



Parent Handbook

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PARENT HANDBOOK

Statement of Ministry – Grace Lutheran Preschool exists to provide a Christ-centered environment in which young children can grow and develop to realize their full potential spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively. In addition, our ministry provides resources to assist parents and caregivers in the Christian education of their preschoolers.

Grace Lutheran Preschool – Grace Lutheran Preschool is operated by Grace Lutheran Fellowship Church in Romeo, Michigan and licensed by the State of Michigan. The preschool is staffed by a qualified director, teachers and paraprofessionals who are caring Christian people. We serve all children within the community. We do not discriminate against any race, sex or religion at Grace Preschool. The Preschool Director will report to the Board of Education.

Learning Environment – Our preschool classroom is filled with age-appropriate toys and equipment specifically selected for learning through play. The Family Life Center/Outdoor Playground will serve as a great resource for gross motor activities.

Program – Our preschool program provides a balance between active and quiet activities. Music, Devotions, Art, Story Time, Math and Science Activities, Fine Motor, Gross Motor, Gym, Cognitive Development, Learning Centers, Dramatic Play, Cooking, and Chapel are all included in our program.

1. **Spiritually** – Devotions will be included in our daily activities along with Chapel, once a month. The love of God will be shared through stories, songs and prayers, but most of all through Christian staff who reflect that love in their daily instruction with children.
2. **Intellectually** – We will provide experiences that are developmentally appropriate for each age level. Our programs are designed to promote a love for learning while working with the children on shape, number and alphabet recognition, printing their names, cutting, language development, etc.
3. **Socially** – We will encourage development of communication and listening skills through oral language experiences, literature, puppetry, finger plays, music, dramatization, free play and other group activities.
4. **Physically** – Developmental activities such as: hopping, jumping, galloping, skipping, rhythm activities, dancing, etc. will be used to encourage large motor development. Fine motor development will be provided through cutting, coloring, drawing, art projects, games, toys, puzzles, painting, play dough, molding, pegboards, sorting, matching, etc.
5. **Emotionally** – We emphasize that each child is a special and precious gift from God. We will enable children to feel good about themselves and their progress. We will encourage development of individual independence and a healthy self-image.

Licensing Notebook

1. The licensing notebook contains all the licensing inspection and special investigation reports and related corrective action plans for the last five years.
2. The licensing notebook is available to parents during school hours.
3. Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past three years are available on the childcare licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

Class Size

1. All class sizes, including the adult to child ratio, will conform to the requirements set forth by the State of Michigan. Those ratios are listed below. At Grace Preschool we will strive to have a teacher to student ratio of 1:7 in all our classes.
2. With present classroom facilities, the three-year old class will not exceed 18 children. Teacher to student ratio is 1:8.
3. With present classroom facilities, the four-year-old class will not exceed 20 children. Teacher to student ratio is 1:10.
4. With present classroom facilities, the Pre-K class will not exceed 20 children. Teacher to student ratio is 1:12.

Drop-off and Pick-up Policy – Please be prompt when dropping off and picking up your child. Parents are required to remain in the lobby with the child until the teacher opens the door to the classroom and greets everyone. Parents can “Love and Go” in the lobby (give your child some love and then go). The teachers will bring students over to the classroom.

Upon dismissal, it is important that the parents arrive, in the lobby, to pick up their child on time. The Director/Teacher provides a summary of the day’s activities as well as important announcements. We have observed that it can be a very traumatic experience for the child if his/her parent is late. If an emergency arises and you are running late, please call the church office at (586)752-9800 to leave a message so we can assure your child that everything is fine, and you will be arriving shortly. **If we do not receive a call, we will assess a late fee.** For the first fifteen minutes after dismissal, the fee will be \$10.00 plus an additional \$5.00 for every five minutes thereafter. The staff will be happy to stay with your child if we know there is a problem in advance. Our hope is that late fees will not be necessary.

Outer doors will be locked during class times for the safety of the children.

Admission Policy and Registration Fees – Registration will take place in winter with preference given to currently enrolled families and/or Grace members for the first two weeks of registration. Registration will be based on a first come, first served basis. Registration will be open to the general public in January at our Open House and will continue all year long. A completed registration form must be accompanied by a **non-refundable registration fee**. The registration fee is \$90 for 3's, 4's and Young 5's programs.

All tuition must be current at the time of registration. ALL applications must be reviewed and approved by the Director, prior to final registration. All necessary forms must be completed and submitted on or before final registration in August or the child may forfeit their place in the class.

Age Requirements

The child must reach the age of three before **September 1st** of the school year to be eligible for the Three-year-old program. The child must be potty-trained to be enrolled in school.

The child must reach the age of four before **September 1st** of the school year to be eligible for the Four-year-old program (with guidance from the Director).

The child must reach the age of five before **December 1st** of the school year to be eligible for the Young 5's program (with guidance from the Director).

New registration/application forms must be completed each year. All financial responsibilities must be current. Placement is not guaranteed from one year to the next.

IMPORTANT - The child must be toilet trained in a routine that includes the knowledge of when to use the bathroom and the ability to independently maneuver clothing. Training pants or disposable "pull-up" pants are not appropriate for preschool.

The child must be in good health with **all immunizations current**. The health form must be completed and signed by a physician before the child will be admitted into the program. An information card must be completed containing home and emergency numbers, allergies, and other appropriate information. A waiver must be obtained from the Health Department if the child does not receive immunizations.

Children who meet these requirements will be admitted, as space is available without regard to race, color, or national origin.

Special Needs Plan – Our goal at Grace Preschool is to serve all children between the ages of 3-5 years old. If a child is identified as having a special need, we will work with the parent and create a plan for their care at our preschool. Our program offers low class ratios (see Class Size, page 4). We can serve children with special needs if their needs can be met within these ratios. If a child requires a one-on-one care situation we may have to refer them to Special Services within Romeo Community Schools. We service a group of children and we must assure all children's needs are being met. Staff will need to be made aware of students with allergies or medical conditions. A medication form will be completed for administering medication. An action plan for each type of special need will be kept on file.

Withdrawal Policy - When your child is enrolled in our preschool, it is expected that he/she will remain with us for the entire year. However, if it should become necessary for you to withdraw your child, please notify us in writing at least two weeks prior to withdrawal. This will give us time to notify a child from the waiting list so that they will be ready to start when your child leaves. **Withdrawal from preschool will result in the loss of your final month's tuition.**

Special circumstances will be considered by the Board of Christian Education.

Termination of Enrollment Policy – When the individual needs of the child cannot be served by the preschool or if program policies are being disregarded, the Director reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment in the program. Such termination decisions will not be made without prior consultation with the child's parents. In most cases, the parents will be given a two-week period to make other arrangements. However, Grace Preschool reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment at any point in time in a situation determined to be extremely detrimental to the child concerned, or other children, or other staff in the program.

Possible reasons for termination of enrollment include but are not limited to:

- 1) The child's behavior is having a consistent negative effect on the well-being and development of other children. Factors to be considered include:
 - The possibility of danger to the child or others in class
 - The impact of the problematic behavior on the rest of the class
 - Availability of resources to the center
 - Ability of staff to meet the child's needs
 - The willingness of the family members to work with the staff and/or get outside help
- 2) Non-payment of tuition and fees
- 3) Non-compliance with Grace Preschool policies
 - Habitual lateness in picking up the child
 - Failure to provide the required forms, i.e. physical, immunizations, enrollment packet

Termination from preschool will result in loss of your final month's tuition.

Discipline Policy – Our staff uses positive Christ-centered methods of discipline. The children will learn the rules/limits of the preschool to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. Positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self direction, self-esteem, and cooperation must be used. As a child crosses limits, he/she will be reminded and redirected into some other activity. If limits are crossed a second time, teacher-directed questions will be asked to the child to work through conflict resolution and reach a solution. The teacher or director will work toward an acceptable solution and if a problem persists, the parents will be contacted as part of the problem-solving process.

All the following means of punishment are prohibited:

1. Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.
2. Placing any substances in a child's mouth, including but not limited to, soap, hot sauce, or vinegar.
3. Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her.

4. Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child.
 5. Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
 6. Excluding a child from outdoor play or other gross motor activities.
 7. Excluding a child from daily learning experiences.
 8. Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar enclosure.
 9. Time out must not be used for children under 3 years of age.
- B. Non-severe and developmentally appropriate discipline or restraint may be used when reasonable necessary, based on a child's development, to prevent a child from harming himself or herself or to prevent a child from harming other persons or property, excluding those forms of punishment prohibited above.

Accident & Serious Injury Policy – Our staff will do everything possible to provide a safe learning environment for your child while he/she is attending Grace Lutheran Preschool. However, should an accident occur at school, our staff will take the following steps:

1. An adult will remain with the injured child.
2. Basic first aid will be administered.
3. The parent will be notified.
4. If necessary, an emergency rescue service or ambulance will be contacted.
5. An incident report will be completed by a staff member and placed in the child's file, as well as, sent home.

Notification will occur at pick up time for minor injuries. Incidents such as a minor scrape on the knee may only require staff to apply first aid, complete incident report, and notify parent at pick up time verbally and provide written injury report.

Notification of parent or guardian will occur immediately via telephone call to parent for serious injuries/incidents. If unable to reach parent the emergency contact person will be contacted immediately for more serious injuries, illnesses, or incidents such as but not limited to head injuries of any kind, injuries requiring medical attention, allergic reactions/rashes, seizures, asthma attacks, unconscious child, fever, vomiting child, or incidents involving lost children, physical discipline of a child by a staff member/volunteer, alleged sexual contact between children or between a child and staff/volunteer...etc.

Illness Policy – The following guidelines have been established to ensure the health of the children and staff in the program. **Please keep your child home for the following reasons:**

1. Children with pink eye, strep throat, diarrhea, vomiting, flu, fever, Covid, undiagnosed rashes, etc. **Your child must be fever and symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.**
2. Children infected with head lice.
3. Children not able or willing to participate in class due to lack of sleep, colds, allergies, etc.

Parents are expected to contact the school whenever their children will not be in attendance. If due to illness, please state the problem. Please be aware that toys and equipment

will be disinfected regularly. Health and safety topics will be included in the program to promote a healthy environment for your child.

If a child becomes ill at school, the parents will be notified of the child's condition and asked to pick him/her up at the school as quickly as possible (see Accident & Serious Injury Policy above).

All communicable diseases are reported to the state and parents will be notified via email and/or written notification sent home.

Medication -

Medication, prescription or nonprescription, must be given to a child by a child care staff member only. A child care staff member shall give medication, only with prior written permission from a parent. All medication must be in its original container, stored according to instructions, and clearly labeled for a named child. Medication will be given according to the directions on the original container, unless otherwise authorized by a written order of the child's physician. The preschool will maintain a record as to the time and the amount of medication given or applied and include staff signature.

Calendar – The preschool will begin in mid-September and end in mid-May. We are open Monday-Thursday 9:00-2:00 and Friday 9:00-12:00 for preschool classes. We are closed on National holidays. We have the same holiday breaks as Romeo Community Schools.

Daily Activities – Each class will have Free choice, Circle time, Small group, Circle time, Snack, and Large Motor activities.

Snow Days – In case of severe weather, the preschool will follow the closing of Romeo Community Schools. The first two days (for 3 yr. old class), three days (for 4 yr. old class) or four days (for Young 5's class) missed due to weather or building emergencies (i.e. no power) will not be made up. Any additional days will be added to the end of the school year.

Dress Code – Your child should dress in washable and comfortable play clothes that are appropriate to the weather. Elastic waistbands and rubber-soled shoes are best. Children should only wear belts if they are able to buckle and unbuckle them without assistance. Each child must be able to remove clothing him/herself to use the bathroom (overalls can sometimes present a huge challenge for a young child). **Please label** all outerwear with the child's name. The child's clothing should be marked for easy identification. Jogging suits are permissible if appliqué is appropriate. Shorts may be worn in warm weather. Tennis shoes are preferred for the safety of the children. No sandals or flip flops. We will go outside in the winter if the temperature is above 25 degrees including wind chill. Please send appropriate outdoor clothing.

Field Trips – Students must be accompanied by their parents (or responsible adult) on all field trips. Field trips are optional but are strongly encouraged. Regular classes will not be held on field trip days. Maps and field trip information, including cost, will be provided prior to the event. Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from the field trip sight and for their supervision while there.

School Supplies – A school supply list will be provided. Please bring the supplies to school with your child on the first day of class. **Each child should have a school bag large enough to contain projects, which also has handles or heavy straps. THE CHILD’S NAME SHOULD BE PROMINENT ON THE FRONT OF THE SCHOOL BAG.**

Safety – A Child Information Card must be completed and on file before your child may begin Grace Lutheran Preschool. ALL lines MUST be filled in. If any changes occur over the year, please let us know. It is very important that we have accurate information if we need to reach you.

For your child’s protection, we will only release a child to a parent or other adult listed on the card. Carpool names should be listed.

In case of fire or severe weather, staff members will follow the emergency plans prepared for the safety of the children. Parents will be notified after we have the children in a safe place.

A. Fire

1. Sound the alarm
2. Director/Teacher:
 - Take all of the children and attendance record out the back door to the back of the parking lot.
 - Take roll to account for all children in attendance.
 - Keep children calm and quiet.
3. Aide:
 - Contact Fire Department
 - Check Center for children in lavatories, closets, under desks, behind curtains
 - Proceed to the back of the parking lot and help teacher keep children calm and quiet.

B. Tornado

1. Sound the alarm
2. Director/Teacher:
 - Take all of the children and attendance record to the kitchen.
 - Take roll to account for all children in attendance.
 - Keep children calm and quiet.
3. Aide:
 - Check Center for children in lavatories, closets, under desks, behind curtains.
 - Bring radio to the kitchen for weather monitoring.
 - Help teacher keep children calm and quiet.

Parents will be notified by:

- Email/Parent communication app

- Staff will use the emergency child information cards to contact parents via phone for pick up.

C. **Man-Made Disaster and Relocation Plan** – Man-made disasters include but are not limited to: Flood, blizzard, gas leak/chemical spill, sewer back up and power outages.

We will relocate the children if any of the above disasters were to occur at the church. We will enlist the help of law enforcement if such an incident occurs and conditions warrant their involvement.

In the event that the disaster is not a life-threatening emergency, we will relocate the children to our “fire safe hill” at the back of the church property until such time as the building is deemed safe to return.

In the event we are unable to return to the church building, children will be relocated to Woodside Bible Church across the street at 7800 W. 32 Mile Road. It would be the responsibility of our staff to transport the children in their vehicles or walk children to Woodside Bible Church if an immediate evacuation of the premises occurred.

Parents will be notified by:

- Email/Parent communication app
- Staff will use the emergency child information cards to contact parents for immediate pick up.
- The preschool will post a notice with the relocation site address in a conspicuous location at the preschool that can be seen from outside.
- The preschool will notify the local law enforcement agency so they can let parents know where their children have been taken if a parent contacts the police department.

Plan for Evacuation with Special Needs Children – Children with special needs may have difficulty in an emergency situation. Our plan will be to identify students whose needs require additional assistance in the event of an evacuation:

- Children with mobility issues that require full or guided assistance will be assigned to the lead teacher to evacuate the child.
- The lead teacher will assist the child(ren) in getting into equipment or guiding the child by the arm to safely evacuate them from the building.
- The teacher aide will take any medication, and the emergency card information for this child.
- Evacuation caregivers will evacuate the building and take children to our “fire safe hill” or to our relocation site at Woodside Bible Church located at 7800 W. 32 Mile Road.

Snacks/Lunch – Each session the children will have a nutritious snack that includes two food groups. A snack list of donations will be provided to our preschool families. We will collect all donations and preschool staff will prepare snacks for the class. A snack calendar will be made available on our communication app and the calendar will be posted on our bulletin board. We ask that snacks be nutritious, low in sugar, and include two food groups as regulated by licensing. For students eating lunch at school, parents are required to sign a form that states they

will provide their child's lunch. If a child is at school without lunch, Grace Preschool will provide lunch for them.

If your child is celebrating his/her birthday, they may bring in a "sweet treat", i.e. cookies and Rice Krispie treats. Due to the messiness, **we request that you do not bring cupcakes.**

Communications – A parent orientation meeting will be held at the beginning of the school year. A progress report will be provided in the fall and spring, and parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring. Parents will receive communication on upcoming events through parent communication app.

The teacher is always willing to discuss the child's progress or problems with parents, but not at busy times and not in front of the child. We encourage you to keep open lines of communication with the teacher. We view ourselves as partners with you, not substitutes for you. Your young child is a precious gift from God. Let us know how we can best serve you and your child.

At the end of the day the Lead Teacher will come out and discuss with the parents what their child has done for that day.

Tuition

3-year-old (monthly installments of \$120)	Tuesday/Thursday program	\$1,080.00/year
4-year-old (monthly installments of \$175)	Monday/Wednesday/Friday program	\$1,575.00/year
Young 5's (monthly installments of \$200)	Monday/Wednesday/Friday program	\$1,800.00/year

Tuition may be paid annually or in installments with the first and last months due before the beginning of the school year. Seven ensuing payments are **due on the first of each month**. Parents will have the option to utilize direct payment of tuition. Payments made without utilizing direct payment should be by **check or money order** and made out to Grace Lutheran Fellowship. Parents are asked to enclose payment and completed coupon in a sealed envelope and **deposit in the lock box outside of the classroom**.

Payments made after the tenth of the month will be subject to a late charge of \$20 unless other provisions have been made. Failure to remit payment and late charge by the 15th of the month will result in a call to the family by a member of the Board of Christian Education and possible request for your child to withdraw from the program until payment is up-to-date. All tuition must be paid in full by the end of the school year to retain your child's placement for the following school year.

Grace Lutheran Preschool offers a sibling discount of 10% off tuition for the younger child (if two or more children from the same family are enrolled at the same time).

Any and all financial questions (i.e. payment of tuition, questions regarding assessed late fees, etc.) should be addressed to the Board of Christian Education, either by sending an

email to boardofed@graceromeo.com, or by placing a written letter in the Board's mail box. The Board recognizes that our staff members are there for one main purpose – to teach your child – and we respectfully ask that you do not approach any staff member with questions regarding tuition.

A Non-sufficient Fund check will be assessed a fee equal to the amount Grace Lutheran is charged for each time it is returned by the bank. If a family presents a Non-Sufficient Fund check to the preschool more than twice, they will be asked to make payments by cash/money order.

If the family plans to take an extended vacation, we request that the family notify the preschool. Tuition payments must be kept current during the family's absence to reserve the child's place in the program.

Media Release – Unless you sign a form stating that you would not like your child's image to be used it is assumed that you give Grace Lutheran Fellowship the right and permission to use and/or publish, in print or via electronic media (such as Grace Lutheran Fellowship's website and preschool Facebook page) any photographic, audio and video materials obtained during GLF-sponsored events. You hereby release Grace Lutheran Fellowship, its employees, agents and any other designees from liability for any violation of any personal or proprietary right you have in such use.

Pest Management Plan - We will provide the parents of our preschool a 48-hour notice if we need to apply a pesticide application. The notice will be posted on the front doors and the classroom door. Parents will also be notified with a letter stating we will be applying a pesticide 48 hours before we apply the pesticide.

Procedure for Legitimate Concerns:

1. Parent(s) informally present concern(s) to the staff member involved.

If not resolved, the parent(s) should notify the Preschool Director, in writing, of the concern(s).

If the concern involves the Director, the parent should notify the chairperson of the Board of Education in writing of the concern.

2. The Director shall discuss the concern(s) with the staff member involved.
3. The Director shall respond to the parent(s) in writing concerning the problem resolution.
4. If the concern(s) continues, the parent(s) shall state the ongoing concern in writing with documentation and address it to the Board of Education.
5. The Board of Education will address the concern(s) at the next regularly scheduled meeting (second Monday of each month) and respond to the parent in written form, as to the resolution of the concern(s).

Statement of Personnel Staffing Policies:

The following steps are taken when screening a person for a staff position at Grace Lutheran Preschool:

1. We require a personal interview.
2. We require a resume containing formal education information and credentials for all teaching applicants.
3. We seek a person who is knowledgeable of early childhood development and developmentally appropriate skills for use in teaching preschoolers.
4. We consider abilities and skills including those of communication, planning, and acceptance of individual difference found in both children and co-workers.
5. We require a Health Screening Report
6. We require a state police screening.
7. Fingerprint clearance statement will be on file for all staff.
8. We seek a person who has knowledge and acceptance of the Lutheran faith.

Statement of Personnel Volunteer Policies:

1. We require classroom volunteers to fill out an agreement of their expectations during their time in the classroom.
2. Volunteers will also have a background check completed through Public Sex Offender Registry.
3. Volunteers will work under the direction of staff and will be always supervised by staff. Volunteers will not be allowed to escort children to the restroom.

Questions – For further information please contact the Preschool Director at (586) 752-9800.