

# Parent Handbook



Grace Lutheran Church  
and Child Care Center



**Grace**  **Lutheran**  
*Church and Child Care*

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[www.grace-charlotte.org](http://www.grace-charlotte.org)



*“Grow in the grace and knowledge  
of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
To him be the glory forever and ever!”*

*1 Peter 3:18*

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# Introduction

## Welcome!

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church & Child Care Center! Thank you for sharing your child with us during this important time of development and learning. Our staff is comprised of Christian men and women who are committed to your child. They are gifted and trained in the principles of early childhood growth and development. At Grace your child will experience individual attention in a nurturing, Christ-centered environment. Please use this handbook to become familiar with the policies, procedures and program information at Grace. If you have questions or suggestions, please speak with the director. May God bless our work together!

## Our Mission

The mission of Grace Lutheran Church and Child Care Center is to serve people in our community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We strive to accomplish our mission in the following ways:

- ◆ Christian teaching is woven through all the daily lessons and activities in every classroom.
- ◆ Chapel is a weekly activity which all children.
- ◆ Parents will be invited to participate in worship and Bible studies. You are encouraged to learn about Grace's Biblical teachings while your child is enrolled here!

## Our Philosophy

Grace believes that the guidance and teaching a child receives in early childhood greatly impacts the success they experience in school and beyond. We teach children through cooperative play and multi-sensory experiences in a flexible curriculum within a child-oriented academic atmosphere. Every day children have opportunities to experience challenges and success. Your child will grow academically, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually.

# About Child Care at Grace

## Center Hours

Grace is open Monday-Friday from 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.. Parents dropping off their child early or picking them up late are subject to early drop-off and late pick-up fees.

## Children Served

Grace served families with children ages 6 weeks-6 years old.

## Liability Insurance

Grace has appropriate public liability insurance coverage with Church Mutual Insurance.

## Confidentiality Policy

Each family is asked to only discuss information regarding a child's development, behavior or family situation with the director and teacher. We want to provide an environment that respects privacy.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

In accordance with federal law, Grace is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or disability. All students are welcome!

## **A Christian Child Care**

Grace is a Christian child care center. We will teach your child spiritual matters, morals and life choices that are God-pleasing and in agreement with the Bible as taught by Grace. All parents are strongly encouraged to complete Grace's Bible Basics Class to receive an understanding of what Grace teaches, believes and confesses. Parents are expected to respect Grace's doctrine and practices while enrolled in its child care center.

## **School Calendar & Holiday Closings**

Check the online calendar at [www.grace-charlotte.org](http://www.grace-charlotte.org) to see the exact dates for center closures as well as upcoming events and activities. The center is closed for 15-17 dates throughout the year for which you will need to make alternative care for your child if necessary. Those dates include the following holidays and events:

- ◆ New Year's Day
- ◆ Good Friday
- ◆ Memorial Day
- ◆ Independence Day
- ◆ Labor Day
- ◆ Thanksgiving and the day after
- ◆ Christmas Eve — New Year's Eve
- ◆ Teacher Preparation Day (August)
- ◆ Annual Teacher Training (September)

# Health and Safety

## **Sickness Policy**

Sick children should not attend school for the wellness of the other children and staff. Children may be excluded from Grace for the following:

Fever - a child with a fever of 100 degrees or more (for any reason) will be sent home and may not return until they have had a normal temperature for 24 hours without medication.

Diarrhea - a child with two loose, runny or watery bowel movements during the day may be sent home. They may not return until they are without a loose bowel movement for 24 hours.

Vomiting - a child who has two vomiting episodes during the day may be sent home and may not return until they are without a vomiting episode for 24 hours.

Eye Discharge - a child with thick mucus or pus drainage from the eye (Pink Eye Conjunctivitis) may be sent home and may not return until they are symptom free for 24 hours.

Severe Cough - a child suffering a chronic whooping cough will be sent home and may not return until they are cough free for 24 hours.

Chicken Pox - a child with chicken pox will be excluded until all of their pox are scabbed (about 7 days) and written permission to return is obtained from the doctor.

Head Lice - a child who has head lice will be sent home and is not allowed to return until they are treated and free from lice.

Skin Rashes - a child with an unidentified rash may be sent home and should not return until treatment has begun or a doctor has provided a note that the rash is not contagious.

In addition, if your child suffers from cold or flu like symptoms for more than a week, you may be required to provide written clearance from your pediatrician that they are not contagious. You may also be called to pick up your child if they are irritable, continuously crying, or require more attention than their caregivers can reasonably provide without compromising the care of the other children. If you are called to pick up your sick child, you may be asked to complete an "Illness Agreement" confirming your child's condition and agreeing to the terms of the sickness policy. You are required to pick up your child within an hour of the notice. Please be as prompt as possible as it is important to isolate a sick child to prevent the spread of any illness.

## **Cleaning & Sanitation**

The teachers in each classroom strive to maintain a clean and healthy environment for your child. You can expect the bathrooms to be sanitized and the floors to be swept, mopped and vacuumed daily. Toys that are mouthed by a child are set aside and cleaned with soapy water, rinsed, disinfected and air-dried before being used again. Teachers clean diaper-changing tables after each use with soapy water and a 500ppm bleach solution while tables are cleaned with soapy water and a 100ppm bleach solution. Crib sheets, bibs and rags are laundered daily and cot sheets are washed once a week. Unscented detergent without fabric softener is always used. Carpets are cleaned professionally every 6 months, and teachers are encouraged to use Grace's carpet cleaner to clean their carpeting as needed.



## **Hand-washing**

Proper hand-washing procedures required by the Department of Health are posted by every sink. Parents are asked to wash their hands and their child's hands when they arrive to the classroom. Children and teachers wash their hands regularly during the day especially after messy play, outdoor play, sneezing or wiping noses, performing first aid, handling mouthed toys, changing diapers, emptying trash, using cleaners, applying sunscreen, prepping and serving food or wiping up spills.

## **Injuries & Accidents**

Appropriate first aid measures are taken when a child is injured at Grace. A teacher who is trained in CPR and first aid is on-site at all times. If the injury is life-threatening, 9-1-1 is called immediately. An incident report is completed by the teacher to inform parents about how the injury occurred and what measures were taken. Parents will receive a report via brightwheel. Parents may also be notified by phone or at pick-up.

## **Safe Sleep Practices**

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the unexpected death of a seemingly healthy baby for whom no cause of death can be determined.

Grace strives to maintain a safe sleeping environment for babies to help lower the risk of SIDS with the following practices:

- ◆ All faculty providing care for children younger than 1 year are required to complete ITS/SIDS training through Child Care Resources Inc.
  - ◆ Infants are placed on their back to sleep, unless a medical waiver signed by a pediatrician is posted by their crib. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies be placed on their back to sleep, but when babies can easily roll over from back to stomach, they can adopt whichever position they prefer.
  - ◆ An infant's head will not be covered with blankets or bedding, nor will the crib be covered
  - ◆ Teachers will visually check sleeping infants every 15 minutes and will document the check. Sleep check records are retained for one month. Speak with your child's caregiver if you would like to see the records.
  - ◆ Caregivers will ensure that the babies are not overheating by regulating the room temperature to 68-75 degrees, avoiding excess bedding, and not over-dressing the babies.
  - ◆ No loose bedding, pillows, bumper pads, toys or stuffed animals will be left in a child's crib while they are sleeping.
  - ◆ Each child will have a safety-approved crib with a firm mattress.
- Only one child will be placed in a crib, with the exception of evacuation purposes

## **Biting Policy**

Biting is a natural stage of development and the teething process for children. It is usually temporary and is most common in ages 1-3, when children are developing their speech and often become frustrated with verbal communication. Biting usually is not an aggressive behavior with the intent to hurt, but an effort to communicate when frustrated. Children who bite are redirected, taught the importance of verbalizing their needs and provided with alternative ways to channel their frustration. Biting is NEVER an acceptable behavior. When a biting incident occurs, the child who was bitten is lavished with love and attention and an ice compress is placed on the bite, if necessary. An "Incident Report" is completed by the teacher and signed by the parents and the director. If the bite is severe enough to bleed, both families will be notified immediately. Each family will decide if a test for HIV and Hepatitis B is necessary. If both family agree not to test, the issue is settled. If one family would like to proceed with testing, then BOTH families must complete the testing. This is a requirement of North Carolina Health Department law. The director serves as a liaison between the two physician offices, the Health Department and the licensing consultant. The results are not revealed to anyone other than the involved families.

How Grace will respond to a biting incident:

- ◆ Be aware of times and situations that influence biting
- ◆ Coach children to verbalize their feelings
- ◆ Redirect children to a different activity
- ◆ Remind children what is "OK" to bite and what they should never bite
- ◆ Closely supervise children who have a history of biting
- ◆ Openly communicate biting incidents with the families of both children, respecting confidentiality
- ◆ Enlist the help of a behavioral specialist if the behavior is repetitive
- ◆ If a child bites the same child four or more times within a four-week period, the biting child may receive a 2-week suspension, if the parents of the bitten child request such a measure. The parents of the bitten child are entitled to this request. The suspension is intended to give parents the opportunity to change their child's behavior. No tuition is charged during the suspension.
- ◆ A suspended biter can return to their classroom after 2 weeks. If the behavior continues, the parents of the bitten can request an additional suspension. If after 2 suspensions the biting child's behavior is not corrected, the family will be asked to move to another classroom (if available) or end enrollment.

If your child has biting habits, please work with your child's teacher and the director to improve their behavior.

## **Medical Liability**

Parents are financially responsible for any emergency medical service provided to their child due to an illness or injury, including but not limited to, ambulance and emergency room costs. Grace Lutheran Church carries a general liability insurance in the event the church property is deemed at fault for an injury.

## Immunization Records

Each child is required to have a certificate of immunization on file at Grace, unless they provide a letter of religious exemption. Please be certain to bring an updated copy to the center when your child receives additional immunizations. Grace is required to annually report immunization records to the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services to ensure that your children's immunizations are current.

Which immunizations does your child need?

Age	Children should have these immunizations					
12-16 mo	3 DTaP	2 Polio	3-4 Hib	1 MMR	2 Hep B	1 Var+
19 mo	4 DTaP	3 Polio	3-4 Hib	1 MMR	3 Hep B	1 Var+
4 yrs +	5 DTaP	4 Polio	3-4 Hib	2 MMR	3 Hep B	1 Var+

## Medication

A "Medication Administration Form" should be completed if your child needs to receive medication at school, as directed by your pediatrician. This includes prescription and non-prescription medications as well as epi-pens. Please ask the director for this form to store medication at school. All medication needs to be kept in its **original container** and clearly marked with your child's name, the doctor's name and phone number, and dosage instructions. We cannot accept expired medications. NEVER leave medication in your child's backpack or in their cubby. Medication is stored in a locked cabinet in the office or in the refrigerator if it requires refrigeration. Please note: If your child has a fever or cold/flu-like symptoms, please do not medicate them at home and send them to child care. This will only spread the virus. If your child requires medication to address such symptoms, they are not healthy enough to be in a classroom. Please keep them home until the symptoms subside for 24 hours.

## Sunscreen

Each child ages 1-5 should have a bottle of sunscreen stored at the center during the summer months. Write your child's name on the bottle. Teachers will apply sunscreen to the children on days which require sun protection on the playground (Typically every day from March through September). Your teacher will have you sign a sunscreen permission form prior to applying it to your child. We cannot accept expired medications.

## Toilet Training

Grace begins to work together with parents on the task of toilet training at age 2. Speak with your child's teacher if you have any concerns or special requests regarding this important training. Grace requires all children to be potty-trained before moving into the threes classroom.

## Allergies

Please be certain to write down your child's allergies on the registration form and to make your child's teacher aware of them. Student allergies will be posted in the classroom for the safety and well-being of your child. You are also required to fill out an Allergy Action Plan. This plan requires a doctor's signature and will need to be updated every 6 months. We cannot accept expired medications. Please ask the director for this form. The form will require a doctor's signature and updated every 6 months.

## Cold Weather and Heat Policy

The center goes by the official heat and cold index. Which you can find here <https://www.weather.gov/ctp/ChillHeat> There is an index posted in every room and the director will check the conditions on a daily basis. Depending on what the index states the children will either have a shortened outside time or they will remain inside and provided an alternate activity.

### **Smoking Policy**

Smoking, tobacco, use of e-cigs, and/or vaping is not allowed on the premise under any circumstances. The premise is tobacco and smoke-free.

### **Fire Safety**

Grace is annually inspected by the Fire Marshall. The facility is equipped with a fire alarm which has pull stations and warning lights located in every classroom. Each classroom has a primary and secondary fire exit. An emergency exit map is posted in each classroom. All classrooms evacuate to the lower parking lot. The school practices and documents a fire drill each month.

### **Tornado Safety**

In the event a tornado is spotted in our area, students will seek cover in a centrally located room without windows and sit on the floor. Teachers will guide students to the following locations:

Infants	bathroom between classrooms
Toddler's	lower bathrooms
Two's	back of office
Three's	upper men's bathroom
Four's	upper women's bathroom

### **Emergency Plan**

Grace trains its faculty with a detailed Emergency Plan regarding emergencies such as fire, severe weather, illness, injury or death, bomb threats, utility or maintenance emergencies, hazardous material accidents, emergency lockdown and emergency evacuations. The North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services provided assistance in the development of this plan. Please speak with the director if you would like a copy of this plan.

### **Child Abuse & Neglect**

According to North Carolina Law, caregivers are required to report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect to the county Department of Social Services. If child abuse or neglect is suspected, the teacher will report it to the director, who will then report it to the appropriate authorities.

### **Children's Dress**

Please ensure that your children are dressed to play. Potty-trained children should also be dressed in clothing they can manage independently. Children should wear shoes that allow them to run, bloomers beneath dresses, belts they can open and close themselves and clothes that are OK to be dirty (sometimes child care activities are messy!) For your child's health and safety, it is recommended that your child's footwear be closed toe shoes. Flip flops and sandals are not recommended because they can be problematic for playground activities. Please speak with your child's teacher if you have questions regarding clothing that is appropriate for your child's classroom. Teachers may also make clothing recommendations to parents based on their child's activity during the day. You are encouraged to write your child's name on their clothing. And, be sure to have a change of clothes stored at Grace in the event of a bathroom accident.

# Security

## Key Fob Access

All entry doors to Grace are locked during school hours. Parents and faculty are provided a key fob for entry through the lower level entrance for a \$10 fee. Please do not share your fob with anyone. Families can purchase as many fobs as they need.

## Arrival & Departure

When you use your fob to enter the building on the lower level, Please sign in and out on the tablet. This practice helps us know exactly who is in the building and is for the safety and protection of your child. Please remember to always sign in and sign out. Also, please lock your vehicle doors before entering the building and never leave children or valuables in your vehicle unattended. Do not pick your child up off the playgrounds without checking them out on the tablet.

## Emergency Lockdown

In the event that Grace is threatened by an intruder, the school will go into emergency lockdown. The director will alert each classroom to the emergency with a code word via walkie talkies Teachers will ensure the hallways near their classroom are clear of students and then all classroom doors will be locked. Classroom lights will be shut off. Children will be instructed to be seated through out the room and to remain quiet. 9-1-1 will be contacted. Classroom doors will not be opened for anyone until the director alerts each classroom that the lockdown has ended.

# Staff

## Screening Requirements

All staff members and substitutes are fingerprinted and receive a local and national background check. They are also required to receive a physical and be tested for tuberculosis to ensure they are in good health and physically able to care for children. In addition, they complete an I-9 form to ensure they are legal residents.

## Education & Training Requirements

Grace strives to have teachers who are educated in early childhood education. All lead teachers are required to have a minimum of a North Carolina Child Care Credential. Most teachers have a Bachelor's Degree or an Associates Degree in education in addition to this credential. Assistant teachers must have a minimum of a high school diploma and the desire to achieve a credential.

## Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers from the congregation and from local staffing agencies are used to ensure that student-teacher ratios are followed when an employee is out sick or on vacation. All substitutes have received appropriate background and medical screening.

# Food and Nutrition

## Daily Snack

Grace provides all students (except for infants) with a morning and an afternoon snack which meets North Carolina requirements. A snack rotation is posted in each classroom and on hallway bulletin board.

## Lunch Requirements

Parents provide lunches for their child. North Carolina Department of Health requires parents to provide components to each lunch they bring. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that these components are included:

- 1 serving of fluid milk
- 1 serving of protein
- 1 serving of grain
- 2 servings of fruit, 2 servings of vegetables, or 1 of each

Some ideas to consider for your child's lunch might be:

- Protein: lunch meat, yogurt, eggs, cheese, sliced hot dogs
- Grain: bread, crackers, bagel, pasta, cereal
- Vegetable: green beans, peas, corn, carrots
- Fruit: bananas, peaches, oranges, cut grapes, fruit cups, raisins

Your child's lunch should be ready to serve when you bring it to the center. Teachers cannot do any food preparation (cutting, peeling, heating, etc.) Avoid sending popcorn, tortilla chips, whole grapes or any food that is a choking hazard. Also avoid sending candy or caffeine. There may be further classroom restrictions due to severity of food allergies.

## Peanut-Free Environment

Because so many children suffer from a peanut allergy, Grace is a peanut-free environment. Please do not include peanut butter or other peanut products in your child's lunch. Products containing peanuts will not be served and will be discarded.

## Birthday Treats

Birthdays are special! You are encouraged to bring a classroom treat to celebrate your child's birthday. However, all treats must be store bought. Homemade treats are not acceptable to the North Carolina Department of Health.

## Label Food & Drink

Please be certain to label all of your children's food containers, sippy cups and bottles with their name and the date it was brought to school. All parts of the container and lids of bottles and cups must also be labeled with your child's name or initials.

## Pizza Friday

Each Friday, parents have the option of ordering pizza for their children. Grace provides a fruit and veggie to go with the lunch. The cost for Pizza Friday is \$5 per child. Simply email the director and your account will be charged accordingly.

# Classroom

## Classroom Capacities

Infant Room	5 children
Toddler Room	6 children
Two's Room	10 children
Three's Room	15 children
Four's Room	20 children

## Curriculum

Grace uses the High Scope philosophy of learning. It is a student-driven approach in which children learn through interactive play. High Scope is organized into eight content areas: (1) approaches to learning; (2) language, literacy, and communication; (3) social and emotional development; (4) physical development and health; (5) mathematics; (6) science and technology; (7) social studies; and (8) creative arts. Within these content areas are 58 key developmental indicators (KDIs). The KDIs are statements of observable behaviors that define the important learning areas for young children. Our teachers keep these indicators in mind when they set up the learning environment and plan activities. The KDI's are posted in each classroom. Teachers strive to help your child achieve these KDI's by developing lesson plans that fit their interests. Speak with your child's teacher to find out what lessons she is planning for the classroom!

Grace supplements your child's learning with Bible lessons as well. Each day your child will hear stories from the Bible and sing songs about their Savior, Jesus. At Grace they will be taught that the Bible is the Word of God and that faith in Jesus Christ's payment for sin is the only way to heaven.

## Classroom Schedules

Each classroom has a daily schedule posted in the room and given to you in the welcome packet. Please speak with your child's teacher if you have any questions about the scheduled activities.

## Open Door Policy

Parents are welcome to visit Grace at any time. We encourage parents to come visit your child's classroom to observe how they are doing. If you have a question or concern, please come to the office to visit with the director. Grace Lutheran Childcare values parental input in its effort to improve.

## Parent Activities

Parents are welcome to participate in various activities throughout the year including, but not limited to Classroom Parties for Holidays, Popsicles on the Playground , Family Gatherings, and Parent Seminars

## Video & Computer Use Policy

Video use is limited to 30 minutes per week at Grace Lutheran Childcare. This may be used in one presentation or divided into increments. Teachers do not utilize the allowed time very often. Any use will be approved by the director beforehand. No media screen time is used in the Infant, Toddler, or 2's classrooms. Computer time is limited to 15 minutes of use per student per day.

### **Attendance Policy**

Grace plans for your child to attend for the days you have enrolled. If your child will not be attending on a day they are expected, please contact the director or teacher via brightwheel or email to make them aware of your child's absence. If your child is a part time student, they can only attend on the days for which they have enrolled, regardless of holidays or vacations. (e.g. Tuesday-Thursday students can only come on Tuesdays and Thursdays).

### **Hand-washing**

Grace Lutheran Childcare makes every effort to be a sanitary environment for your child. All faculty, parents and children are expected to wash their hands when they arrive in the classroom, before eating, food prep, after toileting/diapering, playing outside and any other appropriate times. Regular hand-washing will help reduce the spread of germs and illness.

### **Rest/Naptime**

Each classroom has a scheduled time to rest. Grace provides cots and cot sheets for the children. Cot sheets are laundered regularly. Your child is encouraged to bring a blanket and one small favorite stuffed animal to use during rest time.

### **Outdoor Play**

Each class has outside time daily and has access to a playground directly from their classroom. The upper playground is designed to serve the needs of preschoolers, while the lower playground is designed to serve the needs of infants & toddlers. Please make sure that your child has proper footwear for outdoor play and is dressed seasonally appropriate.

### **Weekly Chapel**

All the students gather in the sanctuary each Friday at 9:00AM for a special devotion with the Staff Minister. Parents are welcome! Every interactive message is designed to communicate the message of people's sin and God's love in Jesus to the children and faculty. The weekly lesson will compliment the lesson the children are learning during the week.

### **Summer Water Play Day**

During the summer months [Memorial to Labor Day], children are invited to wear their swimsuit to school for Water Play Day. Be sure to bring a towel and a change of clothes too! The children will have a chance to play water games during outside time. Shoes must always be worn on the playground, so please provide your child with water shoes or an extra pair of shoes. Water Play Day typically takes place on Fridays.

### **What to Bring on the First Day**

Each family will be given a welcome letter with a list of what to bring for each specific classroom.

### **Toys from Home**

Please do not allow your child to bring toys and unrequired personal items from home to school unless it is for show and tell. Personal toys often cause disagreements and are sometimes lost or broken while at school. We have plenty of toys and games for the children, so please keep your child's toys at home.



**Discipline Policy**

Grace strives to have a program that is well-planned, creative and stimulating in order to hold the child's interest and not allow the children to be idle in the classroom. Discipline is a way of correcting improper behavior and achieving expected behaviors. Rules are established in each classroom to encourage desired behaviors. Teachers model appropriate behaviors and modify the environment to help prevent problems before they occur. Encouragement and positive reinforcement are used to reinforce acceptable behavior. Children are given opportunities to make choices for their behavior. We use logical and natural consequences with children as a result of their poor choice. Corporal punishment will never be used. Discipline is never related to food, rest, or toileting. Conferences are scheduled with parents as needed to work together as a team in the best interest of the children. When discipline problems arise, our faculty uses the Bible as a guide to address the situation. The message of the Law shows children their sin and what they have done wrong. The message of the Gospel shows the children their forgiveness in Jesus Christ, motivates them to forgive others and inspires them to make God-pleasing choices.

**Center and Room Parents**

Every classroom has "Room Parents". Two or three parents work together to help the teacher with special events such as classroom parties and celebrations as well as teacher appreciation and recognition. Speak with the director if you would like to volunteer to be a room parent. The center has one set of parents who act as a "center parents" to help the director to ensure all areas are being met.

**Evaluations**

Grace works with speech, occupational, and physical therapist. Twice a year the children will be evaluated and the parents will be given results of the evaluations. If a parent or a teacher has a concern outside of those screening they may ask the director and she will organize an earlier screening. If a child qualifies and a parent chooses to proceed the sessions will be held at Grace during operating hours. The director will coordinate with the teachers and therapist. The results of the sessions will also be shared with the teachers and director to ensure we are meeting each child at their developmental levels.

Each child will also be assessed every six months by their teachers based on their birthdays. These assessments will aide the teacher in their lesson plans. The director will assess them and reach out to the parents to inform them of their completion. If you would like to meet with the director and the teacher to discuss the results please schedule a time with them.

# Communications

## **On the Web**

Please bookmark [www.grace-charlotte.org](http://www.grace-charlotte.org) in your web browser! Here you will find program information and other resources including a calendar. Also be sure to “like” Grace Lutheran Church & Child Care Center on Facebook.

## **E-Mail**

Grace regularly communicates announcements, news, reminders, activities and events through e-mail. Please ensure that each parent and guardian has a valid e-mail address on file with the director. Please be sure to read each e-mail carefully!

## **Weather Closures**

On a rare occasion the director may decide to close Grace Lutheran Childcare due to severe weather. In the event of bad weather, please check brightwheel for a closure announcement. Your classroom teacher will also be calling/texting you with notification should Grace close due to inclement weather if needed.

## **brightwheel**

Upon enrollment you will be given an account with brightwheel. Throughout the day you will be able to check the app on your phone to see how your child is doing and communicate with the teachers. Please turn on your notifications so you do not miss any important information.

## **Illness Alerts**

Grace is very open about illnesses at the center. If a doctor diagnoses a student with any condition that is contagious, an illness alert message will be sent to all the parents. The illness alert is not meant to alarm anyone, but simply to make parents aware of existing illnesses so they take notice if their child shows symptoms.

## **Message Board**

Announcements and reminders about events, activities and dates of closure are written on the message board above the daily registration table. Please stop to take notice of these postings.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parents can request a private conference with the teacher at any time to discuss their child. Teachers will request conferences with parents at their discretion. Conferences are an opportunity for you to have the teacher’s undivided attention and to address any questions or concerns you may have concerning their care and education and a chance to offer ideas and suggestions. It’s also an opportunity for the teacher to share their concerns and suggestions. Please speak with the director if you would like to schedule a meeting.

## **Parent Grievances**

If you have a concern or a complaint about anything at Grace, please discuss it with the director. Do not complain to teachers or other parents. The director is here to address your concerns and to ensure that both you and your child have an enjoyable experience at Grace Childcare. She will take action on your concern or address it with Grace’s Church Council.

# Financial

## Tuition Rates

Please see updated rates on our website or call our director at 704-365-6828.

## Fees

Please be aware of the following fees that administration reserves the right to charge:

- ◆ Annual Registration Fee - The fee is \$150.00 per family. This fee is due upon enrollment and on each July 1st.
- ◆ Late Pick Up Fee - Grace closes at 5:30 pm. Parents picking up their child after this time will be charged a late fee of \$1.00/minute. If arriving late, parents should expect to sign a Late Pick-up Release Form and agree to the fee charged. Your account will be charged the following Monday.
- ◆ Insufficient Funds Fee - If your account has insufficient funds for your payment, you will be assessed a \$25.00 insufficient funds fee.
- ◆ Pizza Fee
- ◆ Extra-Curricular Fee (2-years-old and up)
- ◆ Fob Fee - \$10/Fob

## Payment of Tuition & Fees

Please note the following regarding your payment of tuition and fees:

- ◆ Please complete an EFT authorization form and submit it to the office with a voided check.
- ◆ EFT payments are debited from your account each Monday.
- ◆ There are no refunds or credits for holidays, sick days, vacation days or weather closure days.
- ◆ Only 51 weeks of tuition is charged. There is no tuition charged on the last Monday of the calendar year.
- ◆ Vanco Services emails a receipt for your payment each week
- ◆ Payment reports are available upon request for employer reimbursement programs. An annual payment report is issued in January for your tax return purposes.
- ◆ If you have any questions about your payment either contact the director or Brent Bitter at [brent.bitter@grace-charlotte.org](mailto:brent.bitter@grace-charlotte.org)

# Enrollment

## Pre-enrollment Tour

It all begins with a tour! All parents are encouraged to come to Grace prior to enrollment to receive a tour of the facility, meet the teachers, see the classrooms and ask questions.

## Enrollment Information

The following information needs to be submitted to the office for your child's enrollment:

- ◆ \$150 Registration Fee
- ◆ Completed Enrollment Application
- ◆ Signed Sickness, Discipline, Bite and Safe Sleep Policy Statements
- ◆ Children's Medical Report signed by your pediatrician
- ◆ Immunization Record
- ◆ EFT authorization Form with a voided check

## Home Visit

Before attending, the director and your child's teacher will come to your home for a visit in order to get to know you and your child's needs, tell you about the classroom's procedures and provide you with an opportunity to ask questions. They will also ask you to sign any necessary classroom permission forms and to complete an emergency card to keep in the classroom. Speak with the director to set up a convenient time for a home visit.

## Discontinuation of Enrollment

In the event you wish to discontinue services, a 2 week written notice is required. Grace Lutheran Childcare reserves the right to discontinue service if the center cannot meet the child's needs, if the child's behavior endangers others, if the child is absent for a long duration, if tuition payments are late or if parents refuse to abide by the policies at Grace.

## Extra-curriculars

Grace works with 3 vendors for extra-curriculars, Happy Feet (Soccer), Shining Stars (Theater), and Hello Spanish. If a parents would like their children to participate in these activities they need to speak with the director to enroll their child. The fee is \$75/child/month to enroll. This payment would come out the first of the month with EFT withdrawal.

## **Helpful Hints for Parents**

1. Set reasonable and consistent bed times. A 2-3 year old requires 11-12 hours of sleep.
2. Arrive at school at a consistent time; students need routine.
3. Make a quick get-away. Most children will cry and fuss when you leave them. Lingering in the classroom or hallway will only make the separation more difficult.
4. Allow sufficient time for breakfast and morning routines; being in a hurry will cause stress.
6. Leave toys and any items of value at home. We are not responsible for any items from home that are lost or broken at Grace.
7. Understand that the work of children is play. Children learn through play. Our classrooms are designed to foster discovery, learning, relationships and communication through play.
8. Make sure your children are dressed to play outdoors. Provide them with socks and shoes that are sturdy. Flip-flops and shoes without backs are not recommended for outdoor play.
9. Encourage your child to talk about school. When receiving answers like “I don’t know” or “nothing”, prompt your child with more specific questions like, “What song did you sing in school today?” or “What was the Bible story about today?”
10. Get to know your child’s teacher and the director. They are your partner in teaching and educating your child and want to help your child reach their full potential.
11. Please inform the teacher and director if someone other than a parent will be picking up your child and ensure they are recognized as authorized for pick-up on the registration form and classroom emergency card. Identification will be requested at pick up if the teacher does not recognize them.
12. Please make your child’s teacher aware of any happenings at home that may affect your child’s behavior (death of a grandparent, illness of a sibling, absence of a parent, etc.)
13. Read all e-mails and paperwork from Grace. We make every effort to communicate with parents and we want to ensure that you are informed about any happenings at Grace.
14. Please pray for us! The entire staff at Grace understands the importance of their role in your child’s life. Ask the Lord to provide the staff with the wisdom, patience and endurance to provide the best possible care for your child.

***God bless your family as you grow at Grace!***

