
Student Handbook



2023-2024

Spiritual Values



Mission Statement

Discovering God, a love of learning, and a servant's heart.

Values

We value LOVE: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... and love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-38

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

We value SERVICE: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

Statement of Faith:

At Discovery Christian Academy our values of love, learning, and service are based on the understanding that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He was born of a virgin through the Holy Spirit. We believe that Jesus died on the cross and was raised on the third day so that we can live eternally in heaven with Him. Our view of morality is defined by following the examples that Jesus showed us on earth. Through Him, we can love God and others, learn to live the way He wants us to live, and give of ourselves to those in need. We also understand that God's grace and His forgiveness is the reason that we can follow Him.

2023-2024 School Calendar



August/September						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

January						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

March						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

April						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

IMPORTANT DATES

August/September

- 30 First Day of School
- 5 No School: Labor Day
- 29 Fall Picture Day

October

- 9 All School Field Trip
- 27 All School Fall Open House

November

- 11 No School: Veteran's Day
- 17 All School Thanksgiving Feast (Minimum Day)

20 - 24 No School: Thanksgiving Vacation

December

25 - 29 No School: Christmas Vacation

January

1 - 5 No School: Christmas Vacation

February

- 2 Winter Open House
- 16 - 19 No School: President's Weekend

March

- 11 All School Family Service Day
- 29 No School: Easter Vacation

April

1 - 5 No School: Easter Vacation

May

- 6 All School Field Trip
- 27 No School: Memorial Day

June

- 5 Last Day of School (Minimum Day)

* Some dates may vary slightly.

Your family will be notified of any changes.

2023-2024 Daily Schedule



8:15 AM	Arrival
8:30 AM	Morning Meeting (Attendance, Calendar, etc.)
8:45 AM	Bible Time (with Flag Salute and Morning Prayers)
9:15 AM	Language Arts
10:15 AM	Recess
10:45 AM	Math
11:45 AM	Lunch
12:30 PM	Afternoon Meeting
12:45 PM	Project Based Learning
1:30 PM	Flex (Art, Science, Social Studies, Music, P.E., etc.)
2:15 PM	Dismissal

Required Student Supplies List



- 3 Boxes of Crayola Crayons (8 or 16 ct.)
- 2 Boxes of Washable Crayola Broad Line Markers, Classic Colors (10 ct.)
- 1 Box of Crayola Colored Pencils (12 ct.)
- 12 Elmer's Glue Sticks or similar brand
- 1 Bottle of Elmer's or Up & Up White Glue (4 oz.)
- 1 Box of #2 Pencils (pre-sharpened, please)
- 1 Package of Pink Erasers – any brand (3 ct.)
- 1 Package of Black Sharpies, Fine (5 ct.)
- 1 Package of Expo Markers (chisel tip)
- 1 Set of Crayola Watercolor Paints
- 1 Pair of Fiskars Kid's Scissors *
- 1 Pair of Child Headphones w/3.5mm connector *
- 3 Packages 3x5 Blank Index Cards (100 ct.)**
- 1 Package of Narrow Chisel Tip Highlighters (4 ct.)**

*Not necessary if purchased in a previous year.

**1st through 4th Grade Only

If you prefer to waive the School Supplies Fee, purchase the Required Student Supplies above and bring them to school within three days of your child's first day of school.

Optional Classroom Donations

(Even purchasing one or two items from this list will help.)

- Tissue Box Cubes
- Antibacterial Hand Soap
- Baby Wipes
- Band Aids
- 8 ½" x 11" Copy Paper Reams
- Paper Clips
- Post It Notes
- Cardstock
- Scotch Tape
- Blue Painter's Tape
- Command Strips
- Stickers
- Ziploc Bags, all sizes
- Construction Paper
- Dot Paints
- Paint Brushes
- Popsicle Sticks (All Sizes)
- Velcro Dots

Academics



We hope that your child's God-given desire to learn is brought to life because of our approach to academics at Discovery Christian Academy.

Multi-Grade Clusters

Discovery Christian Academy is a one-room schoolhouse in the sense that we create classes and small groups using multi-age clusters. Allowing students to work with different grade levels benefits children in many ways. In a Project Based Learning environment, students are challenged by individual abilities. Children will learn from older and younger classmates, as well as support their peers. This will cause the students to advance in academics, self-esteem, and social skills.

Solid Foundations

At Discovery Christian Academy, we teach a strong foundation in Bible, reading, writing, and mathematics. In multi-grade clusters, students can work at individual levels. Rather than struggling or getting bored, children are challenged in a way that they can achieve success.

Bible Time: Because God says to put Him first, we choose to have Bible Time at the beginning of our school day. Although our Bible time sometimes correlates with our Project Based Learning, we also have a structured curriculum. We use the *NirV Adventure Bible for Early Readers* by Zonderkidz. Discovery Christian Academy teaches the Bible and building a relationship with Jesus through object lessons, hands-on learning opportunities, and daily prayer and worship. We also teach monthly character traits like obedience, reverence, loyalty, joy, love, etc.

Language Arts: We believe that reading and writing are two of the most important academic skills that young children need to learn. Also, a love of reading will make learning other subjects more enjoyable. To create a solid foundation, we use Purposeful Design's language arts curriculum by Association of Christian Schools International. To supplement, we use manipulatives, games, journals, age-appropriate learning apps, and a multitude of leveled reading books. In addition, language arts is often integrated into our Project Based Learning.



Academics cont.

Mathematics: At Discovery Christian Academy, we want to inspire children to excel in math. We build confidence by placing students where they can succeed while offering obtainable challenges. We teach to mastery and use the spiral approach as a form of review. This means that the children can understand a concept and apply it. Then we move on, but continue to cycle back so that children don't forget what they have already learned. In mathematics, we also use Purposeful Design by ACSI as a primary curriculum. Additionally, we incorporate games, hands-on learning opportunities, and round off with age-appropriate educational apps.

Project Based Learning

This method of hands-on learning involves a dynamic classroom approach. Project Based Learning starts with a question. For example, "How can we create rules for our class to learn in a safe and fun environment?" Students discuss and brainstorm what they know and what they need to know to answer the question. Through inquiry-based research, mini-lessons, and hands-on learning opportunities, children will learn about rules and laws, why they are important, and how they are created. They will learn about God's laws and what the Bible says about following rules. Then the students will create a government that writes and passes bills into law. Because this question is relevant to the students, they will gain a deeper understanding of information that applies to their young lives. Most project units last about two weeks so our students have time to really answer the driving question and get a full understanding of the themes. Other questions that we have asked include, "How can our class write and perform a play that will tell our friends and family about the first Thanksgiving?" and "How can I design, produce, and market a product that my friends would want to purchase at our classroom marketplace?" There are so many amazing units that we present and each year is a different experience.

Incorporating S.T.R.E.A.M.

A huge part of Project Based Learning is working on a problem through multiple disciplines. At Discovery Christian Academy, this includes: **S**cience, **T**echnology, **R**eading/wRiting, **E**ngineering, **A**rt, and **M**athematics. We feel that this model allows students to be more engaged in learning and have a better understanding of concepts because they are approached from different angles.

Academics cont.



Grading Policies

We believe that students can learn and demonstrate their knowledge through many forms. Tests and quizzes are a low priority at our school because an understanding of academic standards is evident in the final projects that the students create. Your child will receive two report cards each year based on our grade-level standards. He/she will create a portfolio that will illustrate learning from another perspective. Throughout the year, each culminating project will also reveal a pattern of continued growth.

Homework

Reading with your child each day is our top priority when it comes to homework. We try to make time for every child to complete their "work" at school. On rare occasions, students may need to finish up at home. Our regularly assigned homework revolves around the family. Your child might be asked to discuss something that we are learning in class at the dinner table or organize a family game night and talk about it at school.

Field Trips & Special Events

To introduce or conclude many of our Project Based Learning units, we have special events throughout the school year. Attendance is mandatory for all students at each of these activities as the experiences are an integral part of Project Based Learning. Please take note of these important dates in our annual school calendar on page 2, and plan accordingly so that your child can participate. If there are any changes on our part or due to weather, we will notify you as soon as possible for you to make the necessary arrangements.

Attendance



Attendance Policy

We highly value being present at school, especially because of the hands-on and cooperative learning that takes place. Alternatively, we understand the importance of keeping your child home if he/she is ill. We appreciate that our families to work with us to keep our school healthy by staying home when children are ill. Please keep your child home if he/she has a fever and for at least 48 hours after the fever breaks. Thank you for your cooperation.

If your family is planning to take a vacation during the school year, please let us know ahead of time so that we can send work with you. If possible, we will create a Project Based Learning opportunity for your child based on your travels.

Absences or Tardiness

If your child does miss a day of school due to illness or other reasons, or if your child is arriving late, we require written communication from a parent in the form of an email, a text, or a hand-written note. If possible, we ask that you contact us the same morning your child will be absent or tardy. Because our curriculum is primarily Project Based Learning, make-up work will likely vary from the assignments the child may have completed if present. Your child will have one day for every day that he/she was absent to complete these replacement assignments. If more time is needed, requests can be made and will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

We request that you remain in your car when bringing your child to school each morning. A staff member will greet you at your vehicle and ensure the student's safety to class. Dismissal is at 2:15 pm each day. We ask that you are on time. A fee of \$5.00 will be charged for every five minutes a child is left waiting after 2:15 pm. If someone other than those listed on the emergency contact sheet will be picking up your child, please let us know.

Health and Safety



Medications

When it is necessary to administer a prescription or over-the-counter medication to your child during school hours, a parent/guardian will be asked to sign a medical release waiver. Both the waiver and the medication will be stored in a locked cabinet, and the parent/guardian will be contacted with each dose administered. All medications must come to school in original packaging. Personal inhalers may be kept on the student's person or in his/her backpack, but a waiver allowing school personnel to help administer must still be signed by the parent/guardian. Unless medically necessary, please apply any lotions, sunscreen, etc. before coming to school. We DO NOT allow personal lotions to be kept in your child's backpack.

Student Property

Teachers may ask students to bring items from home to share with the class. We are happy to be able to incorporate these into the classroom learning. However, on a general basis, we ask that students keep personal items at home to protect them from getting lost or damaged. On the occasion that a toy or other item does come to school, we will ask that it remain in your child's backpack. Please label all backpacks, lunch boxes, jackets, and water bottles that come to school each day.

Student Lunches & Snacks

As our school is small, we do not offer cafeteria options. Please pack your child a healthy lunch with an additional snack that can be eaten at the morning recess. On occasion, we might have food brought in from local eateries. In this case, you would have plenty of notice, and you are always welcome to opt out.

Food & Allergies

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school if your child has an allergy to food or nature so that our Project Based Learning lessons can be carefully planned. We do allow families to provide a special treat to share for children birthdays, but we will communicate, in advance, of any snacks related to class parties or curriculum that will be provided so that you can plan accordingly.

Communications



We make an effort to stay in close communication with families. We send home a monthly newsletter and send announcement and reminder texts through TalkingPoints, our communication app. You can contact us in-person, by phone/text at (805) 807-6911, or by email at info@DiscoveryCA.org. You can also find most information on our website (DiscoveryCA.org).

Discipline

Because Project Based Learning is highly student-driven, it is crucial that we maintain discipline at all times. That being said, our students are a big part of the rule making process at the beginning of the school year. Because they are involved in creating the rules, they feel a sense of ownership to keep and help their peers maintain them. We use positive reinforcement through words of encouragement and Super Tickets that can be earned and used to purchase items from our Discovery Store each week. For students who choose not to abide by our class constitution, we follow a three-step process of discipline. First, the teacher will give a quick reminder of the rules and redirect as needed. Second, the teacher will have a longer conversation about appropriate behavior. Third, the student will lose a privilege of equal measure to the severity of the infraction. If we haven't already, we will communicate with the parent/guardian. To set every student up for success, children with habitual discipline issues will be placed on individual behavior plans. These will be created and implemented through parent/teacher collaboration.

Dress Code

Uniforms

As with most private schools, uniforms are required at Discovery Christian Academy. With the Uniform Fee that is due on August 1st, students will receive five assorted colored polo shirts with our school logo. These are to be worn every day, unless otherwise specified. Additional polos may be purchased to reduce washing or to replace damaged/out-grown items.

Dress Code cont.



Non-Uniform Apparel

Boys may wear long pants or shorts. Girls may wear long pants, shorts, or skirts. To avoid cartwheel embarrassments, please make sure girls have shorts or leggings on under their skirts. All students are required to wear closed-toed shoes that they can manage easily and be worn all day. Long-sleeved tees may be worn under polos on colder days. We ask that jackets, apparel, and other personal belongings refrain from inappropriate logos or sayings.

Please complete this page, remove it from the handbook and return it on the first day of school.



Student's Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

I give Discovery Christian Academy permission to include my family in the school directory with the understanding that this directory will only be shared with other Discovery Christian Academy families for the purpose of building school community.

By signing below, you are acknowledging that you have taken the responsibility to review the Discovery Christian Academy Student Handbook and agree to work with us to help your child abide by these policies and procedures.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____