property (along the graveyard wall). Access for handicapped and stroller groups is through the courtyard doors. *Please be considerate and leave these spaces for those needing stroller and handicapped access.*

The lot off Mansion Road (by the playground) on the office side of the church will be reserved for church business and is not to be used by DDD parents for drop off and pick up.

Drop off/Pick up procedures:

Enter the church at the back of the building (near the Fellowship Hall) or through the front/side of the building through the courtyard doors. For the safety of our children and staff, all church doors are locked when the preschool is in session. Fellowship Hall and Courtyard doors will be unlocked during drop off and pick up times from 8:45am-9:15am and 11:15am-11:45am. For the afternoon classes, the doors will be open from 12:15pm-12:45pm and 2:45pm-3:15pm.

Parents must walk their child to and from their classroom each day. Parents are responsible for the supervision and safety of their children in the church parking lot and inside the church building during drop off and pick up times. **Only those persons designated on the release portion of your child's form will be allowed to pick up your child.** Photo identification may be requested by teachers and staff until familiarity is established.

If you arrive more than 15 minutes after the start of class or if you need to pick up your child more than 15 minutes before the end of class, please park in the office/playground lot and enter through the buzzing system at the office doors.

Late pickup fee: If an emergency arises, please call the Director or church office to notify that you will be late. A \$1 per minute late fee will be assessed each time your child is picked up late (according to the facility clock) beyond **TWO occurrences**.

EXCEPTION to Drop off/Pick up Procedure

Exceptions to this procedure can occur when another event is happening at the church which would fill the parking lot during DDD drop off/pick up times (e.g., funeral service). In this instance, parents would be notified via either email, flyers, or on Facebook of a "car pool" procedure. In a "car pool" instance, parents would line up single file in their cars and drop off/pick up children at the office doors by the playground. DDD staff will be there to greet the child and then walk them to/from the car to the building. DDD staff are strategically placed on the church property so that all children and staff remain safe during this procedure. **Parents are responsible for putting children into their car and buckling them into their car seats.**

Illness, Medication & Accidents

PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL THE DIRECTOR IF YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ATTENDING SCHOOL THAT DAY DUE TO ILLNESS. ddd@derrypres.org or 717-533-9667

Health Assessments: The PA Department of Human Services (DHS) requires a Health Appraisal form to be completed and updated by a physician for every child in the program. Upon enrollment, parents will be given a health appraisal form which must be returned within 60 days.

We strive to keep children as healthy as possible during preschool time. When you evaluate your child for illness and attendance, please keep in mind that DDD is an enrichment program and not mandatory schooling. If your child is not feeling well, please keep them home to avoid spreading illness to children and staff.

Children are not to attend the program if they present with:

- A fever of 100 degrees or above. The child may return to school after being fever-free **for 24 hours**
- An excessively runny nose with discolored discharge
- Persistent coughing
- Vomiting that day or during bedtime hours the evening before.
- Diarrhea
- Rashes or open sores.

Contact the Director immediately upon learning your child has a communicable disease so that other parents may be informed. Confidentiality will be kept if possible. These are the minimum recommended periods of isolation from school for the following communicable diseases:

Scarlet Fever:	7 days from onset, or on physician recommendation
Strep or Impetigo:	7 days from onset, or on physician recommendation
Head lice:	Medicated shampoo is applied and child is nit-free
Pink eye/Conjunctivitis:	Must be on antibiotic 24 hours before returning to school
Pertussis:	5-7 days after antibiotic treatment begins
Ringworm:	24 hours after treatment has started; areas must be covered

If your child becomes ill at preschool, you will be notified immediately. If you cannot be reached, your emergency contact will be notified to pick up your child. Temperatures are taken from the forehead. Staff will complete an illness report for your child to take home and a copy will be placed in their file. Please communicate with staff any recent illnesses or changes in behavior due to illness.

Medication

No medication will be administered during the program hours. If your child has a condition which could require life-saving medication (Epi-Pen, inhaler, etc.) we must have a physician's order on file as well as medication that remains at the school and is in its original packaging with a pharmacy label. Please speak to the Director for the necessary forms and procedures.

Food allergies

We take food allergies very seriously at DDD. If your child has a food allergy, please contact the Director and indicate the allergy on their intake forms. Staff are trained in administration of Epi-Pens annually and/or upon hire. Depending upon the allergy, parents may be asked to bring in a "safe" snack for their child each day. **DDD is a peanut/tree nut free school.**

Accidents

The majority of DDD staff (at minimum 1 person per classroom as well as the Director) are certified in Pediatric First-Aid and CPR. First aid kits are available in every classroom as well as various locations around the church. Should a child receive a minor injury, staff will care for the child accordingly. An accident report will be completed and a copy sent home with the child and placed in their file. In the event of a major injury or incident, parents will be called immediately. If the injury is severe enough to require an ambulance and the parent has not arrived at the school, the lead teacher in the classroom will accompany your child in the ambulance and will remain with your child until a parent or guardian arrives.

Mandate to Report Suspected Child Abuse

All staff who work with children are required by Pennsylvania law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If abuse or neglect is suspected, staff must report to PA Childline.

Additional School Policies and Recommendations

What to bring to school:

Backpacks: Please make sure your child has a backpack every day they come to school. Busy Bee and Butterfly children should have a backpack that is big enough to fit a folder.

Clothing: Please provide a change of season appropriate clothing in your child's cubby or backpack. These items will be kept at school in case a change of clothes is necessary. Children should be dressed in "play clothes" for school. We do many fun crafts and activities that will be messy. Clothes should be easy to pull up and down for those that are potty training or potty trained. Since children either go to the playground or the gym every school day, please dress them in SNEAKERS so that they can run and play safely.

Snacks: Parents will be provided with a suggested snack list from their child's teacher as well as a snack calendar each month. On their child's designated snack day, parents are requested to bring snack for the number of children in their class. **Due to life-threatening food allergies, we cannot accept any items made with or cross-contaminated with peanuts or tree nuts.** If your child has a food allergy, you may be asked to bring in a snack that is safe for them to enjoy. For more information for children with food allergies, please see the section marked "Illness, Medication, and Accidents".

Potty-training

As your children go through their preschool years, they experience increasing independence, including potty training. The DDD staff want to support your child and help him/her be successful in this process. **We ask that you not send your child in underwear until they are fully potty trained (accident free for at least 14 days).** If they are wearing a "Pull Up", teachers will help them pull it down to go potty so that they stay dry.

Many times children seem to be doing fine with potty training at home, but the busyness and distractions of school make it harder to remember to use the potty even with the help of the teachers. We want your child to be as comfortable as possible and request that you please understand if wearing "Pull Ups" for a while longer at school is necessary.

Please make sure children are wearing clothing that is easy to pull up and down on their own. Our teachers act quickly but it is difficult to remove belts and unbutton several buttons when it's urgent.

If your child is in the Ladybug or Turtle class, please provide diapers labeled with their name to keep at school. **Children are required to be potty-trained to enter the Busy Bee 3's and the Butterfly 4's & 5's.** We do not have the capability to change diapers in these classrooms. If your Busy Bee or Butterfly child is not potty trained by the start of school you can either pay tuition to hold your child's spot in the class until they are potty-trained and ready to join us, OR

withdraw your child from the class and have them placed on the end of the waiting list. If your child has a developmental delay and is involved with Early Intervention or an Intermediate Unit, please contact the Director to discuss exceptions to this policy.

School communication

Monthly newsletters will be sent home by your child's teacher. Communication from the Director or your child's teacher can be sent home in all or any of these ways: email, note in child's cubby or backpack, Facebook, school website. Please check your email and child's backpack everyday to keep up to date about school happenings.

Communication with parents is a core value of our program. The Director and teachers are very willing to discuss any issues you may have regarding your child or the preschool. Please contact the appropriate person to schedule a time outside of school hours to talk. The Director's email address is ddd@derrypres.org and phone number is 717-533-9667 x113. You will be given your teacher's email address at the start of school. Teachers will not be able to take time during school hours to meet with you. An exception is if your child has a scheduled IFSP or IEP related meeting which requires the teacher's presence. In which case, a substitute teacher will be scheduled for the classroom.

All information regarding DDD students and families will be secured under lock and key. Assessment information will be reviewed by the Director. All DDD staff are bound by a signed Confidentiality Statement and strict action will be taken if a violation of this statement occurs.

Emergency Plan & Procedures

This is a separate document that will be given to parents at the start of the school year. Please contact the Director with any questions.

Derry Presbyterian Church Information

www.derrypres.org 717-533-9667

Worship Services: We warmly welcome you to join us for worship! Worship is held Sundays at 8am in the chapel and 10:30am in the sanctuary; Tuesdays from 6:45pm-7:30pm in the chapel.

Church School: Year-round for all ages, Sundays from 9:15am-10:15am

KIWI (Kids In Worship Instruction): For 4 year olds through kindergarten. Kid-friendly instruction of worship skills following the children's sermon at 10:30am worship, September-May.

Nursery: Sunday, 7:45am through 10:30am worship for infants and toddlers through age four. Nursery staff are employed by the church and provide children with the same familiar face every week.

Terrific Tuesdays: Family dinners available for \$3 for adults/\$2 for children 12 and under. The evening includes vocal, handbell and hand chime choir rehearsals for children and adults. Program runs Tuesday evenings, September through April, beginning at 5pm.

Vacation Bible School: For four-year-olds through 5th grade completed. Runs for one week in August, 9:00am-12:00pm. Call the church office or visit the church website for more information.

Fellowships: At minimum, monthly gatherings for youth in grades 3-5 (Pilgrim Fellowship); as well as more frequent activities for middle school and senior high school students, September-May.

Derry Church History: In the early 1700's, Scots-Irish immigrants left their homes in northern Ireland to settle here. Legend has it these hardy, persevering folk began worshiping near the current site of Derry Church as early as 1724.

A small wooden session house was built in 1732 and still stands on the grounds adjacent to the church's historic cemetery. The building was enclosed in glass for preservation by Mr. Milton S. Hershey in 1929.

The John Elder Memorial Chapel stands across from the session house. Built in 1884, the Chapel continues to be used for worship, funerals, and weddings. The main sanctuary, built in 1965, was renovated and enlarged 30 years later.

Today, Derry's 1000+ member congregation actively participates in local, national, and international mission work, small group Bible study, recreational sports, youth fellowships, scouting programs, all-church picnics, cultural events and more. Please join us!

For more information....check out Derry Church online at www.derrypres.org and on social media: facebook.com/derrypres, twitter.com/derrypres, instagram.com/derrypres and youtube.com/user/derrypres.

Derry Church Staff

TBD, Pastor

Rev. Dr. Marie Buffaloe, Parish Associate

Debbie Hough, Director of Christian Education

Sandy Miceli, Administrative Secretary

Teresa Hutcheson, Church Secretary

Sue George, Director of Communications and Technology

Kelly Mehaffie, Director of Derry Discovery Days

Loretta Chubb, Hospitality Coordinator

Ruth Uffelman, Receptionist

Jeff Miller, Custodian

Confirmation of Receipt: 2016-2017 Derry Discovery Days Policies and Parent Handbook

I have received a copy of the 2016-2017 Derry Discovery Days Policies and Parent Handbook. I am aware that I am required to abide by the rules and policies stated in this Handbook and failure to do so could result in my child's/children's removal from the Derry Discovery Days Preschool program.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Please return signed form to your child's teacher or to the Director of Derry Discovery Days Preschool.