





1158 Harrison Blvd.  
Valparaiso, IN 46385  
Phone: 219-242-5389

E-mail:  
[Cottagedirector@valpo.us](mailto:Cottagedirector@valpo.us)

# Parent Information Packet

**Welcome to Discovery  
Cottage Preschool!**

## STAFF

Our Discovery Cottage Director, Brandy Campbell, has worked at the cottage since 2018 and holds an associate degree in early education. Each classroom has 2 teachers who have been hired based on their educational and professional accomplishments.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

We are excited that you have chosen to enroll your child in our preschool! We are a youth enrichment program through Valpo Parks. We host enrichment programs for children ages 2 - 5 years old. Our unique programs are designed to provide total hands-on and kid-centered learning experiences that allow them to use their own creativity and imagination! Through our differentiated curriculum, we encourage growth in the areas of physical, mental, emotional, and social learning.

## REGISTRATION

Registration for Busy Bee & Caterpillar classes must be done monthly. Class registration for one month does NOT give a secure spot for future classes. Please register by phone (219) 462-5144, in person at the Valpo Parks Office, or through the website [ValpoParks.org](http://ValpoParks.org) for next month's class as soon as possible to ensure a spot! 2026 Classes will open December 1, 2025.



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Kinder Ready and Little Sprouts require registration from September-May. Parents may pay upfront or automatic withdrawals will occur on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month prior to class (Sept 15-April 15). Any NSF fees will be applied to the Rec Desk account and must be paid before attending additional months.

Our preschool summer camp, "Summer Days" requires weekly registration.

## ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

**Arrival:** Parents may arrive no earlier than **5 minutes** before classes begins. The doors will be locked before this for safety reasons. Due to class schedules and staff limitations, there will be no supervision for children who are dropped off earlier than this time.

**Pick Up:** Parents will park and come inside to pick up their child at the end of class. Doors will be open 5 minutes before pick up time for safety reasons. **Please be on time.** Due to class schedules and staff limitations, supervision will not be available for children after class. If due to an emergency you are running late, please call immediately to notify the staff. During your first few weeks at the Cottage, parents or guardians may be asked to present their ID at pick up. This is to ensure the safety of your child and will not take too much of your time.

## LATE PICK-UP

If a child is picked up 5 or more minutes after class, a warning will be given. **If tardiness continues to occur, the account will incur a \$10 fee each time.** This fee will be added to the Rec Desk account and must be paid before signing up for additional months of care.

## SAFETY

To ensure the safety of our building, the doors will always be locked, other than 5 minutes before and after class starts. If you need to enter the building during classes, a doorbell is on the outside by the upstairs front door. A staff member will unlock the door for you whenever possible.

## CLOTHING

Children should arrive dressed for play and appropriate for the weather. Oftentimes our differentiated curriculum will include messy activities (they're kids!). We will provide a paint shirt when able, but please know accidents do happen. Please provide children with an extra set of clothes to keep in a backpack or bag they will bring every day. **Nothing may be kept at the Cottage due to lack of storage space.** Weather appropriate clothing and outdoor gear is necessary too; we will be going outside if



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the weather is cooperative. **We will not go outside if temperature is warmer than 90 degrees F or colder than 32 degrees F.**

## SNACK / BIRTHDAYS

Students may be served a special treat or food as part of the lesson plan (i.e—apple tasting in our Apple Study) Students can also bring a **store-bought, nut-free** treat for his/her birthday, if you choose! Please notify your child's teacher a couple days before bringing in a Birthday treat just for planning purposes. Due to occasional snacks, it is vital to communicate any food allergies to all staff at the Cottage.

Kinder Ready will have snack time. Parents are encouraged to send in a healthy snack and water daily with their child. Please remember that we are a NUT-FREE facility. Due to severe allergies we have the right to not serve an item if it is in violation. Discovery Cottage will provide a snack to those who do not have a snack.

## BATHROOM PROCEDURES

All Kinder Ready and Summer Days campers are required to be potty trained.

For Little Sprouts, Caterpillars & Busy Bees, we ask that the child be dressed in “user friendly” clothing, as much as possible if they are still potty training. The best items are shorts and pants with elastic waists, or dresses. Try to avoid really tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers, and overalls. These are difficult for children to remove in a “hurry”.

Staff is limited to the amount of assistance they can give a child in the restroom and will provide privacy and dignity to each child.

## CLOSING / DELAYS

Discovery Cottage follows Valparaiso Community Schools’ closure decisions for weather. If Valpo Schools issues a delay or close for weather, Discovery Cottage will also be closed.

If you suspect schools will be closed, you may visit [www.valpo.k12.in.us](http://www.valpo.k12.in.us) or tune into the radio station 105.5 FM for a list of closings. Closings will also be posted on the Valpo Parks webpage, as well as an e-mail sent to the primary email address.



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## ILLNESS GUIDELINES

Promoting good health and safety is a priority at Discovery Cottage. To prevent the spread of childhood diseases and illness, please do not bring your child that is ill to class. A child must be symptom free (and on antibiotics, if applicable) for **24 hours before returning** to Discovery Cottage. We will send any child home immediately who exhibits any of the following:

1. Fever of 100 degrees or higher (Must be fever-free for 24 hours to return)
2. Vomiting
3. Eye discharge
4. Lice or nits
5. Communicable Disease: chicken pox, measles, etc.
6. Severe coughing (gagging and throwing up)

## MEDICATION

We do not give medication to children. If your child needs to be medicated in order to comfortably participate in class activities, then it is quite possible he/she is too sick to attend for the day. There may be exceptions for doctor prescribed medications, but that will be decided on an individual basis.

## PHOTOS / VIDEOS

We love capturing your child's learning experiences! Pictures and videos taken are used as materials for marketing and advertising for Discovery Cottage and Valpo Parks.

A written consent form is provided for parents to decide if permission is given to include your child in these photos/ videos.

## DISCIPLINE

Kids will be kids, and we understand that learning and growing can sometimes involve challenges. However, rules and guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety and well-being of all students and staff. If physical aggression or defiant behavior becomes a recurring issue, additional steps may be needed—such as a parent/teacher conference or, in some cases, withdrawal from class.

Our goal is always to support your child's success, and we will work closely with you to address concerns as they arise. Whenever possible, we will connect you with appropriate resources and services to help your student grow and thrive for as long as we are able to provide a safe and positive environment for everyone.



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## PARENT / TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Assessments for Kinder Ready students will be given three times a year (October, February, and April (if needed) and all assessments will be sent home. Staff is available for communication before and after class (although sometimes limited due to class schedules). Please feel free to e-mail any questions or concerns at any time at [cottagedirector@valpo.us](mailto:cottagedirector@valpo.us).

*Thank you for choosing Discovery Cottage as a home for both your child and family. We take our relationships with our families very seriously, and aim for a highly pleasant, welcoming, nurturing, and educational experience here at the Cottage. We look forward to having a wonderful school year with you!*