

# The Daffodil Day School Parent Handbook

This handbook is an outline of the policies and procedures for the Daffodil Day School, as well as an introduction to our guiding principles and philosophy. The purpose of this handbook is to inform parents of what they can expect as well as to provide a starting point for conversation and community around loving, high-quality child care.

## **Our mission**

The Daffodil Day School seeks to provide parents and children with the highest level of holistic child care through ensuring consistency of care, time in nature, free play, and healthy food. The goal of the school is to provide for children a safe, wonder-filled world and provide for parents an easy choice for child care that gives them peace of mind.

## **Our school**

The Daffodil Day School (DDS) was formed out of a true love of children and childhood combined with an understanding of the need for high-quality in-home child care in the Twin Cities. Our school prides itself on providing care that feeds children physically, spiritually, intellectually and emotionally. Our philosophy is based in years of experience and takes inspiration and direction from the teachings of Waldorf education and the Lifeways of North America approach to child care.

For the early years of childhood, we at DDS believe that:

- *Every child* has the world to explore and unique gifts to guide them on this journey.
- Consistency of care and caregivers is paramount in building a sense of trust and well-being in each child.
- It is through imitation that young children learn and grow.
- Early childhood is a time for experiential, not academic, learning.
- Allowing children to grow at their own pace fosters healthy development of the child.
- Freedom of movement, in safe environments, develops that which is most fundamental to childhood: imagination, movement, and play.
- Children of all ages thrive in a mixed-age environment.
- Together, parents, caregivers, and children can feed each other's sense of well-being.

To encourage that which is most sacred about childhood, we:

- Make space and time every day for self-directed play
- Spend time outside every day (barring severe weather)
- Offer open-ended projects and activities
- Play with toys that accompany, not dictate, our fun
- Limit unnecessary adult interaction and interruption
- Employ an original, inimitable curriculum that is built from our heart and enacted with love
- Nourish children with healthy, homemade food and special, homemade toys and playthings

Finally, our school aims to provide parents with a childcare experience that enriches not just their child, but their entire family. We know that with quality, dependable childcare, life is easier, and are proud to provide all of our families with this level of care. Honesty and openness about needs, goals, and wishes for you and your children are wholeheartedly welcomed and encouraged. You, as parents, are welcome at our school **anytime**.

DDS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, ability, or veteran status.

## **Provider background**

My name is Claire LeBeau Fromme, and I grew up the younger of two daughters in Southern Illinois. I spent a lot of time outside, as our house was on a secluded plot of land in the middle of a national forest! When I was 8 years old, my mother passed away, and my sister and dad worked together to finish raising me. As I grew older, I was a big reader, and still spent time outside, working with my dad on his farm and in our garden. In high school, I tried my hand at softball, student government, and marching band, and babysat fairly extensively for my friends' younger siblings. After high school, I moved to Minnesota to attend the College of Saint Catherine.

St. Kate's was a great place for me. I worked as a barista as well as a campus tour guide, and again was a part of student government. I used summers as a time to travel and keep up my babysitting skills.

After spending my last semester in Lima, Peru and obtaining my degree in International Relations and Spanish, I moved to Washington, D.C. and then to Pennsylvania, where I worked as a political organizer. While I found the work both challenging and important, I couldn't get my heart behind it, and moved back to the Twin Cities in the fall of 2010. Immediately upon returning, I answered a Craigslist ad for a day care assistant, and started working at an in-home child care run by a wonderful wife-and-husband team. Although I started working as their assistant thinking it was temporary, I quickly realized that I had, in no uncertain terms, found my calling. Spending my days with children helped me realize I want to devote myself to assisting children as they find their way in the world, and supporting their families on that journey.

During my time as a day care assistant, I cared for children aged 6 months to 6 years. Here I experienced firsthand the joys and challenges of those age groups, from changing cloth diapers to handling biting toddlers. Simultaneously, the birth of my niece revealed the challenges for parents in balancing work and family life. Finding caregivers that are trustworthy, environments that are safe and well-suited for children, and curricula that are age-appropriate and creative is very difficult! In the summer of 2011, I started daydreaming about what it would be like to open my own program. To discern more about what this would look like, I enrolled in a distance-learning program through the Lifeways Early Childhood Center located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Based in Waldorf education, Lifeways child care is uniquely suited to children ages 0-7. Their year-long program provides a comprehensive understanding of the developing human being, a foundation in creative and practical arts, and the importance of joy, love, health and gratitude when caring for children. This program helped me further define both who I am and what I want to do in the world. It also allowed me to see the positive impact quality child care can have for families, communities, and kids. Never in years of caring for children had I seen a space so suited toward them, or so peaceful. While undergoing this training, I felt my call toward working with children intensify. Sadly, during my time there a dear member of my family was diagnosed with cancer, and I decided to leave the school in order to be more reliably there for her and my family. Also during this time, the day care where I worked closed, and I accepted a position as an organizer with Minnesotans United for All Families. While working to defeat the anti-marriage amendment of 2012, I again began to daydream about providing families with real, loving childcare. Over the next two years, I researched (and continued to daydream about) what it would take to open my own childcare and put steps in motion to get there.

In the fall of 2014, the Daffodil Day School opened in our home in the Saint Anthony Park of Saint Paul. In the spring of 2016, we moved into our current home at 761 Tatum Street, and immediately felt at home. Our new location means we are walking distance to Newell Park, May Park, Tatum Park Community Garden, the Hamline-Midway Library, bus stops, the Green Line, and the Midway YMCA. We are active members of our neighborhood, and visit those places often. We have made great friends in the neighborhood, and it is not rare to see a few extra kids here during pickup!

## **Curriculum**

"The child learns to be human from other human beings."  
-Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf education

Our curriculum is based upon two fundamental parts of our philosophy: children of all ages learn through imitation and that their approach to learning is through physical experience. With this in mind, we teach through imitation and work to be worthy role models! Children will acquire skills that will prepare them for kindergarten, such as literacy and following directions, by absorbing them in their natural state. For example, in the springtime, we will watch the world thaw and come alive, and birds will begin to sing. On our walks, we will see and hear them, and carry baskets to collect materials for nests. During our circle, our songs will revolve around different kinds of birds, and our movements will mimic theirs. Our stories before nap will feature brave birds, sweet birds, naughty birds. As their mind focuses on this change in our environment, so will their play, their creative energy, and their questions. In all of these ways children will direct their own learning. Everything around them is their classroom, and everything and everyone becomes a teacher. To provide our children with a foundation for a fulfilling life where they are confident, able beings, we must allow them to ask and answer their own questions.

We are not focused solely on preparing the child for school. Childhood is the MOST important time of our lives developmentally speaking, and we aim to protect this special time for your child. In the past 20 years, early childhood education has become little more than the application of the elementary school model to younger and younger ages, yet performance-driven programs are just not what young children need! Early childhood psychology proves to us that that which is hardest and most important to teach comes to children of all ages not through lessons but through play.

“If thinking is to encompass problem solving, flexibility, creativity, and the making of connections, then play is the true work of the child. It is the essential prerequisite to the full development of the thinking capacities.”

-Carol Toole, Waldorf educator

At a young age, self-regulation, or “good executive function” is the highest indicator of future academic success as well as a predictor of effective development in every area of a child’s life. Children that are able to self-regulate are easily identified: they can resist impulses, exert self-control, and understand their emotions and behavior. We will encourage the development of executive function and self-regulation in all our students by:

- providing a space free of television, a known inhibitor to this development
- minimizing our involvement in and interruption of children’s play
- allow and encourage children of different ages to be together
- giving space to children of all ages for them to make their own decisions

As adults, we can use our own growth as an example: academic, professional, and interpersonal “success” requires motivation, flexibility, creativity, respect, and love. This is what children will learn at DDS.

Our school is suited to children aged 12 weeks to 7 years. At our school we provide everything your growing child needs in their years before school. This, combined with the fact that the relationship between child and caregiver is very important and consistency in this relationship cannot be undervalued, we encourage parents to consider DDS as a place for your child until they enter kindergarten.

A note on “Kindergarten Readiness”: While many programs follow a rigorously academic approach to “kindergarten readiness”, our method of helping children prepare for school takes into account the whole child. During their time at DDS, children will have time to practice many skills, and by the time they enter kindergarten we believe they will be able to:

- advocate for themselves to peers and adults
- have at their disposal an emotional vocabulary to help them during difficult situations
- get dressed without assistance
- use the toilet and wash their hands without assistance
- listen with their whole body
- accomplish a variety of chores on their own, including setting the table and clearing their place

- use art, dramatic play, instruments, and play as ways to express themselves and their feelings
- have a strong sense of self and self-confidence
- use their imagination and their body to play freely and wholeheartedly

“What is already present in small children grows with them as they mature. So the final law is to protect childhood. Shield it from experimentation, from premature development, from floods of stimuli, from everything that serves to weaken the child’s powers of imagination. Protect childhood as a source of physical well-being, of inner strength, of self-identity, of social tolerance.”

-Rudolf Steiner

## Typical day

Much of our program is seasonally based, meaning our program and schedule change in sync with the rhythms of our environment.

### Example of an autumn day:

7:45: Dropoffs start; I meet children in the living room. Free play until outside!

9:00: Gear up for outside! Walk to the park for free play.

10:30: Picnic snack - rice cakes, trail mix, and apples

10:45: We play a rousing game of Sleeping Bear

11:30: We walk home, singing all the way

12:00: Caregiver washes the children’s hands; each child sets their place at the table

12:30: Lunch – Black beans with barley, broccoli, bread with butter, and milk. When done, children clear their plates, wash hands, and prepare their nap spot

1:00: Nap - early risers assist in the baking of bread for snack, help with chores. Children clean up their nap spot and are able to go outside when enough of their friends are awake

3:00: Snack - Fresh bread with butter, water

3:30: We collect leaves from the yard and dip them in beeswax to make a wreath.

4:00: Outdoor free play with rakes and leaf bags

5:00-5:30- Parents arrive.

### Example of a winter day:

7:45: Dropoffs start; I meet children in the living room

9:00: Free play inside, babies nap in cribs

9:45: Inside: children come together, we read “Bear Snores On”

10:00: Children take time to re-tell and act out the story

10:30: Snack: warm grain, water. When we are finished, we head outside to build snow forts

12:00: Lunch –Lentil soup with yogurt, bread with honey butter, sweet potatoes and milk. When done, children clear their plates, wash hands, and prepare their nap spot

12:45: Nap - early risers assist in the baking of bread for snack, help with chores. Children clean up their nap spot and read or work on a project (collage, pattern-making, painting)

3:30: Snack: fresh bread and butter, warm milk

4:15: Outside play with shovels and snow tools until parents pick up

### Example of a spring day:

7:45: Dropoffs start; I meet children in the living room

8:45: Outside play: the children create their own games, and we all work together to move mud using shovels, cups, and sticks. Babies nap in cribs.

10:00: Snack: outside, we wipe our hands with warm towels and have a warm grain snack

10:30: Inside for bathroom break and diaper changes; the children have quiet time to play, read books

11:00: We head on a walk to the community garden and look for signs of spring

12:00: Inside for hand washing and bathroom break

12:15: Lunch –brown rice with veggies and eggs, string cheese, apples. When done, children clear their plates, wipe their hands, and prepare their nap spot

1:00: Nap - early risers assist in the baking of bread for snack, help with chores, play with babies. Children clean up their nap spot and are able to go outside when enough of their friends are awake

3:00: Snack: fresh bread and butter with milk

3:30: Outside play

4:00: Inside for more free play, we lead optional activities (chopping veggies for tomorrow's lunch, creating and decorating flags) or work on projects that children can observe and imitate (folding clothes, writing letters to our friends)

5:00: Together we begin to tidy up the house, singing work songs as we go

5-5:30: Parents arrive

### **Example of a summer day:**

7:45: Dropoffs start; I meet children in the yard

8:30: We walk, jog, skip, run to the park

9:45: We walk home and prepare for snack, babies nap in cribs

10:00: Snack on the porch: warm grain, water to drink

10:30: The children play in the yard; if desired, they can build tree forts or help with gardening work

12:00: Inside to wash hands and use the bathroom/diaper changes

12:15: Lunch: zucchini noodles with red sauce, cheesy bread, berries, milk. When done, children clear their plates and wipe their hands and faces

12:45: Children set up their nap beds and read quietly until nap

1:00: Nap - early risers assist in the baking of bread for snack, help with chores, play with babies. Children clean up their nap spot and are able to go outside when enough of their friends are awake.

3:00: Snack outside: kiwi-zucchini popsicles, popcorn, rice milk

3:15: Outdoor free play with the sprinkler

4:30: Together we water the garden and begin to tidy up the yard, singing work songs as we go.

5-5:30: Parents arrive

## **Discipline**

Our disciplinary approach is founded on:

- Age-appropriate expectations
- Firm boundaries and limits
- Restorative justice
- The belief that every child is doing the best they can at any given moment

Our disciplinary approach reflects our respect for and knowledge of each child and childhood itself. We respect that early childhood is a time of big emotions and strive to offer children a safe space to experience them! We set high expectations for children in regards to self-respect, kindness, manners, following directions, and making contributions to our household. These expectations and limits are firm, which allows children to feel confident in our ability as their caregivers to guide them in finding their place in the world. When a child does need behavior guidance, we might guide children to “take a break” with a calming toy in a quiet area with a caregiver. As opposed to time-outs and separation from the group, this strategy allows children to experience a “reset” as they are reminded that they are safe, loved, and expected to keep themselves and their friends safe and loved during our day. Additionally, nurturing acts like gentle hair brushing, hand washing, or back rubbing can assist children in moderating their own behavior. When feelings or bodies are hurt, we will engage the victim, the offender, and the community in rectifying the issue and together, work toward healing from it.

Each child is different, and no approach to discipline will work for all children. As we spend time together, caregivers and children will get to know each other quite well; for caregivers, this means we will be able to recognize each child's

struggles, triggers, and feelings. The policies and practices listed above may morph and shift to suit your child depending on their unique temperament and specific needs.

## **Age Grouping and Size**

DDS accepts children from 12 weeks to 10 years. The children will experience their days together in a mixed-age environment. We aim to keep our school small with competitive caregiver/child ratios, and will always adhere to the State of Minnesota's requirements on age distribution and caregiver-child ratios, which can be found online by searching "Ramsey County in-home child care ratios" or by speaking with Claire.

## **Nap Time**

There will be a nap/quiet time each day after lunch. All children must nap or rest during this period. Our naptime routine and sleeping arrangements may differ from your home routine; after a short adjustment period, most children will get used to both! Infants will sleep in cribs upstairs, and older children will sleep on wool mats set up on the downstairs floor. Parents are encouraged to bring something from home for their child to rest with, such as a blanket, bear or soother. This toy will be special for nap time, and used during these hours only. We encourage parents to have a duplicate security item as a backup!

## **Cleanliness and Hygiene**

Children's hands are washed before meals and after toileting. Children will also wash their faces after lunch and before pickup. Providers wash or disinfect their hands after diapering/toileting, before and after food preparation and eating, and numerous other times throughout the day. Toys and equipment are washed and disinfected on a regular basis.

## **Supplies and Equipment**

Parents are responsible for supplying:

- Two extra changes of indoor clothing appropriate to season, labeled with your child's initials
- Seasonally appropriate outdoor clothing
- Breast milk/formula and bottles for infants (you are welcome to store it at the school, labeled with your child's initials)
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray
- Indoor slippers
- Diaper cream
- Diapers
- If using cloth diapers, a wet bag
- A water bottle that stays here

Our school provides:

- A personal storage area for your child's belongings (please label everything that comes into our school with your child's initials)
- Sustainable and baby-safe wipes
- All food and drink

Please ensure that your child comes to daycare dressed ready to play! We will go outside every day that we can do so safely. This means they need to be dressed appropriately to guard them from the elements and in clothes that can come home dirty! This frees your child to experience their surroundings comfortably and makes the provider's job much, much easier. We also ask that toys from home, aside from one naptime security item, stay at home.

## **Toilet Training**

We are happy to help you with potty training your child. The DDS philosophy is based on positive reinforcement and encouragement; we will never shame a child for accidents. When your child is ready to start toilet training, the parents and Claire will have an adults-only meeting to make a plan that gives the child the most opportunities for success.

## **Releasing Child from Care**

For the safety of the children, we will not release a child to anyone besides a parent or guardian unless Claire has been notified of a change. A verbal notice will suffice if the person is on the list of people who are authorized to pick up your child. If the person is not on your list, they must provide written permission from a parent/guardian to release your child, and will require the person to show a photo ID upon pickup.

## **Illness**

Parents must keep a child at home if he or she has a contagious illness or is displaying symptoms that would inhibit him or her from participating in a typical day. Payment is still required, even if your child is absent due to illness.

Symptoms/illnesses that require your child stay home include:

- a fever of 100 degrees or higher
- vomiting
- two instances of uncontainable\* diarrhea in a 24 hour period\*
- discharge from eyes and or ears
- head lice
- conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- a rash that is spreading
- coughing until vomiting
- child obviously unwell (excessive crying, child out of sorts, or other behavior that inhibits your child from participating fully in our day)
- a contagious illness of any sort

We cannot accept your little one for care if any of these symptoms/illnesses have been present within the last 24 hours. If a child displays any of these symptoms while at our school, we will contact parents for immediate pick up. In most cases, your child may return 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal and vomiting/diarrhea has stopped, or 24 hours after the first dose of an antibiotic. Before your child returns we will need to make sure the incubation/contagious period is over and they are well enough to carry on with the daily schedule. Most illnesses are more serious when passed to infants and younger kiddos. Since we are a mixed-age group, all illness related decisions will take into account not just your child, but all the children here, and therefore might be more strict than you expect. While every attempt will be made to accommodate your family, we have the responsibility to keep all of the DDS kids healthy and safe during the day, and therefore has the ultimate say on whether or not a child can attend regardless of the specific situation.

One of the forms included in this packet and required upon enrollment is the Medical Treatment/Administration Consent form. This form gives the provider permission to administer prescription medication to your child while in our care. Parents' are required to hand all medication, including Tylenol, directly to Claire at drop off time. For safety and ease of use, medication must be in the original labeled container. It is parent's responsibility to give specific instructions in writing, including the name of the medication, dosage, and administration times. It is our responsibility to store the medication properly and deliver it back to you at pick up time. As a helpful note, most pharmacies will split medication into two containers if asked to do so!

If your child requires over the counter medication to get through the day (due to teething, a cold, etc) it is likely they are not well enough to attend school. Please talk with Claire if your child is under the weather so we can make a plan for care that keeps your child, your family, and our school safe and healthy.

Every child gets sick; it is their path to future health. With this in mind, your child is welcome to attend the daycare if he or she has a mild cold and is able to participate. We will make every effort to keep colds from circulating, including regular toy-washing and deep house cleaning, but ask parents' understanding that little sicknesses are a part of every child's social experience.

Please let Claire know if your child will not be attending due to sickness via text, email, or call. In the unlikely the provider is sick to the extent that DDS must close, parents will be notified as soon as possible via phone call, text, or email. Payment on these days is still due, and these days do not count as vacation days for the provider.

## **Immunizations and Vaccination Policy**

Daffodil Day School requires that all children in their care will or have receive(d) vaccinations as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control. This policy is meant to protect all children, including your own, especially as we are a mixed-age child care. As per Ramsey County rules, form outlining the schedule of immunizations (received and pending) must be kept on file at DDS and updated as the information changes. More information on this schedule can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/child-easyread.html>

## **Food and Pet Allergies**

At DDS, we believe that healthy food means healthy kids. Our meals will be prepared from scratch, using very few processed foods, and because of this we are able to accommodate many food allergies. If a child's allergies are severe or extensive enough that a safe environment cannot be provided, enrollment will be terminated and your deposit will be refunded.

DDS is home to Halo, our very loving and absurdly patient cat. Halo has no front claws, and spends most of her time sleeping upstairs (in a non-day care area). While Halo is very loving, she is also fairly furry- if you or your child(ren) have cat allergies, please speak with Claire before enrolling your child.

## **Emergencies**

DDS has been designed to allow children freedom of movement in a safe environment. We believe that freedom to move, freedom from unnecessary intervention, and the freedom to practice good judgment and make mistakes are critical during your child's early years. Children by nature are very self-regulating and are mostly aware of the limits of their own bodies; we aim to give them the space and permission to practice those skills. That being said, minor bumps, scrapes and cuts are inevitable. In the event of a small injury, appropriate first aid will be given. More information on that process and room for input is on the Medical Treatment/Administration Consent form.

All providers and assistants will have current First Aid and Infant and Child CPR Training. If a major injury or medical problem occurs, the parents will be contacted immediately. In the event parents cannot be reached, the emergency contacts supplied by parents will be notified. If necessary we will call 911 or the poison control center just prior to calling the parents. If necessary, the injured or ill child will be transported to the hospital by ambulance at the parent's expense.

Per Ramsey County Licensing, we have a written fire evacuation plan and regular fire drills are practiced with the children on the first Wednesday of every month. Emergency numbers are posted at telephone locations, saved in cell phone contacts, and First Aid kits ready in the house, in our basement (to be used as a storm shelter), and in our adventure backpack.



## **Community and Political Involvement**

As the founder of DDS, I believe that childcare is an incredibly important undertaking, not to be taken lightly. My passion for providing a home away from home for you and your child is truly my life's work. It is because this work is so important that I aim to carry it out from a place grounded in values. This means that I have created our environment around sustainability and spend every dollar in a conscious way. You can count on your child's tuition going directly back into the community through co-ops, partnerships with like-minded organizations, and involvement in neighborhood groups.

This is my life's work, and as such, I will use our school as a model. I hope to do things that advocate for families and bring our community closer together. Serving uncompromisingly healthy food, passing along parenting books, advocating for education reform, marching in parades, knowing our neighbors, providing true professional development for assistants, hosting parent-child classes, having everyone over for barbecues, and facilitating real and meaningful conversations around child-rearing and family life -- these are all examples of ways our school will enrich our world and bring us, as parents and caregivers, into community with one another. I encourage parents to enter into partnership with our school as a way to know that your values are being matched, and invite you to further discussion with me about what this means for you and your family!

## **Staff**

At this time, DDS has no additional full-time staff outside of Claire. We do have a friend, Ava, who works here in the summer and visits us during the year. Ava is 13 and a real blessing for our school!

## **Parent Participation/ Communication**

As the founder of DDS and a caregiver for your child, open communication with parents and families is of utmost importance to me. In order for us to be successful communicators, I ask that all parents thinking of enrolling their child have a meeting with me where we can discuss this handbook and any other questions or concerns before enrolling. Ideally, this meeting would take place at a time when children are not present.

After your child has enrolled, I welcome you to visit us at any time during the day, although we might be out and about at any given time! I will always carry my cell phone with me during the day in case of emergencies, but in order to be completely attentive to the children, I prefer to not answer non-emergency texts or calls outside of naptime (typically 12:30-2:30). You are welcome to call with any questions or concerns, no matter how small, at that time! Any out-of-the-ordinary news about your child will be communicated to you during pickup either in writing or verbally. Because drop-off and pickup can be a hectic time for parents and a very stressful time for the children, I will make every attempt to relay information quickly; please do not take that to mean I am not interested in talking to you!

Sensitive issues shall be discussed in private outside of regular childcare hours either by telephone, email, or meeting. Please know that any issue you have, no matter how small, will be met with respect and professionalism.

## **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

Drug use is not allowed in my home. The legal consumption of alcohol is prohibited during our hours of operation, and illegal consumption is not allowed at any time.

## **Grievance Policy/Mandated Reporting**

Claire is a licensed child care provider through Ramsey County. If you have any issues, concerns, or questions about the program, please feel free to bring them up with Claire. If you feel uncomfortable speaking with Claire or feel that the welfare of your child or other children is in danger while in care, please contact Sean Vang, Ramsey County Family Child Care Licensor, at 651-341-2793 or [sean.vang@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:sean.vang@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)

As a child care provider, Claire is a mandated reporter. This means that any suspicion of maltreatment, abuse, or neglect is required to be (and will be) reported to Ramsey County licensing (651-431-6600) and, if necessary, to local law enforcement.

## Hours of Operation

The Daffodil Day School is open Monday through Friday from 7:45 am until 5:30 pm. Your specific day(s) of care will be outlined in your contract and rate agreement. We offer both full-time and part-time care; your child is welcome to attend 2-5 days a week. Rates are daily, not hourly, and remain the same regardless of how many hours per day your child is at school.

We require four weeks' notice for any change in enrollment. We will always try to accommodate any change in enrollment, but do reserve the right to end enrollment if the new schedule is not cohesive with the school.

While we love to care for your child, we ask that you please be prompt when picking up. Each morning and evening our school is prepped to provide your child with the best environment possible and late pickups cut into this time. We are unable to accommodate regular hours outside of 7:45-5:30, and there will be a base early-dropoff/late-pickup fee of \$10 with an additional \$1.00 for every minute.

## Holidays and vacation

DDS will close in observation of the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

If your child is enrolled on a day that falls on one of the holidays listed above, payment is due as usual for that day.

DDS will be closed from December 24th (Christmas Eve) through January 1<sup>st</sup> (New Year's Day). Payment will NOT be due during this time with the exception of the two official holidays (Christmas Day and New Year's Day).

Claire will take 20 vacation days to be used throughout the year. These are days when the school will be closed but payment will still be due. Parents will be given AT LEAST 8 weeks' notice for the dates we will be closed for provider vacation, and every attempt will be made to give additional notice. Any days closed due to provider illness do not count as vacation days.

Occasionally, substitute caregivers might be used for events like licensing classes, doctor's appointments, etc. Our current substitutes are Sara Cassidy (a previous assistant at DDS) and Claire's partner, Elizabeth, who sees the kids every morning and evening. As new substitutes are added, you will be notified.

## Enrollment Policies

The decision on when and where to enroll your child is a difficult one, and we aim to make it as easy as possible for parents and children alike! Before a child is enrolled, we ask that parents visit our school to see us in action. We also ask that parents read this handbook thoroughly, ask questions, and communicate with us about how and what they think of our school.

If you decide to enroll your child, there are several forms that parents must fill out, sign, and deliver to Claire prior to their first day. Caring for your child before these forms are complete is not possible. Many of these forms are required by the state of Minnesota and many of them help us get to know your child. These forms are provided for you at the back of this handbook. We will accept the original and provide you with copies if you wish.

The forms are as follows:

- Admission and Arrangements form
- Immunization record
- Insurance Notice
- USDA Food Program Enrollment
- Permission to Administer Medications form
- Emergency Medical Consent form
- Daffodil Day School Contract
- Family/child questionnaire

## **Trial Period/Termination Policies**

The first two weeks of enrollment are probationary for everyone. During this period parents may terminate the childcare agreement with 24 hours notice. Tuition for the full two weeks will still be due. After the two week probationary period, either party may terminate the agreement by giving four weeks' written notice.

DDS reserves the right to terminate a contract without notice in the event of (but not solely limited to):

- A parent fails to comply with the policies set forth in the policy handbook
- A parent is verbally abusive/threatening/disrespectful to the caregiver or other children
- A child's needs cannot be met
- Consistently late payments
- Consistently late pickups
- Delinquent tuition

We hope and expect that with open communication, clear expectations, and honesty from both parties we will be able to resolve all conflicts before this stage is reached.

## **Rates/Payment schedules**

Children 12 weeks-1 year:	\$70/day, \$350/week
Children 1-2 years:	\$65/day, \$375/week
Children 3-5 years:	\$60/day, \$300/week
Children 5 years and over:	\$50/day, \$250/week

Before/after-school care for school age children is available, and a price will be reached depending on each family's specific needs. Additionally, we are pleased to provide a 5% sibling discount for families with 2+ children enrolled in the school!

Once you have contracted childcare services from DDS, a space has been reserved for your child. Parents are required to pay the full fee whether or not the child is in attendance, including when our school is closed for holidays and provider vacation/sick time. Payment schedules will be worked out on a family-by-family basis. Parents may pay with cash, check, or direct deposit/automatic withdrawal. Late payments are a hardship on the school and the providers. Therefore, there will be a \$30.00 per incident late payment fee. Parents are responsible for all fees associated with a check returned as NSF (non-sufficient funds). In this event, the school may require future payments in cash. We also reserve the right to terminate care for your child if payment of tuition and/or fees is outstanding.

DDS will review rates on an annual basis. If a rate increase is deemed necessary, parents will be given AT LEAST 12 weeks' notice of any change in rates, and we will make every attempt to give parents more notice. Our rates reflect our desire and dedication to providing you and your child with the highest level of care. These rates are competitive for our area and our services provided, and are non-negotiable.

We will also provide each family with a detailed tax receipt at the end of each tax year. Receipts will be prepared in January each year or when services are terminated. Parents may request a statement of account at any time.

## **Resources/continued reading**

Home Away From Home: Lifeways Care of Children and Families by Mary O'Connell and Cynthia Aldinger

Life is the Curriculum by Cynthia Aldinger

Beyond the Rainbow Bridge by Barbara Patterson and Pamela Bradley

Seven Times the Sun by Shea Darian

The First Three Years of the Child by Karl Konig

The Incarnating Child by Joan Salter

No Bad Kids: Toddler Discipline Without Shame by Janet Lansbury

The Center for Inclusive Childcare podcast, "Inclusion Matters"

Janet Lansbury's podcast, "Unruffled"

The Lifeways North America website: <http://www.lifewaysnorthamerica.org/>

The Alliance for Childhood website: <http://www.allianceforchildhood.org/>

The Joyful Toddlers community and website: <http://joyfultoddlers.com/>