



2023-2024

Parent Handbook

GRACE PRESCHOOL

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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Grace Fellowship Church Preschool Ministry is to teach young children to know and love God and His Son Jesus Christ. In doing so, the ministry will be an extension of Grace Fellowship Church's vision, "to be a house of prayer for all nations."

This will be accomplished through:

1. Providing an age and developmentally appropriate Christian curriculum.
2. Teaching each child to pray for himself/herself and for others.
3. Leading each child to understand that he/she is uniquely created by God for His glory.
4. Teaching each child to respect teachers, peers and self with love and kindness.
5. Students being loved, cared for, and taught by teachers with a love for Jesus Christ.

Grace Preschool is licensed by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services. Our children's program is a non-profit extension of Grace Fellowship Church. The program is open to children of all creeds, races, and ethnic groups who qualify through the admission/registration process. Grace Preschool serves children who are eighteen months through five years of age.

In our classes, emphasis is placed on developing each child's self-esteem and creative potential. This is achieved through well-equipped learning centers, outdoor play, weekly chapel, curriculum objectives and a special music and movement class. We have a strong commitment toward our preschool "family" by offering them a solid educational foundation in the context of Christian beliefs and teachings.

A Board of Directors govern Grace Preschool. This board meets quarterly to discuss the business of the preschool. The board is made up of Grace Fellowship Church members.

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Grace Preschool follows the Katy ISD calendar except for starting and ending dates. If changes should occur, you will have adequate notice. We will follow the KISD guidelines for inclement weather. If KISD closes, Grace Preschool will be closed. The Preschool will also close in emergencies that may render the preschool unsafe or unhealthy, including sewer backups, flood, fire or storm damage, or the lack of running water.

School hours are 9-2:30 pm. School doors will open at 8:50 am. Please respect this, as early arrivals distract teachers from lesson preparations and group prayer time. The main doors will be locked at 9:10 am. You may gain access to the building by "buzzing" the doorbell located to the right of the front door. Please refer to the "Arrival and Dismissal" section for further information.

LATE FEE – A parent picking up a child after 2:40 pm will be assessed the following late fee – One minute through five minutes is a flat \$5.00. Each additional minute is \$1.00 per minute. Please refer to the "Tuition and Fees" section for further information.

ABSENCES

Please notify the school by 9:30 am if your child will be absent and the reason for the absence. Child Care Licensing requires a record to be kept of student attendance and absences.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Grace Preschool is licensed by the State of Texas. **Each student must have a file containing the following information BEFORE he/she will be allowed to attend.** The student's file is required to be updated throughout the course of the school year as needed.

- Completed application and registration fee.
- Health Requirements (State of Texas) with a doctor's signature
- Enrollment/Emergency Information and Agreement
- Release and Hold Harmless Agreement
- Directory Permission Form
- "Introduce Us to Your Child"
- Hearing/Vision Screening for 4 and 5-year old's (See Hearing and Vision Screening)

General registration is held in January and February of each year. Returning students are registered first, followed by siblings new to the program, legacy families, the church congregation, and then the general public. Detailed information on the enrollment process is given at the time of registration. Any changes to the process will be given in writing prior to registration.

Grace Preschool maintains a wait list throughout the school year. As a student leaves the program, the first person on the wait list is contacted. All classes have a limited number of students.

Grace Fellowship Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. Enrollment of students requiring special supervision will come under review of the Preschool Director and the Preschool Board of Directors.

Classroom Placement of Multiple Birth Siblings

Grace Preschool does not require that multiples be placed in different classrooms, but we do recommend it beginning at age four. Based upon the experience of Grace Preschool, it has been found that each individual child's personalities, abilities, learning styles and independence become better defined when allowed to learn and grow apart from their sibling. It also gives more opportunity to access any needs that each individual child may have when they can be evaluated individually, apart from their sibling. While multiples may have similarities, Grace Preschool feels it is important to realize that multiples are unique individuals. They may have different learning styles, and differences in ability.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL

- Doors will open, and morning carpool drop-off begins at 8:50a.m. and if over at 9:10a.m. Classes begin at 9:00a.m. Please be on time to maximize your child's learning opportunities. If you have multiple ages of children to drop off, please use the specified drop off location for the youngest child.

Student Entry

- The front carpool door and back carpool door will be unlocked from 8:50a.m. – 9:10a.m. for carpool students only.
- **Parents may not enter through the carpool doors from 8:50a.m.-9:10a.m.**
- If you choose to walk your child to their classroom, use the parking lots on the southwest and southeast corners of the campus (Student Ministry Building front and back lot parking).
- The doors on the south side of the Preschool Building (playground entrance) will be unlocked from 8:50a.m.-9:10a.m. for arrival.
- Do NOT Park in front of the Preschool Building during arrival. The preschool front entrance (north side of Preschool Building facing apartments) is used for Toddlers' and 2s' carpool in the morning.

Toddler's (18–23-month-old class) Daily Arrival

- **All Toddlers will be dropped off on the Toddler/2's playground between 8:50a.m.-9:10a.m.**
- In case of rain, parents will walk their Toddler to the classroom.
- Toddlers will be able to drop off in the front carpool line with the two-year-olds in January.

2's Daily Arrival Drop Off

- Arrival drop-off entrance is on the north side of the Preschool Building facing apartments. Once in arrival/drop-off lane, drive forward as far as possible and wait for your child to be unloaded.
- Please keep your vehicle door closed and your child seated in the vehicle until a staff member opens the door. **Do not let your child stand in the sun/moon roof or hang out the window of the vehicle while in the carpool line. STAY IN YOUR CAR.**
- A staff member will assist your child from the car and escort him/her to their classroom.
- At 9:10a.m. carpool ends, and staff members return to the classrooms.

3, 4 and 5-Year Olds Daily Arrival Drop Off

- Arrival drop-off entrance is on the east side of the Kids Ministry Building entrance. Once in arrival/drop-off lane, drive forward as far as possible and wait for your child to be unloaded.
- Please keep your vehicle door closed and your child seated in the vehicle until a staff member opens the door. **Do not let your child stand in the sun/moon roof or hang out the window of the vehicle while in the carpool line. STAY IN YOUR CAR.**
- A staff member will assist your child from the car and escort him/her to their classroom.
- At 9:10a.m. carpool ends, and staff members return to the classrooms.

Late Student Drop Off – After 9:10a.m.

- Parents dropping off after 9:10a.m. must enter through the front preschool door located across from the apartment complex entrance. **Parents may not enter using the back door between the playgrounds after 9:10a.m.**
- Parents should park in a parking spot in front of the preschool and walk their child to the door. **No one may park under the covered drive because it is a fire lane.**
- An office staff member will answer the door and walk the student to class.
- If a parent wants to walk their child to class, they must sign in/out at the Preschool Office

DISMISSAL

Doors on the south side of the Preschool Building (playground entrance) will unlock at 2:15p.m.

Student Pick Up

- **ALL PARENTS** must park and walk into the building to pick up their child from their classroom.
- Students will only be released to an adult, parent, or guardian, not a sibling.
- If another person picks up your child, a written note from you is required. Students will only be released to an adult designated by the parent/guardian after verification of a picture ID by the preschool office.

Dismissal Parking and Building Entrance

- Use the parking lot on the southwest and southeast corners of the campus (Student Ministry Center, front, and back lot parking) or the parking spots in the front preschool entrance.
- **No one may park under the covered drive because it is a fire lane.**
- The doors on the south side of the Preschool Building (playground entrance) and the Front Preschool Entrance will be unlocked at 2:15p.m. for afternoon pick up.

Early Student Pick Up – Before 2:15p.m.

- Parents may park in a special needs parking spot in front of the Preschool. **No one may park under the covered drive because it is a fire lane.**
- An office staff member will answer the door.
- Parents must sign out their child in the Preschool Office.
- An office staff member will get the student from their class.
- **All visitors entering the building after 9:10a.m. or before 2:15p.m. must sign in/out at the Preschool Office before entering and leaving the building.**

**Any special needs or circumstances must be approved by the Preschool office.*

***To reduce theft opportunities and keep everyone safe please do the following when parking your car:*

1. *Keep valuable items out of sight.*
2. *Always lock your car.*
3. *Never leave children in the car.*

****These procedures may change during a pandemic due to emergency rules set in place by Texas state licensing.*

TUITION AND FEES

Registration: A non-refundable registration fee is required prior to enrollment. This annual fee reserves a place in Grace Preschool for your child. The registration fee provides for classroom supplies.

Tuition: Tuition is based on the number of school days per year and is payable in nine monthly payments. Monthly tuition can be paid monthly, quarterly, annually, or in whatever way is most convenient for you. There is not a discount if paid quarterly or annually. The first tuition payment is due, in full, by August 1. This first payment is prepayment for May. (No tuition will be due in May.) The remaining eight payments (September through April) are due on the first of each month. Any payments made after the 5th day of the month are subject to a \$10.00 per day, late fee. There will be a \$15.00 penalty for any returned payments.

Our preferred method of payment is through Tuition Express at tuitionexpress.com. We offer the following

Tuition Express payments options:

- Credit/Debit Card Transactions ***
- Point of Sale Credit Card Transactions ***
- Automated ACH Transactions-Form available in the Preschool Office ****

*Credit Card and Debit Card Transactions will incur a 3.5% convenience fee per transaction

**Checking and Savings account transactions are free

We accept checks made payable to **Grace Preschool**. There will be a \$15.00 penalty for any returned checks. Grace Preschool cannot accept auto pay or auto bill pay through your bank. If you choose to pay by check it must be brought to the Grace Preschool Office. **Do not** send tuition with your child or leave it with your child's Teacher.

No credit or refund on tuition is given for scheduled school holidays, inclement weather days, emergency school closures, scheduled school conferences, vacation, pandemics, or sick days. Any changes to policy are case by case and decided by the Grace Preschool Board.

Late Pick-up Fee: Please make every attempt to pick up your child by 2:40 pm. There is a late fee if your child is left after that time. Please phone (281) 398-3412 if you know you have a situation that will require extra care of your child. Students become upset and confused when a parent is late picking them up. A parent picking up a child after 2:40 pm will be assessed a late fee of \$5.00 for one minute through five minutes past 2:40 pm. Each additional minute is \$1.00 per minute.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Additional policies and procedures may be required in case of a pandemic.*

Dress Code

Please send your child dressed to "play!" All clothing and shoes should be comfortable and appropriate for floor activities, sand/water table experiences, creative painting, outdoor play, and large motor skills. Unless the temperature (below 20°) and weather does not permit, students will spend time outside every day and should be properly dressed. Please discuss with the preschool director any concerns you have about your child participating in outdoor activities such as jumping, climbing, or running. Please send a complete extra outfit (including socks and shoes) for your child completely labeled in case of accidents. Please provide plenty of diapers if your child is not toilet trained. Only disposable diapers can be used.

Special Care Needs

Per state licensing requirements, when a child has special care needs, with accommodations recommended by a health-care professional or a qualified professional affiliated with the local school district or early childhood intervention program, Grace Preschool will utilize adaptive equipment that has been provided by the parent, for the child's use at the center. Grace Preschool will not be responsible for the purchase or maintenance of adaptive equipment recommended for the child. Grace preschool will seek to ensure that planned activities integrate children with and without special care needs. As much as possible, we will ensure that caregivers adapt equipment, procedures, and vary methods as necessary to ensure that we care for a child with special care needs in a natural environment. Grace Preschool will make information regarding early intervention services offered in the community available to parents. Our center will cooperate with qualified service

providers for children who receive early intervention services or special education services so they may receive service at our center, with parental request and approval.

Health/Illness

Do not bring your child if he/she has had a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the last 24 hours, even though the symptoms may have dissipated by the morning. Additionally, do not send your child to school if you have medicated them to bring down a fever. Students are not considered to be fever free for 24 hours until they have been without fever for 24 hours and not taking fever reducing medications.

If a student develops any of the following symptoms during the day, we will contact you and expect you to pick your child up as soon as possible:

- Fever - an infrared temporal (forehead) temperature above 100 degrees.
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Contagious rash
- Thick, colored discharge from the nose (unless you have a physician's note)
- Behavioral changes or other symptoms of illness

Any signs of childhood contagious diseases such as COVID 19, hepatitis, measles, mumps, whooping cough, head lice or chicken pox must be reported immediately to the director. In addition, any condition or problem (medical, physical, or emotional) observed by the staff which may affect the future health or learning ability of the student will be brought to the parent's attention.

The student's teacher will conduct a visual and/or physical assessment of a student to identify potential concerns about a student's health, including signs or symptoms of illness and injury in response to changes in the student's behavior since the last date of attendance.

Vaccination Schedule

- Birth: Hepatitis B (HepB)
- 2 Months: HepB; Polio (IPV); Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTP)
Haemophilus B (Hib); Pneumococcal (PCV); Rotavirus (RV)
- 4 Months: IPV; DTP; Hib; PCV; RV
- 6 Months: HepB; IPV; DTP; Hib; PCV; RV
- 12-15 Months: DTP; Hib; Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR); Varicella; PCV
- 24 Months: Hepatitis A Begin Series
- 4-6 Years: IPV; DTP; MMR; Varicella
- TB Test: Recommended, but not required

Each student admitted to Grace Preschool must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services (as per the schedule above). All immunizations required must be completed by the date of admission. You can find more information on immunizations at dshs.state.tx.us/immunize.

Grace Preschool accepts the Exemption from Immunizations for Reasons of Conscience Affidavit from the State of Texas for incoming students. This must be turned in with the enrollment packet before a child is allowed to attend school.

*Grace Preschool does not require staff members to receive any adult immunizations.

Hearing and Vision Screening

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services requires documentation of hearing and vision screening for all students in the four-year-old and transition classes. A registered physician or a licensed screener must do this screening each year. The results must be completed and on file with Grace Preschool.

Medications

Grace Preschool will not administer medication. If your child is on a prescription medication that he/she must have during the day, parents are invited to come to school and administer that medication. Please try to schedule your child's medicine around school hours. Make sure your child's teacher and the director are aware of specific cases such as diabetes, asthma, allergic reaction, etc. Document any information you feel is necessary.

Grace Preschool will not apply insect repellent and/or sunscreen.

First Aid and Emergencies

Your child's teacher or director will treat simple cuts, bumps, or bruises. A fully stocked first-aid kit is available in the preschool office. In case of any accident, the staff member who witnessed or handled the situation will complete an Accident/Incident form. That teacher, a director, and a parent must sign this.

If a more serious injury occurs, we will immediately phone parents for consultation. We may require the parents to come to the school to evaluate the injury.

In the event of an injury requiring professional attention, if possible, we will contact parents first but if the injury is an emergency, 911 will be called first and parents will be notified second. Students will be transported by the preschool, church staff or, if necessary, by ambulance to the nearest medical center/hospital. Child Care Licensing will be notified if injury to a child at the facility requires treatment by a health-care professional.

Head Lice

Head Lice are not a public threat, they do not carry communicable disease. The Texas Department of State Health Services does not track cases of head lice in schools. Grace Preschool recognizes that an active head lice infestation may create a difficult learning environment for the affected student(s) and as a result, will follow the below policy to identify and eliminate live head lice.

Head checks are made whenever symptoms are noted to be present. Parents are notified immediately if their child has evidence of live head lice. Parents are encouraged to promptly pick up their child and treat the condition. If the parent cannot come to pick-up their child, the phone number of a relative, neighbor, or friend who must be on file in the preschool office will be contacted. Parents should contact their medical provider for methods of treatment. Students may return to preschool 24 hours after treatment if no evidence of lice is found.

When the child returns to preschool they must be seen in the office before being admitted back to class. Their head will be rechecked by the director. If the child is found to be free of live lice, they will be allowed to return

to class. If any live lice are found in the child's head, they will be sent home until no evidence of live lice exists. Nit removal, though tedious, is the most effective way to eliminate lice. The most effective screening occurs at home.

The preschool will provide written notice within 48 hours to the parents of all children in a class when there is an outbreak of lice or other infestation in their class.

Allergies/Allergic Reactions

Precautions to ensure your child's safety and health are of the utmost importance to Grace Preschool. Please keep the preschool informed of any allergies/reactions your child might have or develop during the year. It is advisable to schedule a meeting with your child's teacher and/or director if specific medical precautions need to be focused upon. An allergy list will be posted in each classroom and teachers will be informed of emergency actions.

A Food Allergy Emergency Plan must be provided for each child with a known food allergy that has been **diagnosed by a health-care professional**. The child's health-care professional and parent must sign and date the plan. The plan must list each food the child is allergic to, possible symptoms if exposed to a food on the list and the steps to take if the child has an allergic reaction.

Please try to avoid sending any birthday treat containing peanuts. You might choose to provide teachers with bagged, individual snacks for your child if allergies are known.

Safety

Grace Preschool will take every precaution through experienced supervision and strict safety measures to prevent accidents. The Preschool does not assume responsibility for accidents.

If it is determined that the staff/center is unable to adequately meet a student's needs for structure, safety, or intensity of the overall program, Grace Preschool reserves the option of dismissal.

Cell Phone Free Zones

Grace Preschool has a strict policy prohibiting staff from using their cell phones for the purpose of talking, texting and/or social media while they are in the classroom supervising students. In addition, Child Care Licensing requires that teachers must be free from personal use of electronic devices, such as cell phones, while they are involved in the teaching, care, and supervision of students. Supervision is basic to the prevention of harm to students and the use of cell phones impedes proper supervision. In addition, parents and/or anyone picking up or dropping off need to be free from cell phone use. While in your car during drop off and whenever entering the preschool doors for pick up, please refrain from cell phone use.

Emergency Preparedness

An emergency preparedness plan has been written to ensure the safety of students during an emergency. The plan addresses staff responsibility and facility readiness with respect to emergency evacuation and relocation. The plan addresses the types of emergencies most likely to occur in the area including, but not limited to, natural events such as tornadoes, floods or hurricanes, health events such as medical emergencies,

communicable disease outbreak and human-caused events such as intruder with weapon, explosion, or chemical spill. Procedures for emergency drills have been established and conveyed to all staff members. Drills are staged and documented according to licensing guidelines.

The Emergency Preparedness Plan has been shared with all staff members. Parents may obtain a copy and/or view the plan by notifying the preschool director.

Please note that Grace Preschool follows KISD guidelines and will open or close accordingly. If in doubt, listen to the local radio and television reports for rulings. When an EVACUATION DRILL is in progress, please remain in your car, park and/or stop and wait for the "All Clear" before proceeding. The Emergency Preparedness Plan is available upon request.

Notification of Pesticide Applications

The Grace Preschool indoor facility, playground and surrounding yard area is periodically treated with pesticides. Information on times and the type of application is available upon request.

TOILET TRAINING POLICY

Grace Preschool requires all students in the 4's and 5's programs to be fully trained.

Grace Preschool staff will be glad to assist you and your child with toilet training. Please use the following guidelines during training:

1. Be consistent. There is generally more success with consistency between the routines and expectations of the parents and preschool. Let the staff know what you are doing at home so that they can try to do the same at school.
2. Realize that any training method without side closures may be worn to school for a maximum of two weeks. If, after that time, he/she is unable to wear regular underwear, he/she is not toilet trained and must return to wearing diapers with side closures.
3. Provide at least two complete changes of clothing (including socks/shoes) and an adequate supply of disposable diapers and training pants. Only disposable diapers may be used.
4. Select clothing for your child that is "easy on and easy off." NO overalls, please.
5. A student who refuses to use the toilet during school hours is not trained or ready to be trained.
6. Instruct your child's teachers if you prefer to have your child wear a diaper during quiet time during the toilet training period.
7. Students in the 3's programs are strongly encouraged to actively begin toilet training when the student turns age 4.

FOOD AT SCHOOL

Lunches

All students need to bring a healthy sack lunch or lunchbox from home with each part clearly labeled. Toddlers should have a lunch they can easily feed themselves. Lunches are not refrigerated or heated. Feel free to use ice packs in lunches. Drinks should be limited to water, milk, or juice. Any leftover food will be returned in the child's lunch container. Parents are responsible for meeting their child's daily nutritional food needs.

Snacks

All students need to bring a light, healthy snack each day. Please bring a water bottle for your child. If your child does not bring a water bottle a cup of water will be provided.

Snack Suggestions:

Cut up Fruit

Baby Carrots

Cucumbers

Animal Crackers

Goldfish Crackers

Dry Cereal

Cut Up Vegetables

Teddy Grahams

Ritz Crackers/Cheese

Pretzels

Cheese Cubes

Fruit Cups

BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are always special, and Grace Preschool looks forward to celebrating your child's special day at the preschool. Special treats need to be store bought and prepackaged. The Texas Department of Health will not allow the preschool to serve homemade food.

Please plan birthday snacks with your child's teacher in advance.

Parents are responsible for any birthday cups, plates, napkins, and healthy, non-staining snacks. Please, no goodie bags. Be sure to check with the teacher for specific rules that apply to her class. **NO balloons, please!**

A parent may distribute birthday party invitations at preschool, as long as every student in the class is invited.

CURRICULUM AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Faculty and Staff

All Grace Preschool staff is experienced in working with young students or has participated in pre-service training. Staff members are required to participate in a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours of early childhood education during each school year. In addition, all staff are trained in CPR and First Aid. Each employee must pass a criminal history background and fingerprint check conducted by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Curriculum

Grace Preschool's academic and Christ-centered curriculum is based on a well-rounded choice of unit/weekly themes. These themes lend themselves to all areas of the curriculum: science, math, arts, language, pre-reading, music, and motor experiences. Learning centers, individual, and group instruction time help enhance these themes. The depth of learning is planned developmentally appropriately for each age level. Grace Preschool believes students are continually learning and will capitalize on "teachable moments." A low student-to-teacher ratio is maintained so each student can be provided with individual attention. Activities are planned to meet the student's needs and to stimulate learning. Students are encouraged to work and learn at their own pace with the understanding that students learn best through everyday experiences with people they love and trust. Grace Preschool does not use worksheets related to paper/pencil activities unless it is curriculum related to a specific skill or lesson. Our four-year-old classes use a modified version of the Learning Without Tears curriculum.

All students will have Music and Movement weekly which will promote physical fitness and coordination as well as instill a love for music and knowledge of basic musical concepts. The teachers will use a variety of songs, musical instruments, games, and equipment for this class.

Christian Education

Christian teaching will be woven throughout the day and Grace Preschool will offer many opportunities for spiritual development. Students participate in prayers in the classroom at snack and lunch times, during circle time and other times of the day. They will hear Bible stories, sing praise, and worship songs. The Toddlers, 2's, 3's, 4's and transition classes will attend a weekly chapel led by a staff member where stories about God's love, His creation and His Son, Jesus, are shared. Christian books are available for book centers and story times. Through Christian care, students will begin to learn and experience the love of God. Grace Preschool welcomes students of all faiths.

Animals at School

Animals can visit Grace Preschool under the following conditions:

1. The preschool is required to give written notice when an animal will be present. Therefore, Grace Preschool must be given advance notice so that a note can be sent home to each parent.
2. Documentation must be provided to prove that cats, dogs, and ferrets have proper vaccinations and are healthy.
3. Chickens, ducks, snakes, turtles, lizards, frogs, or other amphibians and reptiles are allowed, but the students must NOT have contact with them or the items they use.
4. Teachers and students must wash hands after coming in contact with an animal or the items used by an animal.

Field Trips/Water Activities/Nature Walks/Special Programs

Grace Preschool does not offer off-site field trips. Visits from a fire truck, veterinarian, dentist, school bus, theatrical performers or a movement class may be provided. The four-year-old and transition classes will be

included in most of the special programs. The participation of the other age groups will vary according to the nature of the event.

Grace Preschool may offer water activities consisting of splashing/wading pools, sprinkler play, water table play and various water toys. You may note your child's permission to participate in these activities on the admission information form.

Grace Preschool may leave the preschool building and/or fenced playground area for special planned nature walks, picnics, and/or field days. All these activities will be on Grace Fellowship or Equestrian Center property. You may note your child's permission to participate in these activities on the admission information form.

Indoor and Outdoor Physical Activity

Outdoor play and physical activity provide for greater freedom and flexibility, fuller expression through loud talk, and a greater range of active movement. They also extend opportunities for large muscle development, social-emotional development, and small muscle development by offering variety, challenge, and complexity in ways that are not attainable in a confined space.

All Grace Preschool students will have outdoor play/physical activity each day as required by Child Care Licensing; Toddlers will participate in at least 35 minutes of physical activity per day; 2's, 3's, 4's & 5's will participate in at least 55 minutes of physical activity per day. Physical activity at Grace Preschool will include unstructured and structured outdoor play on the playground, structured gross motor activities in the classroom and structured activities in music and movement.

Please dress your child appropriately for the weather and provide a coat, hat and/or gloves as needed to ensure your child is dressed for cold weather. Each child should wear appropriate footwear for outdoor play. In case of inclement weather (rain, thunder, lightning, or temperatures below 30 degrees or above 100 degrees Fahrenheit) children will have structured indoor playground time in a large group room or their classroom.

Quiet Time

To help balance active learning and play experiences, students must rest on their nap mat each day for a "quiet time" after lunch. Students need to bring a mat and are required to remain quiet on their mats for a minimum of 25 minutes. Sleeping bags, towels or comforters are not allowed. Soft, soothing music will be played. Your child may bring any special "attachment." After a brief period, students who do not fall asleep will be allowed to participate in quiet activities. Please label all quiet time items!

Any student unable to rest quietly on their nap mat for a quiet time of at least 25 minutes will need to be picked up prior to rest time. Tuition will **not** be prorated.

School Parties

Celebrating with friends is an important part of the preschool experience. The following school parties are planned for the school year:

- Thanksgiving Feast – (no parent helpers)
- Christmas - Celebrating the Birth of Jesus
- Valentine's Day – (no parent helpers)
- Easter - Celebrating the Risen Savior
- End-of-Year

Sign-ups to help with these parties will be during “Meet Your Teacher” prior to classes beginning in the fall. It is stressed that ALL classroom celebrations reflect Christian values. **Only the party chair and party helpers are invited to attend the parties. Due to room size and Child Care Licensing requirements, please arrange for childcare of siblings.**

Money may be collected to cover a lunch for the Christmas and Year-End parties only with a limit of \$5.00. No money is to be collected for “goodie bags,” party decorations, students' gifts, etc. and no money should be collected for the Easter or Valentine’s Day parties. **NO BALLOONS** or live fish party favors are allowed.

Show and Tell

The purpose of Show and Tell is to encourage a variety of interests, build self-esteem and self-discovery, and enhance vocabulary skills. Teachers will designate show and tell dates. Please note the following guidelines:

- One item only
- Guns or war-related items are not suitable.
- Items need to arrive and leave in a school bag or backpack.
- Please label the item brought to school with your child's full name.

Grace Preschool cannot be responsible for items brought to school on days other than your child's designated show and tell day. Please discourage this, as we would regret anything of value to be lost or broken.

*In the event of a Pandemic students will not be allowed to bring items from home to share.

Special Events

During the school year, there will be special events that you will want to attend with your child. Grace Preschool encourages you to use these events as a special time with your preschooler. Sufficient notice on the dates and times for the events will be given. You can look forward to events such as "Muffins with Mom" and “Doughnuts with Dad.” **Due to classroom size and licensing requirements, if possible, please arrange childcare of siblings for these special events.**

Screen Time

Occasionally, the students will be allowed to enjoy large group screen time at school. A preschool director must approve all screen time activities. It is the intention of Grace Preschool that all screen time content correspond to unit themes, contain Christian values, or celebrate holidays. Viewing time should be at most, 30 minutes. Alternative activities will be provided for those students who do not wish to participate in the screen time activity. The Toddler class (18–23-month old’s) is not allowed to have screen time pursuant to Child Care Licensing requirements.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

Discipline must be all of the following:

1. Individualized and consistent for each student.
2. Appropriate to the student’s level of understanding.
3. Directed toward teaching the student acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

1. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
2. Reminding a student of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
3. Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
4. Using brief supervised separation from the group, when appropriate for the student's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the student's age.

If inappropriate behavior continues the student is taken to the director for a visit. If the student's behavior is still not acceptably modified, the parent will be called to pick up the student.

To ensure a safe learning environment for all staff and students, it may be necessary to dismiss the student from the school. Thus, if corrective measures have not been successful and if the safety of the student, other students or staff is jeopardized, the preschool reserves the right to dismiss the student upon notification to the parents.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any student. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

1. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
2. Punishment associated with food, nap, or toilet training.
3. Pinching, shaking, or biting a student.
4. Hitting a student with a hand or instrument.
5. Putting anything in or on a student's mouth.
6. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a student.
7. Subjecting a student to harsh, abusive, or profane language.
8. Placing a student in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet; and,
9. Requiring a student to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the student's age, including requiring a student to remain in a restrictive device.

DISMISSAL, EXPULSION AND SUSPENSION POLICY

The classroom setting is structured and organized yet informal, and a great deal of freedom exists. Classroom guidelines are fair and consistent. Teachers are trained to foster a positive school climate, prevent, and manage challenging behaviors, promote social-emotional development, form nurturing relationships, identify children who may need additional supports, and have an understanding of culture and diversity. Positive techniques such as redirection, positive reinforcement, teaching appropriate behavior, and use of natural consequences are employed. If a student repeatedly behaves in an unacceptable manner, a short break from an activity (limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age) in the classroom may be used. If inappropriate behavior continues, the student is taken to the director for an office visit. If the student's behavior is still not acceptably modified, the parent will be called to pick up their student for the remainder of the day.

To ensure a safe learning environment for all staff and students, it may be necessary for the director to dismiss the student from school. For persistent or excessive behavior problems, parents will be contacted by the director and with the assistance of the teacher, parent and director, an individualized plan that recognizes and encourages positive behavior may be developed. Further corrective measures may also be taken as the

director deems necessary, including, but not limited to suspension or expulsion from the program if it is determined to be in the best interest of the student and/or other students in the program. Thus, if corrective measures have not been successful and if the safety of the student, other students or staff is jeopardized, the director reserves the right to dismiss the student upon notification to parents.

In cases involving physical misbehaviors (i.e., biting, hitting, kicking, pinching, etc.) the following measures will be applied:

- First offense will result in a note to the parent from the teacher sent home with the student.
- Second offense the child will be taken to the director for an office visit and a note to the parent from the teacher will be sent home with the student.
- Third offense the child will be taken to the director for an office visit and a note to the parent from the director will be sent home with the student.
- Fourth offense the director will call the parent to discuss the behavior and the parent will pick up their student for the remainder of the day.
- After the fifth offense the director will arrange a meeting with the parents and the student will be dismissed from preschool for a specified period of time or for the remainder of the school year.

COMMUNICATION/VISITATION

Classroom Communications

Each student will receive a communication folder. The folders will contain the student's work and any written communication. Reminders or a newsworthy note will be sent home, as well as a monthly calendar. Toddlers and two-year old's will receive a brief, daily report from their teacher. Three's, four's and transition classes will receive a weekly report at the end of each week. Teachers will be checking folders for notes from parents as well. Teachers will also utilize the ProCare Parent Engagement App to send messages, photos, and videos. You will receive an invite to join the app from the preschool office. **Please remember to check your child's communication folder daily.** The teachers are busy before and after class. You are welcome to schedule a meeting with them at a mutually convenient time.

Please keep your child's teacher informed of special circumstances that may arise in your family, or situations that could alter your child's mood or behavior.

In case of any accident, an Accident/Incident form must be completed. Please refer to the "First Aid and Emergencies" section for more information.

Conferences/Evaluations

Evaluations will be conducted, and progress reports sent home for each student at the beginning of the year. At the end of the year, a formal conference will be held for 3's, 4's and Transition. A developmental checklist will be discussed and sent home for each student. These will be based on classroom observations and informal "testing" in motor, social, language and readiness skills appropriate to each age level. At the end of the year Toddlers and 2's will receive a "Progress Report" in their student's folder.

A parent or teacher may request additional conferences at any time. Do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or the preschool office to schedule a phone call or meeting.

Meeting with the Preschool Office

The office has an open-door policy and welcomes your suggestions, comments, and concerns. If you need to schedule an appointment with the office, please feel free to write a note or call the office 281-398-3412.

Meet Your Teachers

Prior to the first day of school, an opportunity to meet the staff and view the classrooms will be held. Teachers and assistants will be present in the classrooms. This is also an opportunity for you to volunteer your time for classroom parties. Refer to the preschool calendar for times and dates.

Parent Visits and Participation

A parent is welcome to observe their child and the preschool's operation without securing prior approval. To alleviate disruption, the center may feel it best to observe the classroom through the hallway window rather than entering the classroom. When visiting the school, everyone must check in with the preschool office. Parents are asked to be sympathetic to any transitions a child may be experiencing and to delay a visit if it may be more upsetting to the student. In the event of a pandemic, State Licensing may implement emergency standards that restrict entrance to the preschool building by those who do not have a legitimate reason to enter.

Parents are encouraged to participate in special events and programs offered by Grace Preschool. They are also invited to share their time and talents with the preschoolers. All arrangements for special class visits should be made through the teacher and approved by a director.

Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in the care of Grace Preschool. The preschool will provide a comfortable place with a seat that enables a mother to breastfeed her child if needed.

Student Directory

Information from the "Directory" form included in the enrollment packet will be used to compile a student directory that will be given to all parents of students enrolled in Grace Preschool. If the directory authorization was not completed and returned, only your child's name will appear in the directory. If you request not to have your phone number and/or address printed, the preschool will respect your wishes. If you have any additional or new information, please provide it in writing to the preschool office.

STATE REGULATIONS

State Licensing

Grace Preschool is regulated and monitored by Texas Health and Human Services. HHS has published a set of rules called "Minimum Standards" which must be strictly followed by all licensed facilities. A copy of "Minimum Standards" is available for your review in the preschool office or you can download a copy from their website at: https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/.

A State Licensing Representative conducts an annual unannounced inspection of the preschool. The results of the inspection are posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway. Inspections are also available online at

Local Licensing Office: 713-287-3238

THHS Website: <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care>

THHS Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

Child Abuse

State Law require grace Preschool staff members to report any suspected cases of child abuse (physical, emotional, sexual and/or neglect) to the proper authorities within 48 hours.

Each staff member is required by Child Care Licensing to complete one hour of annual training which addresses prevention, recognition, reporting and response to abuse and neglect of children. Information from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services regarding child abuse, child neglect, reporting abuse and neglect, protecting children, prevention techniques and public awareness will be provided to all staff and shared with parents. "Keeping Children Safe," Form 2958 published by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services will be posted on the preschool parent information board.

Any parent of a child who is a victim of abuse or neglect may find support and information online at preventchildabuse.org. Parents can find training and community resources online at the National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP Program) at <http://friendsnrc.org/>. Additionally, parenting classes, tips and support can also be found at learntoparent.org. The website HelpAndHope.org provides resources and offers parents fun videos, articles by experts, and other tips designed to help parents deal with some of the most challenging aspects of parenting. Grace Fellowship Church can also provide a list of counselors, Care Ministry assistance and individual Stephen Ministers.

Grace Preschool will coordinate efforts with ESCAPE Family Resource Center which is a local and global organization that provides child abuse prevention programs, offers court ordered and CPS approved parenting classes, parenting tips, and tools to develop positive parenting and appropriate discipline skills.

To make a report call the Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or online at txabusehotline.org.

Gang-Free Zones

As a result of House Bill 2086 you are hereby informed that Grace Preschool and the area within 1000 feet of the facility is a designated gang-free zone. Gang-related criminal activity is prohibited and a violation of the law and subject to increased penalty under Texas law.

Open Carry Law

Pursuant to Child Care Licensing, firearms are **prohibited** (concealed or open carry) on the preschool and church properties unless the individual is a law enforcement official who is trained and certified to carry a firearm. In addition, Grace Fellowship, like all property owners, has the right to restrict open carry, on our property, and Grace Fellowship has chosen to prohibit firearms on our property.

Liability Insurance

Grace Preschool carries the required amount of Liability Insurance required by Child Care Licensing.

If it is determined that the staff/center is unable to adequately meet a child's needs for structure, safety, or intensity of the overall program, Grace Preschool reserves the option of dismissal.



2023-2024 STUDENT CALENDAR

August 1 – Paperwork and May Tuition Due to Preschool Office

August 31 – Meet the Teacher

September 5 & 6 – First Day of School

September 26 - Mr. Tom, Musical Guest (All Ages)

October 9 – KISD/Grace Preschool Closed

October 16 & 17 - Firetruck Visit (All Ages)

October 16, 17, 18 – Individual School Pictures

October 23-26 – Fall Progress Reports Sent Home (All Students)

October 25 or 26 – Doughnuts with Dad 9am-9:45am

November 6 & 7 – Fun Bus (all ages)

November 15 & 16 – “We Are Thankful”/Fall Celebrations and Feasts

November 20-23 – Preschool Closed for Thanksgiving Holidays

December 5, 6, 7 – 3's, 4's and Transition Christmas Programs

December 11, 12, 13 or 14 – Classroom Christmas Parties

December 18 – January 2 – Christmas Break

January 3 & 4 – First Days Back from Break

January 15 – KISD/Grace Preschool Student Holiday

January 16-18 – Registration Packets Distributed to Existing Students

January 17 – Books Alive (2's, 3's, 4's, 5's)

January 19 – Developmental Conferences for 4 Year Olds 8:30am-12pm

January 22-25 – Fall 2022 Early Registration turned in by Current Students

January 29, 30 & 31 – Fall 2024 Grace Fellowship and Public Registration 9:30am-1:30pm

February 1 – Grace Preschool Closed for Teacher Training

February 13 & 14 – Classroom Valentine's Day Parties

February 19 – KISD/Grace Preschool Holiday

TBD - Dental Hygienist Visit (4's & 5's)

February 26 & 27 – All School Rodeo Activity

February 28 & 29 – All School Rodeo Parade 9:25am-9:45am (after morning drop off)

March 11 -14 – KISD/Grace Preschool Closed for Spring Break

March 20 - Mr. Tom, Musical Guest (All Ages)

March 26 & 27 - Classroom Easter Parties

March 28 - Grace Preschool Holiday

April 1 - Grace Preschool Closed/Grace Fellowship Church Closed

April 8 & 9 – Class Group Pictures

April 10 & 11 – Muffins with Mom 9am-9:45am

April 15 - 18 – Spring Progress Reports (Toddlers and 2's)

April 30 - Transition Water Day

May 1 & 2 – Toddlers, 2's, & 3's Water Day

May 3 – Developmental Conferences for 3 Year Olds and Transition Class 8:30am-12pm

May 8 – Transition Graduation

May 8 & 9 – Four-Year-Old Graduations

May 14 & 15 – End of the Year Classroom Parties

May 15 – Last Day of Preschool (Wednesday)