

Rev April 21, 2025

Discovery Club After School
Family Handbook
2025-2026



Welcome families to JCC Greater Boston's Discovery Club After School! We are so excited to have your children with us for the 2025-2026 school year. In this family handbook, you will find information that is important for you and your children to better understand our mission and programs.

Discovery Club After School at JCC Greater Boston strives to provide an atmosphere where children will grow, learn and have fun. The staff always welcomes suggestions and ideas that will help us to make your child's time at Discovery Club beneficial and rewarding. We encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with us at any time.

If you have any questions about the content of this handbook, please feel free to contact me at 617-558-6483 or hbaranick@jccgb.org I look forward to the time that we will be spending together.

Heather Baranick
Program Director
Discovery Club After School

DISCOVERY CLUB CONTACT INFORMATION

JCC Greater Boston's Discovery Club After School is located at the Leventhal-Sidman JCC, 333 Nahanton Street, Newton, MA 02459.

To report an absence, a change of drop off or pickup information, or a pickup delay, please call the Program Director with as much notice as possible at 617-558-6483 and email discoveryclub@jccgb.org.

DISCOVERY CLUB AFTER SCHOOL

Discovery Club is an active and engaging after school program for children in grades K-5. This vibrant, welcoming community of students and educators is filled with enrichment programming, Jewish celebrations and values, learning and fun!

The program will maintain School Age licensure by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

Our outstanding staff is comprised of highly qualified childcare providers, well-versed in working with school-age children. Background checks are performed on all staff members and vendors employed by JCC Greater Boston.

TUITION

Discovery Club tuition for the 2025-2026 school year is divided into 10 equal monthly payments.

	Tuition/month	Transportation/month (optional)
2 days	\$443	\$162
3 days	\$665	\$231 (5% savings!)
4 days	\$886	\$2293 (10% savings!)
5 days	\$1088 (\$200 savings!)	\$345 (15% savings!)
Early Release Wednesdays Newton	\$1,332/year	
Early Release Wednesdays Needham	\$540/year	
Additional Early Release Days (Newton)	\$36/day	

One year of JCC Greater Boston Family Membership - a \$2000 value - is included when you sign up for three or more days of Discovery Club! From September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026, enjoy all the benefits of Family Membership including the Fitness Center, Basketball and Tennis Courts, Indoor Track, Indoor Pool, group fitness classes, JCare and JKids, and exclusive pricing on Family & Children's Programming, Birthday Parties, JCC Camp Programs, and the Outdoor Pool.

A \$250 non-refundable deposit will be required to hold your spot.

Discovery Club operates Monday-Friday from 3-6pm, September 2, 2025 - June 12, 2026. The program opens at 12:30pm on Early Release days which are available as an optional add-on for \$36 per day.

Payment is due in advance of services. The amount due does not change when the program is closed due to holidays, snow days, or JCC closures. Discovery Club requires 30 days written notice in order to remove days or withdraw from the program and changes will be made the last day of the month following the 30 days. Any request to decrease the number of scheduled days in your child's after-school program after August 1st, will be subject to a \$36 change fee per request. This policy helps ensure consistent staffing and program planning. Please plan your child's schedule carefully and communicate any changes in writing to the program director. Payments already received and future payments owed will be adjusted accordingly to reflect participation in the program to date. You are welcome to add days to your schedule at any time provided there is availability.

If a child is absent due to illness, travel or religious observance, their tuition for that day will not be refunded. Credits or refunds are not given for sick days, vacations, extended leave, unforeseen emergencies, weather closures, or holidays and staff days shown on the calendar. Please consult the school calendar carefully. In addition, there is no substitution of days if your child is absent for any reason on a scheduled day in the week. Tuition payments are expected whether or not your child attends the program.

Tuition includes certain optional lessons like weekly swim, as well as daily enrichment kids' choice activities and programs like science, chess, art, sports, music and much more. Other options like Karishim Swim Club are available for additional fees.

The Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) provides modest financial assistance to families who meet Massachusetts median income guidelines. For Discovery Club, the actual number of awards and the total amount given varies based on available funds, overall enrollment and the level of participant need. Families interested in applying for financial assistance can email discoveryclub@jccgb.org to request an application or if you have any questions.

**Discounts are per year and available for siblings, current ELC families, staff & JCC Members. Discounts cannot be combined. Please note that discounts only apply to base tuition and do not encompass add-ons such as early release days, transportation, and pizza.*

SCHEDULE OF OPERATION

On regular school days, Discovery Club operates from 3-6pm. On Early Release days, Discovery Club operates from 12:30-6pm. Pickup is no later than 6pm.

Snow Days and Delayed Openings

The JCC makes every effort to keep the facility open during inclement weather. However, if the JCC needs to close due to weather or power outage, we will notify families of program closure by email and text message.

Discovery Club follows the Newton Public Schools for weather-related closures. If Newton Public Schools are not in session due to the weather, Discovery Club will also be closed that day. If there is an early release due to inclement weather, we will not have Discovery Club on that day.

If you have any questions about our operating schedule on a day when school has been cancelled or delayed, please email discoveryclub@jccgb.org.

Full Calendar: [Discovery Club 2025-2026 Calendar](#)

Arrival

Transportation will be provided by trusted local bussing companies from select elementary schools in Newton and Needham based on availability and interest. If you chose parent drop off and arrive after 3:15 PM, or if DC staff are no longer present outside, it is your responsibility to escort your child to the 5th floor and ensure they are safely signed in. Please do not leave your child unattended in the lobby.

Pickup is no later than 6pm each day. If you pick up your child after 6PM more than three times during the 2025-26 school year, your family can be subject to termination from the program without notice. Please pick up your child at the Discovery Club checkout points. It is important that you check in with a Discovery Club staff member and sign out before taking your child home. If a parent is not picking your child up, please inform the Director by noon of that day via phone or email as to whom will be picking up your child.

Attendance Procedures

The safety of each child is paramount to the staff of the Discovery Club. If a child will not be attending the program as scheduled, it is **essential** that the child's parents call us at 617-558-6483 and email discoveryclub@jccgb.org by 10am to report the child's absence from the program. **Discovery Club relies on you for absence information.**

The staff is unable to remain on site after 6pm for activity updates or consultations about children. We will be happy to discuss special requests or exchanges of detailed information over the telephone or at a meeting scheduled during or before program hours.

PROGRAMMING

Discovery Club is committed to delivering a child-centered experience filled with special events, enrichment programming, swimming and more. Throughout the school year, the children will be offered a variety of activities. Examples of activities offered include art, robotics, sports, music, dance, science and much more!

Sample Daily Schedule*

Time	Activity
3-4pm (Open at 12:30 on Early Release Days)	• Arrivals • Healthy snacks with fresh fruit/vegetables • Jewish value community time • Indoor/outdoor free play
4-5pm	• Expert-led enrichment programs and activities in arts, sciences, sports, swim, etc.
5-5:45pm	• Small group activities • Special projects
5:45-6pm	• Closing Circle • PJ Library Story Time • Departures

*Schedule subject to change to reflect the children's and the program's needs.

Food Policy

Healthy nut-free, kosher-style snacks will be provided on all program days.

Children attending on Early Release Wednesdays should plan to bring their own nut-free lunch or sign up for kosher pizza service that we provide on Wednesdays. Children who attend on Newton extra early release days on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays should bring their own nut-free lunch, as the kosher pizza program is not offered on Tue/Thu early release days. We will eat lunch together when the children arrive.

Packed Lunches: All snacks and lunches brought into the program must be "nut-free". We do not check the contents of children's lunches for adherence to kashrut.

We also strongly encourage children to bring water bottles **labeled with their name**. We have water filling stations at the JCC. The JCC has several vending machines on site, but it is our policy that Discovery Club children are not allowed to purchase items from the machines during their time with our program.

Aquatics Program

As part of the Discovery Club After school program, children who are interested will be assigned a group swim lesson once per week based on their skill level. Families are responsible for sending their children to the program with towels, swimsuits, goggles and caps. In the event that a child misses four or more consecutive lessons, we will initiate a discussion

with the family to assess the child's ongoing participation in swimming. We adhere to a policy of respecting children's comfort levels and do not compel them to engage in activities they are resistant to participating in.

Home Toys

We kindly ask that children refrain from bringing personal toys from home, such as Pokémon Cards and figurines, to the after-school program. We offer a wide array of engaging activities and toys for them to enjoy during their time here. Personal toys are best kept in their backpacks or safely at home, allowing them to fully immerse themselves in the diverse range of activities we provide. Exceptions can be made for comfort items.

Lost and Found

At our after-school program, we encourage children to take responsibility for their belongings. They are expected to keep track of their clothing and any personal items brought from home or school.

In the event that an item goes missing, we provide a designated lost and found bin within the program space. Both children and parents are welcome to search through this bin if they are missing an item. We aim to reunite lost items with their owners whenever possible.

Outdoor Play

Children who attend Discovery Club can expect to be outside as much as possible. Outdoor play will be cancelled due to heavy precipitation, icy ground conditions, temperatures below 20 degrees, or excessive wind or heat. Please be sure your child is dressed in and brings with them seasonally appropriate attire.

Insect Safety

When a child is stung or bitten by an insect, staff will monitor changes carefully. The family will be contacted if an allergic reaction occurs.

When the children will be exploring the trails of Nahanton Park abutting the Leventhal-Sidman JCC property in the woods or outdoors when public health authorities recommend the use of insect repellents, specific guidelines will be followed. The children will be encouraged to wear long sleeve shirts and long pants on these days. In addition, families can provide insect repellent and students will self-apply repellent. Insect repellent will be stored in the child's backpack.

Sun Safety

Families can provide sunscreen and students will self-apply if they have indicated that on the enrollment permission forms. Sunscreen will be stored in the child's backpack.

Clothing Requirements

The children can expect to play outside year-round. Warm clothing, hats, gloves, and waterproof boots are necessary for the winter months. Children without boots or snow pants will be asked to stay on shoveled areas.

Abuse and Neglect Policy

The staff of Discovery Club are mandated reporters and as such, are required by Massachusetts General Law ch.119, S.51A to report all suspected instances of abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The children and staff of Discovery Club are asked to treat each other with respect, tolerance, kindness, and consideration. The rules and behavior expectations utilized by Discovery Club will be explained to the children clearly and reinforced in a consistent manner.

Children will be given reminders and redirection in order to encourage positive behavior. Staff members will empower children to make positive choices and to practice empathy in group settings. The success of behavior management rests on building positive relationships between children and staff. Staff then get on the children's level and communicate in a way that works best for them to help them process and resolve the problem. After the issue has been resolved and appropriate consequences or steps have been taken (ie: apology, speaking to a friend, taking a cool off period from a game, making a different choice, etc.), the child resumes activity within the group and continues their day.

Under no circumstances will a child be subjected to neglect, physical punishment, verbal abuse, or denial of restroom facilities. Parents will be notified if a child exhibits unusual emotional or physical behavior that threatens the wellbeing of the child or others in Discovery Club.

If a child has specific behavior issues, every effort will be made to implement a behavior management program consistent with efforts being made at the child's home and school. If a child's behavior indicates that the program is not able to meet his or her needs, the Program Director will contact the child's parents to arrange a meeting. A parent or staff member may also request a meeting. With the parent's permission, school staff, and other professionals providing services to the child may be asked to attend the meeting.

Within ten days of the meeting, in keeping with the conclusions of the meeting, an action plan will be developed that establishes reasonable, attainable objectives for the child. A copy of the plan will be given to the staff and to the child's parents. A log will be kept of the child's progress.

If the Director feels that Discovery Club cannot accommodate the needs of the child, or if the objectives established for the child are not met, Discovery Club reserves the right to terminate the child's participation in the program with two weeks' notice. Payments already received and future payments owed will be adjusted accordingly to reflect the amount owed for participation in the program to date.

Any child who does not accept the physical boundaries of the program, or exhibits behavior that threatens their wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is subject to dismissal without notice. Any inappropriate behavior by a parent, including verbal abuse of a child or staff member, or confrontations with staff members in the presence of a child, is grounds for termination of the family's participation in the Discovery Club without notice.

CHILDREN WITH UNIQUE NEEDS

Our program is currently designed for children who can access the general education classroom with limited additional support, as it is a high-energy experience with approximately five transitions each day. Discovery Club will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations to the best of our ability to welcome or continue to serve any child with a disability. Reasonable accommodations are determined at the discretion of the program director. In determining whether accommodations are reasonable and necessary, Discovery Club, with parental consent and as appropriate, will request information about the child from the Local Education Agency (LEA), Early Intervention Program or other health or service providers. If Discovery Club determines that we cannot meet your child's needs, you will be refunded your tuition deposit.

HEALTH POLICIES

All children enrolled in Discovery Club must satisfy the minimum immunization and routine physical examination requirements in accordance with the Massachusetts Public Health requirements. Documentation of the above must be on file at the child's elementary school as indicated on your child's permission forms.

Discovery Club's exclusion and reporting policies for communicable diseases are in conformance with the guidelines set by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease or condition that is reportable to the Department of Health, parents will be notified via email.

If your child becomes ill while attending the program, a parent or emergency contact person will be notified. A child who is not feeling well should be picked up within one hour of notification. The Discovery Club staff will keep the child comfortable until a parent or caregiver arrives.

Sick Policy: Children who attend Discovery Club should be well enough to follow the normal routine of the program. Children who have a contagious condition, eye ailment, head lice, rash, fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, may not attend the Discovery Club and must be fully recovered, and symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to the program. Children who did not attend school or are sent home from school due to illness cannot attend Discovery Club.

Please report any changes of emergency contact information, employment, telephone numbers, or addresses to the Program Director as soon as they become available. Although this information will be kept confidential, it will be shared with appropriate staff members to facilitate communication with parents or guardians in emergency situations.

Accidents or Acute Illness

In the event of an accident or acute illness, every effort will be made to notify the child's parents and physician prior to treatment. If a situation requires immediate attention, 911 will be called and the child will be transported to the hospital by ambulance.

Medication Policy

Discovery Club staff will dispense prescription and non-prescription medication only when the written permission of the child's doctor and/or parent or guardian is on file at Discovery Club. Any child with an allergy must have an IHCP form on file and requisite medication at Discovery Club to attend the program. All medication administered by the staff of the Discovery Club must be current and in a pharmacy-labeled container. An adult must bring the medication prior to or on the first day of the program, or when the child returns to a program after the medication has been prescribed. Children are not allowed to transport medication into the program. Expired medications will be returned to the families. A medication request form is included in the Discovery Club registration packet. Children cannot take the first dose of new prescription medication at Discovery club.

COMMUNICATION

Please feel free to direct questions or concerns related to any facet of Discovery Club to the Director at any time.

Any questions regarding tuition, policies, staffing, activities, or a child's participation in the program may be directed to the Program Director, Heather Baranick, at 617-558-6483 or discoveryclub@jccgb.org.

Appendix A: JCC Greater Boston Participant Code of Conduct

Creating a code of conduct is essential for fostering a positive and inclusive environment for program participants.

Purpose

JCC Greater Boston is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all participants and staff. This Code of Conduct outlines the expectations and behavior we uphold to ensure a positive experience and environment for everyone involved.

Our Values

- **Belonging:** We welcome and treat everyone with dignity, kindness, and respect.
- **Joyfulness:** We celebrate and rejoice in our shared experiences and one another.
- **Collaboration:** We achieve exceptional results by working together.
- **Transformation:** We listen, embrace change, lead by example, and take inspired action.

Expected Behavior

Participants are expected to:

- **Be Inclusive:** Actively include and involve others. Be open to different perspectives and experiences.
- **Respect Others:** Treat everyone with dignity and respect. Do not engage in threatening, offensive, discriminatory, or harassing behavior.
- **Collaborate:** Encourage collaboration and teamwork. Share knowledge and support others in their learning journey.
- **Be Mindful of Language:** Use inclusive language and be mindful of how your words may impact others. Avoid offensive language, slurs, and inappropriate jokes.
- **Maintain Confidentiality:** Respect the privacy and confidentiality of others. Do not share sensitive information without consent.
- **Promote Safety:** Help support the safety and security of our participants and staff. This includes adhering to safety and security policies and promoting the psychological safety of others.
- **See Something, Say Something:** If you see concerning behavior or something feels unsafe, please report it to a JCC staff member.

Unacceptable Behavior

The following behaviors are not acceptable and will not be tolerated:

- **Harassment:** Any form of harassment, including verbal, physical, or visual harassment.
- **Discrimination:** Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, ability, gender identity, or any other protected characteristic.
- **Bullying:** Any behavior that intimidates, belittles, or creates a hostile environment.
- **Aggression:** Any behavior intended to threaten, demean, or cause fear.
- **Disruptive Behavior:** behavior that negatively impacts or disrupts activities, events, or the overall environment.
- **Violations of the Law:** Engaging in any illegal activities.

Reporting Violations

If you witness or experience a violation of this Code of Conduct, please report it to a JCC staff member as soon as possible. You may also alert a member of our security staff or call 617-558-6555 to report an incident. In an emergency, please call 911.

If a staff member is involved, you may report directly to Human Resources at HRinquiries@iccgb.org.

All reports will be treated with confidentiality and will be thoroughly investigated.

Consequences of Violations

Violations of this Code of Conduct may result in consequences, including warnings, suspension, or expulsion from the program or the JCC, depending on the severity of the behavior.

All participants and visitors to the JCC must adhere to this code. The JCC will follow its standard incident review process in all cases involving unacceptable behavior.

Acknowledgment

By participating in a JCC program or activity, you agree to abide by this Code of Conduct. We reserve the right to update and modify the code to better serve the community.