

GRACE WEEKDAY SCHOOL

A MINISTRY OF GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



PARENT HANDBOOK

“But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people that are like these children.’”

Matthew 19:14

1245 Heights Blvd.

Houston, TX 77008

School phone: 346-998-2354

School fax: 346-998-2371

School office hours: 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

Introduction:

These are the policies and regulations set forth by Grace Weekday School. All parents must read and agree with the following regulations.

MISSION:

Our mission at Grace Weekday School is to provide an environment where children can excel at their own pace. We offer safe and stimulating classrooms that engage children to explore & learn. Our goal is to build strong relationships between school and home so that positive guidance and direction will aide your child in having a successful school experience.

ENROLLMENT POLICIES:

Grace Weekday School is a church based school. It is an open program that provides care for all children regardless of their race, nationality, color, or religious belief. At the time of enrollment, a registration fee of \$150.00 will be due upon receiving the application packet. This is non-refundable.

We do not charge a reenrollment fee each school year, but we do require that you notify us by June 1st of each year in writing that your child will/or will not continue at Grace for the following school year. This allows the school time to register new students for the following school year.

Required documents:

The following items must be present and complete the first day that your child begins school: application form, a copy of an updated immunization record, physician signature stating that the child is in good general health, signed agreement, and signed policies. Each child four years and older enrolled in the preschool program must agree to a vision and hearing screening provided by the school with a nominal fee or provide the results of these screenings.

TUITION / FEES & HOURS OF OPERATION:

The hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday. There is a \$10.00 late fee (per child) for every five minutes after 6:00 p.m. The late fee begins at 6:01 p.m. according to the clock at the front desk. These fees must be paid upon arrival. We are open all year with the exception of the days on the Holiday List. Tuition is due on Monday of each week or the first day the child attends.

Payments can be made until 6:00 p.m. A \$25.00 late fee is applied if the tuition is not received on Monday, or the first day the child attends. Tuition and late fee must be paid in full by Wednesday of each week in order to keep your child in attendance. If they are not paid by Wednesday, your child can be excluded from care until payment is made.

School Supply Fees:

Every child enrolled in the school must pay the \$150.00 school supply fee August of each year. This fee covers all the supplies your child will use through the following school year. These fees are non refundable if your child drops from care after these fees are paid.

If your child is absent any amount of days, tuition stays the same. If your child will be out for more than two days, please contact the day care office at (346)998-2354. If no call has been received by the end of the week, we will assume that you no longer need care and we will drop your child from attendance. If you bring your child back, it will be necessary to go through the enrollment process again. If the school is closed for holidays or scheduled closed days, your tuition will stay the same. The only exception to this is the ECMC Conference for the teachers and preparation days before the school year starts. The week that these days fall in, you will receive a fifty percent discount on your regular tuition.

Half Tuition:

You may take two weeks out of each year in which you pay half of your regular tuition to hold your child's slot. September 1 of each school year marks the beginning of your child's year. Your child must be out of attendance the complete week to utilize this rate. Example: going on vacation, or your child is sick. If your child is out a third week, you must pay your full tuition.

Return Checks:

You may write checks to pay your tuition. Make them payable to Grace Weekday School. If a check is returned, there is \$25.00 service charge. The check along with the service charge must be paid in cash or credit. If two checks are returned, you must go on a cash/credit basis only.

PROCEDURES FOR BRINGING AND RELEASING CHILDREN:

Upon arrival and departure from the school, each parent is responsible for signing their child in and out at the front desk along with your initials. You will be asked to show identification each time you pick up a child, until the staff know who you are. Persons listed to pick up children will be asked for identification as well. If a person is not listed on an application, they will not be able to pick up the child.

OPEN DOOR POLICY:

Grace Weekday School has an open door policy. Once your child is enrolled into our facility, you are welcome to visit your child's classroom at any time.

GANG FREE ZONE:

All persons who come on the Grace Weekday School campus are required to know that any area within 100 feet is a gang free zone. According to the Texas Penal Code any criminal offense related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.

PROCEDURES FOR PARENT VISITATION, CONFERENCES & CONCERNS:

Parents can visit the school at any time. Parents may also volunteer to attend functions, field trips, or observe their child in class. Sign up sheets for special events will be at the front desk for any functions that parents would like to help with.

Conferences with teachers or the Director may be scheduled to discuss concerns or review the policies of the school. A copy of Minimum is located in each classroom. The latest child care licensing report for this facility can be viewed at www.dfps.state.tx.us.

Our local licensing office can be contracted at:

Texas Department of Family & Protective Service
1919 West North Loop
Houston, Texas 77008
(713) -293-1800

To report Child Abuse you can contact

Texas Department of Family & Protective Services
701 W. 51st street

Austin, Texas 78751

Or

P.O. Box 149030

Austin, Texas 78714

Or call Child Abuse Hotline at 1800-252-5400

DRESS CODE:

You must bring your child properly dressed for school. This includes having their shoes on, hair combed, and faces washed. Clothing must be appropriate for the weather. Children should wear washable play clothes and shoes that are not slick. Children need extra clothes sent to school in case there is need for them. Label your child's belongings to avoid confusion and loss. We cannot be responsible for unlabeled items.

HEALTH AND MEDICINE:

The school administers medication at 7:45 a.m. and 11:45 a.m. only. These times will accommodate a three or four times a day schedule. The only exception to the policy is for children on a continual medication. These schedules must be arranged by the Director. Medications must be in their original containers. If it is prescribed, it must have the child's name, amounts to administer, expiration date, and quantity to administer. If the medicine is over the counter, your child's name must be on the bottle, expiration date, your child's age and amount to administer must be printed on the label. If your child's age is not on the bottle, the only way we can administer the medicine is with a doctor's authorization. Anytime the school administers medication to your child, an authorization form must be filled out completely.

Children cannot come to school sick. If your child appears ill, they will not be accepted. Children must be able to participate in regular classroom activities, which includes going outside. The only way a child will be excused from outside play, is with a doctor's authorization. This authorization must include a start and finish date for which the child is excused from outside activity. If your child becomes ill while in care, or gets a fever of 100.9 degrees or higher, you will be asked to pick up your child. If the parents cannot be reached, the emergency contacts will be called. Parents need to authorize the child's physician to accept calls from the school for medical or emergency care. Parents must notify the school in writing if their child needs special care because of previous or current medical problems, disabilities, or limitations.

All children enrolled in care must have a signed health statement. This is found on the third sheet of your enrollment form. If this conflicts with tenets or practices or a recognized religious organization, a signed affidavit is needed to be place of the health statement on file.

All children who are four years or older enrolled in care must have a vision and hearing screening done to detect any possible problems. One of the following must be on file at the school.

- A) The individual visual acuity and sweep check results; or
- B) An affidavit stating that the vision or hearing screening conflicts with the tenets or practices of a church or religious denomination of which the affiant is an adherent or member.

All children enrolled in care must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of (State Health Services) Immunization Requirements in Texas Elementary and Secondary and Institutions of Higher Education. This requirement applies to all children in care from birth through 17 years of age. If this conflicts with the tenets or practices of a recognized religious organization, an affidavit will need to go on file stating so.

- C) Although it is not required that staff receive preventable vaccines, they are recommended to take the flu shot and tb test.

TODDLERS:

All bottles and cups must be clearly marked with child's first name & last initial.
All necessary items for your child's diapering must be labeled and supplied by parent.
If in the process of toilet training, please send adequate clothing and shoes for each day.

BREASTFEEDING:

Grace Weekday School provides a comfortable place for breastfeeding mothers to come in and breastfeed their child. You are also welcome to bring in breast milk for our staff to bottle feed to their child. Please send it labeled with the child's name and date it was expressed.

FOOD:

AM snack and PM snack are provided. AM snack is served from 7:30 – 8:00 a.m. Lunch is from 11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and PM snack is served from 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. All parents are responsible for providing lunch for their child. Grace Weekday School does not provide lunch. When providing your child's lunch we ask that all cold lunches be put on an ice pack and hot lunches be put in a thermos to be maintained at proper temperature. All lunches need to be brought in an insulated lunch box. Please provide a nutritious lunch for your child. We encourage healthy choices. Please do not send a lot of sugary foods. All lunches will be left in the child's cubby. If your child does not have a lunch, you will be contacted to provide a lunch. AM snack and PM snack menus are posted in each classroom. If you would like a copy you can request one at the front desk. We do ask parents to please label all items with their child's name.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION:

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of any information changes as soon as possible. This includes home addresses, phone numbers for home or work, who can and cannot pick up the child from the school. Parents that are separated or divorced must bring in a copy of the custody papers if a parent is not allowed to pick up a child, otherwise the school cannot keep a child from a Mother or Father.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

Staff members are trained in basic emergency procedures. Necessary responses to issues regarding natural disasters, (floods, tornados, hurricanes, etc.) hostile situations, and fire escape routes are addressed in staff training. Monthly fire drills and quarterly tornado drills are conducted at the site. We do not have gas in our building, but in the event of a gas leak in the area, your child will be relocated and you will be notified immediately to pick up your child.

In the event of an evacuation, staff members will first move the children to a designated safe area or alternate shelter known to all employees, caregivers, and volunteers. Evacuation procedures also address the care of children with limited mobility or who otherwise may need assistance in an emergency, such as children who have mental, visual, or hearing impairments. Head counts and roll sheets will be utilized to account for all children and will be conducted by two or more caregivers. The safety and well being of each and every child will be emphasized at all times.

Children ages 8 weeks to 17 months old will be transported to a designated safe area or alternate shelter in the cribs. Teachers will transport 2 – 3 children at a time in one crib. There are sufficient cribs in the school to evacuate all infants. Children 18 months and older will walk to the designated area with their caregivers. In the event of an emergency, all children and staff will be relocated by foot or in cribs to the front of the church on the Heights Blvd. side. Our alternate location to relocate by foot / cribs is to Heights Library 1302 Heights Blvd. Houston, Texas 77008. Phone number is (832)393-1810. Teachers will carry their binders that have daily

attendance and children's information. The attendance log will help account for all the children in care. The applications will allow the teachers to contact parents to notify them of the emergency. Directors will carry cell phones to contact parents. All staff will take their classroom tablet to notify parents on their class dojo. All staff will stay with their group until all children have been picked up. The emergency binder contains the emergency contact numbers. It is important that you update us whenever there is a change in your personal information.

In the event of a hostile situation, all staff is trained to move the children to a bathroom and put door wedges in place to keep the door closed. Teachers will take with them their binders and tablets with emergency information. The tablets are to contact parents of the emergency. Children will remain there with their teachers until notified with further instruction. Director will call 911.

In cases of inclement weather, Grace Weekday School will follow specific school district recommendations. If HISD is closed due to the weather, Grace will also be closed. If the weather begins to worsen during the day, we will ask that you pick up your child as soon as possible, to ensure the safety of our staff and families.

FIELD TRIPS:

Only children who are four years of age may go on field trips. Parents may accompany their children on trips, but must provide their own transportation.

DISCIPLINE:

Our program is designed to provide a safe environment for all the children. Therefore, when a child behaves in an inappropriate manner he/she will be redirected. If the redirection fails and the inappropriate behavior continues, removal from the group may result. Supervised "Conscious Discipline" is used for children two and up. A child may sit out for any length of time the child needs to recompose themselves. Soft plush animals are available as well as feeling charts are in the safe place for the child to utilize. It may be necessary for a parent to sit in class to monitor their child's behavior if the above methods fail. In the event that a child's behavior can still not be changed, the Director has the authority to dismiss a child from the program if he or she is endangering himself/herself or the group.

It is ultimately the parent's choice how to handle the discipline of their children. According to our Minimum Standards set forth by The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, we must use positive methods, which encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. There can be no harsh or cruel treatment. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment are prohibited on our property by any adult to any child.

PROMOTION OF CHILDREN:

Grace Weekday School operates on a school year calendar. The school year starts September 1 and goes through May 31st. We have summer activities for the months of June, July, and the first two weeks of August. Promotions of the children are done the third week of August each year. This gives the children and teachers two weeks to adjust to the move and get settled to start school activities. We do not promote children at any other time during the year. If a child drops from care during the school year, the slot is then filled by one that is on the wait list.

WITHDRAWAL:

You must give a 30 day notice when you are dropping your child from care. This gives the school time to

prepare for the departure of your child from his/her class.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO PICK UP ANY ITEMS BELONGING TO YOUR CHILD (REN). Any items left behind will be considered donations after 30 days of the child (ren)'s last day in the school.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Parents may bring in store bought food or cakes for a child's birthday celebration. Please notify the teacher in advance. We cannot serve homemade food or cakes to the children due to regulations set forth by the City of Houston.

We do not allow children to bring toy guns, war toys, swords, or other toys related to violence, which includes video games.

Toys for show-n-tell, are allowed on designated days only. Please write your child's name on the toy to avoid confusion. No outside toys are allowed any other day to avoid problems in the classroom.

PARENT AGREEMENT:

I have read and understand the School's policies and regulations. By signing this form, I agree to abide by these regulations set forth by Grace Weekday School. Failure to abide by these policies may result in dismissal of my child from the school.

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

I, _____, parent of _____, will be providing nutritious food for my child while my child is in care at Grace Weekday School. I release the school from meeting my child's nutritional needs as set forth by The Texas Dept. of Protective and Regulatory Services.

**PLEASE KEEP THIS COPY
FOR YOUR RECORDS**