Grace House
PRESCHOOL

# Parent Handbook
# 2026-2027

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## Welcome

The faculty and administration of Grace House Preschool (GHP) would like to welcome you and your child(ren) to our preschool. Grace House operates as a nonprofit organization and is dedicated to providing quality care for preschool children.

This PARENT HANDBOOK provides general information about the Preschool's program, administrative procedures, operating guidelines, health and safety policies, and suggested parental involvement. Parents will find that most of their questions about Grace House are answered in this handbook. For specific situations that may not be covered, parents are encouraged to seek additional information from the Director.

We look forward to working with you and helping your child(ren) grow throughout this school year. Please remember that our door is always open to you.

## Introduction

**Forward:**
This handbook strives to communicate the philosophy and goals of our Christ-centered preschool and to set forth standards, rules, and procedures that will foster self-discovery, and facilitate a learning environment. It will change and grow as our school changes and grows. This handbook is designed to foster mutual understanding. It is dedicated to the glory and honor of the Lord as we work together in His Kingdom.

**Mission Statement:**
Grace House Preschool exists to focus attention on God's grace as He transforms us into a community that delights in Him, is marked by selfless care for others, and proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ with gospel-transformed words, relationships, vocations, and lifestyles resulting in the transformation of the communities of the Triad and the world.

Care is taken to work with children according to recognized standards for childcare and early education. We seek to promote creativity, to expose children to learning through play, unit lesson studies, art, music, etc. We want to help them learn values and ideals through being exposed to Christian beliefs. The emotional, social, physical, and intellectual development of each child is the major goal of the staff. In other words, the total personal development, according to his/her individual abilities and needs, is our primary concern.

Grace House Preschool supports the "parent-child" relationship. Our job is not to take the place of or compete with the child's family. The teachers will be a supportive agent to help further a warm relationship between parent and child. We recognize that parents are the most important people in the lives of their children.

Grace House Preschool does not discriminate based on race, color, national, or ethnic origin.

## Program Information

Grace House Preschool strives to provide excellent services for young children from one year of age until they are ready for kindergarten. All children must be the age of the class they are entering on or before August 31 (this coincides with North Carolina policy). Classes are as follows:

| AGE GROUP | TEACHERS | |
|---|---|---|
| Infant Class | Christy Ogburn, Lead | Janet Zung, Assistant |
| Toddler Class | Michelle Trapp, Lead | Anna Kirstine, Assistant |
| 2-year-old class | Liz Steele, Lead | Ashley Terranova, Assistant |
| 3-year-old class | Beth Ridgway, Lead | Ann Ervin, (M/W/F), Assistant<br>Tina Vandemeer (T/TH), Assistant |
| 4-year-old class (Pre-K) | Ashley Sabella, Lead | Leah Bryant, Assistant |
| Enrichment Class | Christy Lankford | |

Preschool is in session from 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

**Ratios:**
Grace House is committed to maintaining low staff to child ratios. We firmly believe that the beginning of any quality environment begins with creating close and nurturing relationships between teachers and children. The following are the maximum teacher/child ratios for the 2023– 2024 school year:

| | |
|---|---|
| Infants | 1 teacher to 3 children |
| 1 Year Old | 1 teacher to 4 children |
| 2-Year-Old | 1 teacher to 5 children |
| 3 Year Olds | 1 teacher to 6 children |
| 4 Year Olds | 1 teacher to 6 children |

## Tuition

**Tuition Rates for 2026 – 2027**

Infant Class Rates:

| Number of Days | Tuition/Month |
|---|---|
| 2 days per week | $ 200 |
| 3 days per week | $ 235 |
| 4 days per week | $ 265 |
| 5 days per week | $ 290 |

Toddler, 2-year-old, 3-year-old, Pre-K:

| Number of Days | Tuition/Month |
|---|---|
| 2 days per week | $ 190 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 3 days per week | $ 215 |
| 4 days per week | $ 235 |
| 5 days per week | $ 255 |

Tuition is based on a full year's enrollment, not attendance. Tuition is due on the 1st day of every month and considered late on the 6th of the month. Payment is accepted via your bank's bill pay or ACH (electronic draft). Because our program is designed with a full year enrollment as its basis, tuition is not discounted for holidays, professional days, inclement weather days or absences.

**Registration Fee:**
A registration fee is paid at the time of registration and is non-refundable. Registration is complete when all enrollment forms have been completed and returned along with receipt of the registration fee.

**Activity Fee:**
This is an annual fee due at the beginning of the school year. This fee covers the cost of consumable materials and craft supplies, along with food and drink for snack to be used throughout the year. The activity fee is non-refundable.

**Late Fee and Dismissal Due to Non-Payment and Absences:**
A late fee of $10 will be added to tuition if payment has not been received by the 5th of the month. An additional late fee of $10 will be added to tuition if payment has not been received by the first of the following month. If your family is experiencing financial difficulty due to extenuating circumstances, please notify the director and the Preschool will make every effort to work with you until the issue is resolved. Failure to make two consecutive tuition payments will result in the withdrawal of your child from the preschool.

If your child is absent, please notify your child's teacher or the Director. If your child is absent for more than 5 consecutive days for the 5 day, 4 day and 3 day a week schedules or 3 consecutive days for 2 day and 1 day schedules with NO notification to the preschool as to the nature of the absence and/or your child's intention to return, your child will be withdrawn from the preschool program.

**Return of Check:**
If your draft or check is returned to us as "insufficient funds", you will be responsible to repay the full amount of the draft/check along with a $25 service fee in cash.

**Tuition Discounts:**
Sibling tuition discount - $10 off each monthly tuition for additional children in the same family, after the 1st child has paid the full tuition
Sibling registration fee discount - $5 off each registration fee for additional children in the same family, after the full registration fee is paid for the 1st child

**Student Withdrawal:**
To withdrawal your child from Grace House Preschool, please notify the Director and complete the *Student Withdrawal Form* available from the Director. If withdrawal occurs after the first of the month, that month's tuition, the registration fee, and the activity fee are non-refundable.

**Disclaimer:** Grace House Preschool reserves the right to change policy based on the circumstances within any given year.

## The Preschool Staff

The Preschool's staff is a team of loving, caring Christ-centered people that look forward to serving the needs of you and your child(ren). They teach and evaluate, plan and prepare, relate and counsel, pray and care. Their communications with parents are key to effective education. Please pray for them and give them your respect, love, and encouragement.

All Lead Teachers and the Director are required to obtain CPR and first aid training. Prior to hiring, each employee must have a criminal records check. GHP only accepts employees with a commitment to parents and children. In order to optimize your child's growth and development, we hire teachers who are interested in providing quality care and stimulating environments.

The teachers are employed by GHP and accountable to the Director. The Director is also employed by GHP and is accountable to the Executive Board. The GHP personnel policies reflect the respect felt for staff as professionals and provide a basis for understanding and meeting the needs of both the Preschool and the families. For this reason, the Administration is committed to providing a working environment that exemplifies cooperation and support.

## Curriculum

Grace House Preschool curriculum is based on the Active Learning Series created by Debbie Cryer, Thelma Harms, and Beth Bourland of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The series contains separate books specializing in infants, one, two-, three-, four-, and five-year-olds. Each curriculum book contains age appropriate teaching ideas and activities for:

- Listening and Talking – This section contains ideas to help the teacher make the best use of talking with and listening to the children. Play ideas include using books, pictures and puppets.
- Physical Development – This section has ideas to develop the large muscles that help them run, balance, and climb and the small muscles needed to begin to read and write.
- Creative Activities – This section provides activities to help develop the senses, the imagination, and the skills to enjoy the arts through activities using art, blocks, dramatic play and music.
- Activities for Learning the World Around Them – This section focuses on nature, the senses, size (math), shape, color, and numbers. The activities help the children enjoy and learn about the world God created.

Chapel is an opportunity for the children to focus on God and the Bible. Songs, stories, Bible verses, and God's love are presented to the children and reinforced in the classroom. We strive to excite the children about the wonderful things God has done in a way they can understand and remember. This year chapel will be held the 2nd and 4th Mondays and Tuesdays of the month in the sanctuary as a schoolwide event.

Enrichment is a time to ignite the love of reading and learning. This special teaching time includes library, music, science, and art. This year enrichment will be held in the enrichment room.

Kindergarten readiness provides our 4-year-olds with skills needed to make a smooth transition into Kindergarten. The activities focus on academic (introductory reading, writing, and math), social (listening, following directions, and peer interactions) and life skills (emptying backpacks, opening lunch containers, and tying shoes).

## Parent Participation

We recognize the importance of the parent-teacher/family-school relationship and therefore, encourage you to use the Class Dojo app on your phone as this is the primary way we will communicate with parents this year.

There are many additional opportunities in which you can be part of our program.

1. Classroom visitation: Parents are always welcome at Grace House Preschool. You are welcome to have a brief visit to the classroom on your child's birthday or other special occasion if the teacher is made aware that you are coming.
2. Classroom supplies: Donating classroom supplies is a great way to help the preschool. Throughout the year each classroom will have special projects and events in which they need additional supplies donated. This may include things such as empty milk containers, paper towel tubes, items for a treat bag, or a special snack. Signup sheets will be posted on your child's Class Dojo page.
3. Special activities: Parents are encouraged to participate in special events. Some of these are during class time while others are evening events. Volunteers and donated items are always helpful to make these events a success. Some of these include service projects, Fall Festival, Thanksgiving Feast, music programs, and classroom holiday parties.
4. Fundraisers: Grace House Preschool sponsors various fundraisers throughout the year. All funds raised are used to improve the preschool program and provide scholarships. Your support is greatly appreciated.

## Parent Communication

Grace House Preschool recognizes the importance of parent involvement and strives to work closely with families throughout the school year. Listed below are some ways contact is maintained. Families are encouraged to suggest additional means of communication.

1. Web Site and Class Dojo: Please visit our website www.gracehousepreschool.org. You will find overall information about the Preschool and each classroom as well as a complete Handbook for Parents and yearlong calendar. Please use the Class Dojo app to receive updates and announcements from Grace House throughout the year. This will be the primary way that we communicate with families this school year.
2. Conferences/Evaluations: Parent/teacher conferences will be offered in April/May to discuss your child's progress. Your child's teacher is also available to meet with you at your convenience throughout the year. The purpose of these conferences is for sharing information and ideas about your child's growth and development.
3. Informal conversations and notes: Each day, teachers may talk informally with parents as they drop off and pick up their child. Please share any pertinent information about your child, such as a recent emotional upset or interrupted sleep the previous night. Please notify the director immediately about a change of address, telephone number, or if family circumstances change (e.g. birth of baby, separation, illness).
4. Child Assessment: Assessments help the teaching staff to identify children's interests and needs and adapt their teaching practices as needed. Our 3-year-old and four-year old classes will receive a written report in the fall and spring regarding your child's skills and kindergarten readiness. A detailed verbal assessment can be obtained at any time, at any age, in a scheduled parent-teacher conference at either the parent or teacher's request.
5. Parent Survey: Periodically, you may be asked to complete a survey that will provide us valuable information about your Grace House Preschool experience. Your feedback is important to us, and we hope that you will take time to respond to the survey.
6. Contact Information: You will receive contact information for your child's classmates at the beginning of the year. Executive board members' information can be found in this handbook. Parents not wishing that their information be included should indicate this on the enrollment application. This list is not for business use.

## Separation

Separation is a normal part of growth that occurs in life. In order to engage in new opportunities, we need to let go of some familiar securities. The way separation is handled in the early years of a child's life has

a great impact on how the child will respond in later years. Therefore, a positive, sensitive, and caring approach is extremely important in the first major separations of the child's life.

To ease this transition:

1. Prior to the start of school, you will be invited to an Open House with your child to see the classroom and meet the teachers.
2. On the first day of school, if your child is experiencing anxiety, we encourage you to say a confident goodbye and tell them that you will be back soon.
3. Sometimes a transitional object (an object from home like a favorite toy, book, picture, etc.) helps ease anxiety and helps to bridge the gap between home and school. Please ask your child's teacher about bringing these items as we want to make sure that personal items are not shared at school.

Children may experience the sadness felt when leaving the ones they are attached to for the first time or the anxiety of unfamiliar places and people. We also acknowledge that parents may have difficulties separating from their children, too. Please be assured that this can be a very normal part of separation and the staff will be ready to work with you and your child to help him/her feel secure in his/her new environment.

## Classroom Routine

The following will be incorporated into the classroom each day:

**Daily**
Free Play
Circle Time*****
Bible Story/Religious Ed.
Craft/Art activity
Outdoor Time (weather permitting)
Snack Time
Story Time
Music, Dance, etc.

***** Circle time allows the opportunity to introduce preschool concepts such as letters, numbers, colors, shapes, weather, calendar skills, and seasons.

Videos will **not** be shown in the classroom during the school day unless it is a short video that directly ties in with the lesson for the day or on rainy days, a video of music and movement. These are pre-approved by the Director, and parents will be informed about the video that was shown on Class Dojo.

For safety reasons, a head count of all the children will always be taken when leaving or entering any room, the playground area, or outside the building.

## Policy and Procedures

**Arrival Procedure:**
Preschool classes begin at 9:00 am and dismiss at 12:00 noon. Parents/Caregivers will enter the preschool via the doors located under the overhang. Please walk your child into the building and drop your child off at his/her classroom door. The preschool doors will be unlocked at 8:55am to begin the drop off process.

For the safety of our children, we will operate the school day in a lock-down mode. All doors will be locked from 9:00 am until Noon. To enter the building during these hours, please come to the front center entrance doors and ring the doorbell.

**Dismissal Procedure:**
Our school day ends at 12:00 noon. Please be prompt in picking up your child. Once the children have gone home, the teachers use this time to prepare their rooms and activities for the next day. If tardiness becomes habitual, further action will be required.

Only those adults indicated on the Pick-Up Authorization section of your *Enrollment Form* will be allowed to pick up your child. In the event someone else needs to pick your child up, a written message or a direct conversation with your child's teacher or the Director will be required that day. If at anytime a teacher does not know or recognize a person asking to take home a student, we will request a photo identification of that person before allowing the child to leave with them. This is for the safety of the child. Please do not be offended if asked for picture I.D.

**Carpool Line:**
We desire to build a relationship not only with your children but with you as well. For this reason, we do not offer carpool drop off and pick up on a regular basis. However, if it is a rainy day, we will have carpool. Teachers will be at the overhang to assist your children getting out of your car and to their classrooms. Teachers will also assist the children getting into cars at dismissal.

**Backpacks:**
Each child needs a backpack large enough for a 15 in. folder that is labeled with the child's first and last name and brought to school every day. This will be used to transport any papers or crafts as well as provide a place for an extra change of clothes to be kept for your child.

**Clothing:**
Clothing for your preschooler should be simple, comfortable, washable, and easy for your child to manage. All clothing, hats, coats, gloves, and backpacks should be clearly marked with your child's name. An extra set of labeled seasonally appropriate clothing (please include underwear and socks) should be kept in your child's book bag or at school for emergencies. Children need to have at least two disposable diapers (or pull ups) in their backpack if they are not potty trained. Children will play outside daily if weather permits so appropriate outerwear such as hats, gloves, and warm coats should be sent with your child. Please always send your child to school prepared to play outside. In addition, we prefer that your child not wear sandals, crocs, rainboots or cowboy boots as it can present a danger when climbing outdoors. Rubber soled sneakers are preferable.

**Class Dojo for communication:**
Please use Class Dojo to assist in parent teacher communication for daily issues. Parents will be able to write notes concerning such things as a change in pick up, change in sleeping or eating habits, or general questions. Teachers will review your notes daily and respond as needed. All parents are interested to know how their child's day was and with the bustle of pick up, Class Dojo will provide this information as well as contain pictures of the activities they did that day.

**Calendar:**
A Grace House Preschool calendar will be posted on our website at the start of the school year showing all holidays and professional days. We will follow most of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School calendar with some exceptions. The following is a list of days that Grace House will be closed this year.

Labor Day- September 7th
Consignment Sale Friday.- September 18th
WSFCS Teacher Workday-October 12th
WSFCS Teacher Workday- November 3rd
Veterans Day- November 11th
Martin King Luther Jr. Day- January 18th
WSFCS Teacher Workday- February 15th
WSFCS Teacher Workday- March 10th
Consignment Sale Friday- March 19th
Spring Break/Easter Break- March 26th-April 2nd

Thanksgiving Break- November 25th-27th
Christmas Break- December 21st-January 4th

**Inclement/Severe Weather Policy:**
In case of inclement weather, listen for announcements from Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (WSFCS). If WSFCS is closed or have a Remote Learning Day, then Grace House Preschool is closed. If WSFCS is on a 1- or 2-hour delay, preschool will begin at 10:00 am. We will not make up snow days nor will refunds be given for school closings due to inclement weather.

If WSFCS close due to inclement weather during the preschool day, Grace House Preschool will also close at the same time as the earliest school to close. Please be prompt in picking up your child(ren) to ensure that the preschool staff can travel home safely too. If there is any need for Grace House to close even though the school system remains open, we will notify you via Class Dojo.

In case of serious emergencies such as a tornado, fire, or loss of power/water, parents will be contacted, and children will be cared for until parents or emergency contacts arrive.

**Snacks:**
Snacks will be at the discretion of each Lead Teacher. Healthy, non-perishable snacks will be purchased by the Preschool. These include items such as pretzels, goldfish, graham crackers, etc., and water to drink. Please inform the teacher if there are restricted foods in your child's diet.

Students will say a group blessing prior to snack each day. It is up to the teacher how this will be conducted in their classroom.

Periodically, or for special occasions, teachers may ask parents to bring in healthy perishable snacks as a treat. Healthy snacks may include apples, grapes, oranges, quartered cheese sandwiches, bananas, carrots, muffins, etc. At no time should parents feel obligated to contribute.

**No nut products or foods containing nut products will be allowed in Preschool activities due to food allergies.**

Children in the Infants, Toddler and 2-year-old classes will need to bring a sippy cup with them each day with water to drink. Cups will be used at the snack table only (This is for sanitary purposes and the teachers will work with the children to teach them this). Ms. Beth's 3-year-old class 3-year-old class will be served water in a disposable cup. Ms. Ashley's Pre-K class will need to bring a water bottle from home.

**Birthday Parties:**
We welcome you to celebrate your child's birthday with his/her class. You may bring a special store-bought treat to share with the class at snack time. We ask that you refrain from bringing treat bags to school for your child's classmates. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher prior to the special day and discuss any food allergies of other children.

Please do not send or hand out birthday party invitations at school unless you are inviting the entire class. Children are very perceptive and aware of rejection through not receiving an invitation.

**Changing Diapers:**
Parents must supply diapers. Teachers will wear protective gloves when changing diapers. A new pair of gloves will be worn for each child and the changing mat disinfected after each child is changed. Parents will be notified if a child shows any redness or rash.

**Potty Training:**
When you feel your child is ready to potty train, we will be happy to assist you. Our desire is to be consistent with potty training methods used at home so please discuss this with your child's teacher. As additional motivation, each child may receive one Skittle, M&M, or sticker after using the potty (this is at the discretion of the lead teacher). Please notify the teacher if you do not wish for your child to receive

this reward. During this transition, please provide two sets of clothes in your child's backpack. A note will be provided to you daily concerning your child's potty activities only while potty training.

**Children entering the 3-year-old classroom need to be fully potty trained** or well on their way with expectations of being fully potty trained by October. A fully potty-trained child should be able to express their need to use the bathroom, be able to pull up/down pants and underwear with limited assistance and wipe themselves. Our 3-year-old classrooms are not equipped with diaper changing stations.

**Bathroom Policy:**
The classroom bathrooms are the primary bathroom used by the children. When in use, the bathroom door must remain ajar. If a child must use the church bathroom, they must be accompanied by a staff member. The 4-year-old class will go as a class to the church bathroom to help in Kindergarten preparation.

**Hand Washing Procedure:**
Hand washing represents the most effective method of preventing the transfer of bacteria and germs from person to person.

Hand washing or hand sanitizer will be used:

- Upon arrival into the classroom
- After any toileting or diapering
- After outdoor activities
- Before any meals, snacks, or food preparation of any kind
- After sneezing, coughing, or wiping a runny nose
- Anytime hands are obviously soiled

## Playground Rules and Guidelines

Outdoor play provides gross motor activity, which is important to healthy growth and development. During playground time, teachers will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Children may not be out on the playground unless they are being supervised.
- Each class spends at least 30 minutes per day outside (weather permitting).
- For safety reasons, each age group will be assigned their own playground time during the day.
- If the playground is not available because of the weather, equipment may be set up in the fellowship hall or in the classroom. A variety of challenging activities will be made available to stimulate creative and social play.
- The teachers will interact with the children during playground time. This will include pushing children on the swings or helping a child climb. This is a time of free play for the children, or a combination of outdoor games, walks, sidewalk chalk, etc. with free play.

All playground equipment must be used appropriately and safely. Teachers are responsible for using good judgment on the number of children allowed to play on one piece of equipment at the same time, suggesting that children take turns, or directing their attention toward other equipment or activities. Teachers will check out the playground area, make sure the gates are closed, and pick up any debris prior to the children entering the playground area.

## Show and Tell

Show and Tell time will be determined by each Lead Teacher. Your child's teacher may encourage your child to bring something special to show and tell about. Nature things, books, anything educational, photographs of family or vacations, a special craft project your child made, or small pets are all good examples of Show and Tell items. Please check with your teacher for children with allergies prior to

bringing in show and tell items. Items will not be shared among the children. At no time will we allow weapons of any sort, toy or otherwise, in the preschool.

## Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will be offered according to the availability of staff. Please check Preschool Class Dojo page and your child's Class Dojo page for announcements about when lunch bunch will be offered. Lunch Bunch is a fun time for children to bring their lunch (including a drink) to school, eat with their friends, and have some additional time together. Children from all the classes will have an opportunity to eat lunch together and playtime with one another.

The cost is $5 per child per day that your child stays. Checks need to be made out to Grace House Preschool or cash is accepted and should be put in your child's lunch box.

We reserve the right to discontinue offering lunch bunch if there is no demand for this service.

## Positive Discipline and Child Guidance Procedure

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management for children. When children receive positive, warm, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Our teacher's actions are respectful of children and never include corporal, verbal, or emotional punishment. Additionally, we do not relate discipline to food, rest, or the toilet. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, our staff follows this twelve-step behavior management guide. This guide was created by Linda LaRue of the North Carolina Child Care Commission, and Grace House has been given special permission by her to make use of this method at our Preschool.

**STEP 1 - *CREATE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT:*** A child's potential for learning is maximized when obstacles in the environment that might encourage failure are removed. By providing safe, childproof, interesting play spaces for children, we create an environment that enhances the probability that children will behave in appropriate ways.
**STEP 2 - *CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS:*** We realize a child's struggle for independence is a normal developmental phase. We ignore minor behaviors and limit our expectations to what is realistic for the child.
**STEP 3 - *SET CLEAR, FAIR, AND CONSISTENT RULES AND LIMITS:*** We teach self-discipline through expecting and setting reasonable limits for children. When children help develop these guidelines, they understand what is expected and can actively participate in the learning process.
**STEP 4 - *DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHILD:*** Consistent positive interactions between adults and children encourage respect and trust. Praise, hugs, acceptance, and communication help to gain a child's cooperation. We let children know we respect and understand their feelings.
**STEP 5 - *MODEL POSITIVE BEHAVIORS:*** Adults serve as positive role models and nurturers for children. We speak and act in ways we want children to speak and act.
**STEP 6 - *GIVE CHILDREN CHOICES:*** Children will model positive social behaviors when adults help them understand the consequences of their actions through meaningful conversations. We tell children what they *can* do rather than what they *cannot* do.
**STEP 7 - *TEACH CONSEQUENCES:*** In a child-centered environment, adults listen, guide, and help children. When children hear in simple words the results of their behaviors, they can better understand the problems associated with destructive behaviors. We help children understand why a change is needed and value mistakes as learning opportunities.
**STEP 8 - *TEACH PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS:*** In a positive learning environment, adults collect information about the situation, acknowledge and support the child's feelings, state the problems clearly in language a child understands, and help the child to generate several solutions to the problem. We teach life skills.

**STEP 9 - *ANTICIPATE AND REDIRECT:*** We anticipate potential problems and redirect the child's interest.
**STEP 10 - *DISCUSS IN PRIVATE:*** We privately help children learn to verbalize feelings and frustrations.
**STEP 11 - *CHANGE THE TECHNIQUE IF IT'S NOT WORKING:*** All children respond differently to situations. We carefully observe the child to determine reasons for misbehavior and try to find solutions that work for that child.
**STEP 12 - *ALLOW RENEWAL TIME:*** When necessary, we allow children a brief period of rest away from the situation. This renewal time and space is for calming the child and is not viewed as punishment. Children will remain in this renewal time for one minute per year of chronological age (e.g., 3-year-old student = 3 minutes in renewal time, maximum.)

We believe children have a right to consistent and fair expectations from adults. Whenever possible, we will work with the family to reach consensus for limits and expectations for the child. We pledge to be the family's partner in this process and will never use destructive discipline techniques.

Parents will always be informed of problems and progress involving their children. Please check your child's communication folder for daily information. Parent teacher conferences are encouraged for private conversations about your child.

Any severe behavior that disrupts a classroom will result in removal of the child from the classroom until he/she can gain control of him/herself. A note will be sent home that day for the parents to sign and return the following day. In the extreme case of a child inflicting or attempting to inflict harm to another (e.g., kicking, biting, punching), or a repeating occurrence of such behavior, a parent will be called to take the child home.

Children displaying chronic misbehavior will require an intervention plan to remain at GHP. This plan will be developed during a meeting involving parents, the Director, and the student's teacher(s). Timelines for behavior improvement will be agreed upon and criteria will be set for continued enrollment in the school.

If a child's behavior continues to be such that his safety or the safety of others is in danger and/or the rights of others are not respected thus making him/her unable to function in the group, the child will no longer be able to attend the Preschool.

## Student Participation

All students are encouraged to participate in all daily and weekly activities (i.e. Chapel, enrichment, playground, etc) whenever offered and attended as a class. All activities will be offered on more than one day to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate. If a child attends preschool on both days that the activity occurs and the class is attending on both days, the child will join the class on both days.

## Distribution of Promotional Literature

Neither parents nor staff may solicit either parents or staff for funds, services, or products that are not specifically related to fund-raising activities for the Preschool. If a parent or staff member is participating in a fundraiser for another non-profit organization, he/she may request permission from the Director to post notices at the Preschool and/or send notices home with students. The Director/GHP Board will approve or disapprove such requests on a case-by-case basis.

## Photographs and Publicity

Photographs of the children participating in our program may be taken from time to time. Any such photography will be done under the supervision of the Director and staff. These photos may appear on the bulletin board, in newsletters, in brochures, on our website, or in other publicity materials. Permission to use photos including your child or his/her work (artwork, crafts, projects, etc.) must be first granted by the child's parent via the *Student Photo Release Authorization*, which is part of the *Enrollment Form*.

## Children's Records

All records kept on each child are confidential. Children's records include enrollment information, medical information, accident reports, and evaluation/assessment reports. Parents have the right to view their child's records during regular school hours. If any changes occur in the parent and/or child's name, address, telephone numbers, insurance, physician information, or employment, please notify the Director and your child's teacher. The Preschool staff is required to sign a confidentiality statement.

## Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

All staff will comply with the provisions of the Child Abuse Reporting Act by bringing suspected cases of abuse and neglect to the attention of the Director. If necessary, the Director will report the suspected case to the Forsyth County Department of Social Services according to *GHP Child Protection Policy*.

## Health Policies

**Medical Information:**
Each child is required to have current immunizations to be enrolled in the Preschool. A copy of your child's immunizations must be dated and signed by doctor or other approved medical personnel and is due by the first day of school. GHP reserves the right to refuse entrance to school if immunization records are not provided, or if a child does not have current immunizations. Information about required immunizations is available from the director.

**Illness:**
For everyone's protection, children should be kept at home if they have had any of the following symptoms in the previous 24 hours:

- Temperature over 100°
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Constant runny nose
- Severe, persistent coughing
- Unexplained rashes or skin infections/conditions
- Eye infections of any kind
- Childhood diseases such as hand, foot, and mouth, etc. that could be contagious
- Head lice*

In most cases children must be free of all symptoms and/or on an antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to the Preschool.

Because allergies can be confused with illness, we encourage parents to treat their child's allergies so as not to cause panic. We will err on the side of caution and send a child home for symptoms such as

cough, fatigue, congestion, and diarrhea/vomiting because these can also be symptoms of many illnesses. In young children, a fever does not have to be present to be concerned.

**Returning to school:**
In most cases children must be free of all symptoms and/or on an antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to the Preschool.

Children must be able to participate in regular activities. If a child's teacher notices any signs or symptoms of a contagious disease or illness, the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. This precaution is best for the ill child as well as the other children. The child will be kept in a comfortable location with the Director and away from other children, to prevent exposure until the parent arrives. Please ensure that you (or your emergency contacts) are able to pick up your child within 30 minutes of being notified to minimize exposure to other students and staff.

*Before a student who was confirmed to have head lice returns to the classroom, the preschool director should be notified of the student's return and a follow up screening will be performed. A student may not return to class if the follow-up screening reveals live lice or nits.

**If your child is absent, please notify your child's teacher or the Director**. If your child is absent for more than 5 consecutive days for the 5 day, 4 day and 3 day a week schedules or 3 consecutive days for 2 day schedule with NO notification to the preschool as to the nature of the absence and/or your child's intention to return, your child will be withdrawn from the preschool program.

If a child develops a contagious disease, such as strep throat, hand,foot, and mouth, pink eye, or chicken pox, the Director should be notified immediately. The Director may notify other parents.

**Should your child have any allergies (food or otherwise), please notify your child's teachers and the director verbally and in writing immediately.**

**Medication:**
Grace House Preschool will not dispense any medications or vitamins other than a rescue inhaler, EpiPen,sunscreen, bug bite cream, burn cream, or diaper cream. EpiPens and Inhalers must be in their original container bearing the pharmacist's label which lists the child's full name, date prescription was filled, the physican's name, the name of the medication, the prescription number, and the the directions for dosage. No expired medication will be administered. Any child requiring EpiPen or Inhaler must have a signed *Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form* on file with the teacher. These forms are available upon request from the Director. Medication cannot be administered without this release form.

Medication for emergency use such as Epi pens and inhalers must be handed to the teacher who will place it out of reach of the children. All other medications must be given to the director to dispense.

If a prescribed medicine is necessary during school hours, parents and guardians are required to come to the school to admister the medication. Parents are required to first check in with the Director upon arriving via the main entrance of the church. The Director must be informed of the medication and it's possible side effects.

A parent may give a teacher standing authorization for up to 10 months to apply over-the-counter topical medication such as ointments, sunscreen, and diapering creams when needed. This type of medication may be administered by the child's teacher or the Director if the child has a *Permission to Administer Over-the-Counter Medications Form* on file. This form will be provided to parents at Open House.

## Emergencies

In case of an emergency, the staff will follow specific procedures:

**Minor Accident:**

- The teacher or Director will administer first aid. There is a first aid kit located in each classroom. A more extensive one is in the church office.
- The teacher will inform the parent of the accident on Class Dojo.
- The parent will be called if the injury requires a doctor's attention.

**Serious Accident:**

- The injured child is assessed and a teacher and/or the Director will administer First Aid as needed. If CPR is required, only a trained person will administer the CPR.
- The injured child will never be left unattended.
- Rescue squad is contacted at 911, giving the location and nature of emergency.
- A staff member will call the child's parents. If the parents cannot be reached, the child's emergency contact will be called.
- If the child is transported to the Emergency Room, the Director or staff member will take the child's backpack with him/her and remain with the child until parents/guardians arrive.
- An accident report will be prepared and kept on file.

Emergency contact information must always be kept current. Please notify the Director of any change. All of the Lead Teachers and the Director receive training in CPR and first aid. We will contact you or your emergency contact person as soon as possible in the event of an emergency.

**Fire – Actual or Drill:**
In the case of a fire or fire drill, the children shall be lined up in an orderly fashion. Then the staff will do a quick count and evacuate everyone through the door indicated on the escape route map posted near each classroom's interior door. After everyone is evacuated, roll call will be taken.

Each classroom will practice exiting the building monthly, and school wide fire drills will be conducted at least once a year. Teachers will discuss exit procedures with their class the first week of school and regularly thereafter throughout the school year. Please do not be alarmed if you hear the drill or happen to be in the church building at a time when a fire drill is taking place.

**Tornado - Actual or Drill:**
In cases where a tornado warning is issued by the National Weather Service, the children will be lined up in an orderly fashion, counted, and then the teachers will accompany their students to their designated area (the men's restroom, the bathroom hallway, or the copy room). After everyone is evacuated, roll call will be taken. In the event there is an actual tornado in the area, and there is no time to safely go to the designated areas, the children should first try to get in the class bathroom. If the classroom does not have a bathroom or if the bathroom is too full, the teachers will put children under a classroom table close to the interior wall. Children shall be instructed to turn toward the wall with their faces covered until teachers receive the all clear. GHP will hold a tornado drill (aka "tomato" drill) once a year.

**Lock Down Procedure:**
In cases where there is a safety threat in or near the church building, Grace House Preschool will be 100% locked down. All children will be moved to their classrooms and be placed under a classroom table or as low and as far away from the windows as possible. The teacher will ensure that all doors are locked or secured, the classroom lights are turned off and the blinds closed. The children shall be instructed to remain "hidden" until the teachers receive the all clear. GHP will hold a lock down drill once a year.

## Administrative Dismissal

The following situations can result in a child being dropped from enrollment:

A. <u>Nonpayment of fees:</u>

1. Registration fees (along with all signed forms and medical records) and activity fees must be paid before a child attends class.
2. Tuition is due by the date specified previously in this handbook under “Tuition”.
3. Further, the school reserves the right to refuse registration for the next year for any family whose accounts are chronically or excessively delinquent.

B. Failure to notify the school if absent:
If your child is absent, please notify your child’s teacher or the Director. If your child is absent for more than 5 consecutive days for the 5 day, 4 day and 3 day a week schedules or 3 consecutive days for 2 day and 1 day schedules with NO notification to the preschool as to the nature of the absence and/or your child’s intention to return, your child will be withdrawn from the preschool program.

C. Health and Safety
A major responsibility of GHP is to ensure the health, wellbeing, and safety of all the children enrolled. Failure of families to abide by health policies and provide the Preschool with current, accurate emergency information can result in the child’s dismissal from the Preschool.

D. Severe disruptive/destructive behavior
If, after all reasonable attempts (explained in the “Positive Discipline and Child Guidance Procedure” section of this handbook) have been made to accommodate the child’s individual needs, any child who demonstrates the inability to benefit from the program, or whose actions are detrimental to the group, will be dismissed.

*Fees paid for the month of a child’s dismissal will not be reimbursed.*

## Complaint Resolution and Grievance Policy

Any grievance involving a student, teacher and/or the classroom should first be addressed through a parent/teacher conference. If resolution is not obtained, the grievance may be referred to the following:

1st Director of Grace House Preschool
2nd Executive Board of Grace House Preschool

The Director will discuss the issue with the parties involved, make every effort to resolve the situation, and provide written feedback/resolution within one week.

If the parties involved continue to be dissatisfied or if the Director refers any grievance to the Preschool Board the grievance must be stated in writing. The statement must include the nature of the grievance, the relief sought, and a description of efforts, with dates, to resolve the issue(s) prior to the referral. The Executive Board will make every effort to respond promptly. The Board’s decision will be final in all cases.

We ask that all parties involved not discuss the grievance, previous conversations, or efforts of resolution with anyone outside those immediately involved with the situation.

## Parent Resources

**Smart Start** is North Carolina's nationally recognized and award-winning early childhood initiative designed to ensure that young children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. Smart Start Partnerships work in collaboration with many local agencies and often know whom to call in your community about issues. Information and links are also provided for the following topics:

- Family Support
- Raising Your Child

- Brain Development
- Tips for Promoting Healthy Development
- Developmental Milestones
- Child Care
- School Readiness
- Health and Safety
- Children with Special Needs

To get more information go to https://smartstart-fc.org

**ZERO TO THREE** works to ensure that babies and toddlers benefit from the family and community connections critical to their well-being and development. The organization plays a key role in ensuring that babies and toddlers get a strong start in life by supporting:

- parents with practical resources that help them connect more positively, deeply and continuously with their babies
- professionals with knowledge and tools that help them support healthy early development
- policymakers in advancing comprehensive and coherent policies which support and strengthen families, caregivers and infant toddler professionals

Their website is zerotothree.org.