

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2024**

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**Mission Statement**

Gracey Learning Center is a Christian establishment founded on Luke 2:40, “And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.”

Our vision is to engage in the total development of the child by focusing on spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing. At Gracey, children are gently encouraged to discover their individual strengths and unique talent. We believe that each child possesses a marvelous capacity to learn. Learning is best accomplished in a place that is spiritually and emotionally secure, physically safe, and fun!

**INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to Gracey Learning Center! We are thrilled that you've chosen our center for your child's care and education. Before your child's first day, we encourage you and your family to visit us. This gives our teachers and your child a chance to meet and get acquainted, making the transition smoother on the first day.

Please take the time to read our Parent Handbook thoroughly, as it contains important information about our program, philosophy, policies, and practical details to ensure each day is happy and successful. Feel free to reach out to our staff with any questions or concerns you may have. Once again, welcome to Gracey Learning Center!

**Philosophy/Vision**

At Gracey Learning Center, our goal is to provide each child with exceptional care in a safe and nurturing environment. Under the guidance of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we offer quality education and love. We prioritize your trust by implementing safety measures such as proper sign-in/out procedures, secure outside gates, and classroom video monitoring.

We are dedicated to meeting each child's developmental needs, fostering independence, self-esteem, and positive guidance.

**Program Description**

Gracey Learning Center utilizes Creative Curriculum approaches to learning. Our primary goal is to cultivate enthusiastic learners by encouraging children to be active and creative explorers. We empower them to try out their ideas and think independently.

Our curriculum focuses on developing children into independent, confident, and curious learners who can apply their learning throughout their lives. We tailor learning experiences to each child's pace and preferences, instilling good habits and positive self-perceptions that will benefit them for years to come.

**Curriculum Goals**

Our curriculum is designed to achieve developmental goals in the following areas:

* **Spiritual:** Helping children grow in their understanding of God and their personal faith journey.
* **Social:** Supporting children in feeling comfortable, trusting their environment, making friends, and feeling part of a community.
* **Emotional:** Encouraging pride, confidence, independence, self-control, and a positive outlook on life.
* **Cognitive:** Promoting confidence in learning through experimentation, problem-solving, questioning, and verbal expression of ideas, observations, and feelings.
* **Physical:** Enhancing both large and small muscle skills and fostering confidence in their physical abilities.

At Gracey Learning Center, we are committed to providing a well-rounded educational experience that supports the holistic development of every child entrusted to our care.

**Infant Program**

* **Developmental Focus:** Focuses on building trust, security, and independence in infants (0 - 18 months).
* **Environment:** Provides a safe, clean space with room for crawling and exploring.
* **Activities:** Includes sensory and motor skill development through play with age-appropriate toys.
* **Schedule:** Follows an individualized schedule for eating, playing, and napping based on each child's cues.
* **Care:** Ensures diapering areas are separate from play and eating areas for hygiene and comfort.

**Toddler Program**

* **Learning Focus:** Encourages independence and social skills for toddlers (18 months – 3 years).
* **Activities:** Incorporates learning into daily routines such as feeding self, potty training, and group activities.
* **Curriculum:** Introduces structured activities including outdoor play, interest centers, art, science, language, and math.
* **Routine:** Establishes consistent daily routines to support learning and development.

Both programs aim to provide a nurturing environment where children can explore, learn, and develop essential skills under the guidance of responsive caregivers.

**PRESCHOOL & PROGRAM**

Our curriculum is rooted in the unique developmental stages of early childhood, recognizing that each child learns at their own pace and possesses individual strengths. Here’s how we ensure a dynamic and effective learning environment:

1. **Personalized Learning:** We tailor our approach to meet the specific needs of each child, fostering a supportive atmosphere where every student feels encouraged and challenged appropriately.
2. **Comprehensive Development:** Our curriculum encompasses cognitive, social, emotional, and physical domains, providing a well-rounded foundation for future learning and personal growth.
3. **Active Engagement:** Children are encouraged to explore, create, and express themselves independently, promoting curiosity, creativity, and a sense of achievement in their learning journey.
4. **Social and Emotional Skills:** We prioritize the development of social skills and emotional intelligence, laying the groundwork for positive relationships and resilient emotional health.
5. **Diverse Learning Experiences:** Our daily routines offer a blend of group activities, individual exploration, quiet reflection, and outdoor play, ensuring a balanced and enriching educational experience.
6. **Meaningful Assessment:** Through ongoing observation and evaluation, our teachers assess each child’s progress and understanding, adjusting our approach to support their learning effectively.

By focusing on these principles, we create an inclusive and stimulating environment where children can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, preparing them for future success in school and in life.

**School-age Program**

1. **Transportation:** Offers rides to and from nearby elementary schools.
2. **Meals:** Parents provide all meals and snacks.
3. **Activities:**
   * **Outdoor Play:** Supervised outdoor playtime.
   * **Computer Use:** Monitored use of computers.
4. **Early Release:** Allows early pickup from schools.
5. **Full-time Care:** Available on student holidays, includes meals.
6. **Homework Help:** Support for completing homework.
7. **Technology and Learning:** Supervised use of technology and educational games.

This program aims to support children with safe transportation, supervised activities, and academic help, while accommodating parents' schedules with extended care options.

**STARTING OUT AT THE CENTER**

Remember that it’s normal for a child to have some fears and misgivings about starting childcare.  Children need time to get used to new situations.  What can you do to help?  Prepare your child(ren) for the change as far in advance as possible.  Discuss their concerns with them.  If you’re enthusiastic, chances are they soon will be, too.  Talk honestly and openly about where you will be while they are at the center.  Take them inside to the awaiting staff, give the staff appropriate instructions, and tell your child you will pick him or her up at the end of the day.  Give them a kiss and/or hug and leave when you feel comfortable.  It will be easier for the child(ren) to separate from you if you do not linger and you leave a positive manner.

**PARENT CONFERENCES & VISITS**

Good communication between the parent and the center is essential in order to provide quality care.  However, we ask that you do not try to conference with teachers while children are in their care. This prevents them from giving the other children in their care the best care possible. We invite parents to make appointments for conferences before or after care or during the lunch period. We feel that parents and teachers working together facilitate learning and role modeling for children. We also feel that parents’ involvement in their child’s program is crucial for success.

We have several goals for parents.

* To feel good about their role as parents.
* To gain insight into the behavior of children in general and their child in particular.
* To provide an atmosphere of acceptance, caring, and support where parents and teachers work as partners in the care and education for children.

**STATE REGULATIONS**

Our center is licensed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, as required by law.  The TDFPS is the state agency responsible for monitoring child care centers.  The TDFPS can be contacted by calling the local # 713-940-3900 at or the state office in Austin at (512) 834-3195, by utilizing the TDFPS website at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)  or calling the child care information line at (800) 862-5252.  The license certificate is posted for inspection.

**Child Abuse and Neglect**

Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Texas, and so is failure not to report it. Abuse is mental, emotional, physical, or sexual injury to a child or failure to prevent such injury to a child. Neglect includes failure to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter, and/or medical care; and leaving a child in a situation where the child is at risk of harm. To report cases of Child abuse or neglect please contact The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400. Or visit their website at <https://www.txabusehotline.org>.

**Employee Child Abuse and Neglect Training**

All employees working with children must have at least 2 clock hours of annual training on

* prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including:
* Factors indicating a child is at risk for abuse or neglect;
* Warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect;
* Internal procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect

**Warning Signs of Child Abuse and Neglect**

The Child:

* Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
* Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents' attention
* Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
* Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
* Lacks adult supervision
* Is overly compliant, passive, or withdrawn
* Comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home

The Parent:

* Shows little concern for the child
* Denies the existence of—or blames the child for—the child's problems in school or at home
* Asks teachers or other caregivers to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves
* Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless, or burdensome
* Demands a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve
* Looks primarily to the child for care, attention, and satisfaction of emotional needs

The Parent and Child:

* Rarely touch or look at each other
* Consider their relationship entirely negative
* State that they do not like each other

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the **child:**

* Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
* Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school
* Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home
* Shrinks at the approach of adults
* Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the **parent or another adult caregiver:**

* Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury
* Describes the child as "evil," or in some other very negative way
* Uses harsh physical discipline with the child
* Has a history of abuse?

Consider the possibility of neglect when the **child:**

* Is frequently absent from school
* Begs or steals food or money
* Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses
* Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
* Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
* Abuses alcohol or other drugs
* States that there is no one at home to provide care

Consider the possibility of neglect when the **parent or another adult caregiver:**

* Appears to be indifferent to the child
* Seems apathetic or depressed
* Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
* Is abusing alcohol or other drugs

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the **child:**

* Has difficulty walking or sitting
* Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate in physical activities
* Reports nightmares or bedwetting
* Experiences a sudden change in appetite
* Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
* Becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease, particularly if under age 14
* Runs away
* Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the **parent or another adult caregiver:**

* Is unduly protective of the child or severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex
* Is secretive and isolated
* Is jealous or controlling with family members

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the **child:**

* Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression
* Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example)
* Is delayed in physical or emotional development
* Has attempted suicide
* Reports a lack of attachment to the parent

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the **parent or another adult caregiver:**

* Constantly blames, belittles, or berates the child
* Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's problems
* Overtly rejects the child

**Prevention Techniques of Child Abuse and Neglect**

Monitor your stress level. Find out where your frustrations lie and address them in some way.

Be cautious of new people you bring into the lives of your children – for example, babysitters or significant others – and understand how they will be caring for and treating your child.

Evaluate your use of substances such as alcohol. Understand how these substances change your decision-making ability or your personality. Do you yell? Do you hit? Does it change you in some other way?

Closely supervise your children while they are on the Internet. Even if you have parental controls set on your computer, many pornography sites still are accessible, and teens and pre-teens can easily access the sites’ chat rooms where they can meet people who may harm them.

 If any indications of abuse or neglect are suspected, we encourage employees and families to notify authorities immediately.

**EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

If a child requires emergency medical attention, we will contact the parents, physician, and local acute care facility and request immediate transportation through 911.  (See emergency medical Authorization).

**Procedures for parental Notification**

We will notify all parents on any charges and /or important information through posting of notices on the family boards, and through letters sent home to parents. Parents please check your information on current updates. All parents will be notified of any changes that they need to know.

**NAP TIME**

A rest period is included in our daily schedule. Nap time is 12 pm until 2 pm, however infants are on an individual schedule and will nap according to their schedule. We provide a sanitized cot for each child. Parents will need a small blanket and sheet with child’s name on it. Blanket should be taken home weekly for laundering.

**HEALTH CHECK**

Daily Health checks will be done upon arrival of each child daily and will be documented.

**SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME**

Shaken Baby Syndrome is the result of violently shaking young children. Injuries can include brain swelling and damage, subdural hemorrhaging, mental retardation and death. NEVER SHAKE A BABY!

**SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME**

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or SIDS is the unexplained death of a sleeping baby. Always put infants to sleep on their backs. Make sure their crib or playpen is free of clutter, toys, bumpers, and blankets. If your child is accustoming to sleeping in another position and you prefer for them to sleep in this position, you must provide us with a written statement from the doctor.

**BREASTFEEDING**

Under State Licensing, we are required to offer breastfeeding mothers a comfortable place to breastfeed. Please inform the center’s director upon enrollment if you plan to breastfeed your child at the center so we will discuss how to make the process comfortable for you. We will provide a comfortable adult size chair in a private area in your child’s classroom or private area in the center to allow you to feed your child. You are welcome to bring a breastfeeding pillow, calming music, and other supplies to make feeding comfortable. We will also allow parents to provide breast milk in a closed container. We will store the breast milk in the refrigerator located in your child’s classroom. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please speak to the director.

**NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Gracey Learning Center does not discriminate against anyone in regard to race, sex, age, color, national origin, disability, religion, or political belief, be denied the benefits of, or be excluded from participation in, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in any form.  If you believe you have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, political beliefs, or religion, you may lodge a complaint against this center.  Call or write immediately to the Civil Rights Dept., P.O. Box 149030, Austin, TX  78714-9030 or call (512) 438-4313.  USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights (202) 514--3831.

**MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS/ IMMUNIZATION**

We will furnish you with a medical form for your child’s physician to document his/her immunizations and a space for the physician to sign, stating that the child is in good health and free of any contagious diseases.  State law requires that every child in a child care setting have an up-to-date physical exam within 12 months prior to enrollment.  It is very important that we have this written statement from your child’s physician as soon as possible. Parents are given up to 5 days to provide us with the up to date immunization records.  This requirement must be met prior to enrollment or when you are updating your child’s enrollment packet.

**\*Important: It is your responsibility as parent or guardian, to maintain up-to-date immunizations and physicals for your child(ren). Updates must be reported to the center director in writing.**

**The Texas Department of Health requires the following**

**immunizations:**

**Children 3 Months**

1 dose of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap)

1 dose of polio vaccine

1 dose Hemophilus influenzae type b vaccine

1 dose of hepatitis B vaccine

1 dose pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)

**Children 5 Months**

2 doses DTap

2 doses polio vaccine

2 doses Hemophilus influenzae type b vaccine

2 doses hepatitis B vaccine

2 doses pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)

Children Ages 7Months :

3 doses DTap

2 doses polio vaccine

2 doses Hemophilus influenzae type b vaccine

2 doses hepatitis B vaccine

3 doses pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)

**16 months**

4 doses diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap)

3 doses polio vaccine

4 doses pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)

3 doses hepatitis B

Complete series, or 1 dose Hemophilus influenza type

b (Hib)

1 dose measles, mumps, rubella vaccine

1 dose Varicella

**Children Ages 19 Months**

4 doses diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap)

3 doses polio vaccine

4 doses pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)

3 doses hepatitis B

Complete series, or 1 dose Hemophilus influenza type

b (Hib)

1 dose measles, mumps, rubella vaccine

1 dose Varicella

**25 Months**

4 doses diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap)

3 doses polio vaccine

4 doses pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)

3 doses hepatitis B

Complete series, or 1 dose Hemophilus influenza type

b (Hib)

1 dose measles, mumps, rubella vaccine

1 dose Varicella

1 dose of HepA

**43 Months**

4 doses diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTap)

3 doses polio vaccine

4 doses pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)

3 doses hepatitis B

Complete series, or 1 dose Hemophilus influenza type

b (Hib)

1 dose measles, mumps, rubella vaccine

1 dose Varicella

2 dose of HepA

**ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

The Directors and staff at Gracey Learning Center are not medically trained to administer medication. If you feel that your child need any form of medication why they are in our premises, we ask that a parent or guardian administer the medication. We practice open door policy and you may come at any time of the day to give your child medicine. You are never allowed to give your child a fever reducing medicine while they are at school.

**Application of Sunscreen and Insect Repellant Policy**

Gracey Learning Center will provide permission slip to parents for center staff to apply tropical products on the children whether center provided, or parent provided. If is parent provided, the products must be in the original container and must be labelled with the child’s name.

**ILLNESS**

In order to ensure the health and safety of an ill child, as well as the other children in care and the staff, children who are ill CANNOT be brought into the center! Children who become ill, or show signs or symptoms of illness or communicable diseases will be kept isolated until he/she is taken home.  If your child is vomiting, has diarrhea, a fever of 100˚ F, or greater, you will be called and expected to pick up your child immediately.  Children who are sent home for diarrhea, vomiting, and/or fever must be free from all signs and symptoms for 24 hours before returning to care.  This means that your child cannot attend group care at the center for 24 hours after the last episode of diarrhea, vomiting, and/or fever.

**Medical Conditions**

* Diarrhea (2 or more loose stools).
* Difficulty or rapid breathing.
* Asthma or severe upper respiratory infection unless parent provides evidence that child is under physician’s care.
* Vomited within last 6 hours.
* Yellowish skin or eyes.
* A temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher and/or has had a fever during the previous 24 hours.
* Mucus with green or yellow color, unless child has been on antibiotic therapy for 24 hours.
* Undiagnosed rash.
* Sore throat.
* Severe cough.
* Chicken pox, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, impetigo, diphtheria or herpes simplex.
* Untreated scabies, tinea corporis or capitis (ring worm).
* An ear infection, unless provided notification that child is under physician’s care.
* Untreated head lice.
* Pinkeye.

***\*Please notify the school at once if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease.***

**TUBERCULIN TESTING REQUIREMENTS**

If necessary, we may require tuberculin testing from your child. We will need documentation that indicates your child is free of active tuberculosis.

**VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASE:**

A vaccine preventable diseases is a disease that is included in the most current recommendations of the Advisory Committee on immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease control and Prevention. Gracey Learning Center Policy does not make it mandatory for employees to get vaccinated but optional. However, all employees are advised or employed to get themselves vaccinated in relation to their health issues for their wellbeing and the safety of the children as well as another staff. Although, Gracey Learning Center prohibits discrimination or retaliatory action against an exempt employee, any employee that is sick with any conditions or issues relating to vaccine preventable disease that might endanger others will be advised;( A) to use protective medical equipment, including gloves and masks, based on the level of risk the employee presents to children by the employees’ routine and direct exposure to children. (B) on the whole, the employee will be advised to stay off work for 24hours or until when they get fully recovered.

**ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS**

The staff will make every effort to ensure safety of your child while in our care. Unfortunately minor accidents may occur. If your child is involved in an accident and/or incident at the center, you will receive a report with information describing what happened and what actions were taken.  We will ask that you sign the report. Parents are responsible for medical bills that may arise from a minor accidents.

In case of a serious accident of injury, we will make every effort to contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you will call the person you have indicated on the forms to make medical decision for your child. Otherwise we will take your child to the nearest hospital

**ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE RELEASE POLICY**

Children are required to be escorted to their classroom and checked into their teacher.  We require that the parents sign the child(ren) in and out each day at the front desk. For your children’s safety, we will only release your child to a parent/legal guardian or an authorized pickup person designated by you in the enrollment packet. We will need a photo copy of the ID of all authorized pickup persons.

**OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Parents will be allowed to visit children as they would like. They will be allowed to sign in at the front office during operating hours and visit with their child inside of their classrooms.

**PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Items must be labeled. Items such as toy guns, choking objects and any toy that may cause harm to another child are not welcome at the center. We are not responsible for any items you choose to send to the center with your child. Children may bring a blanket, sheet cover and a soft toy for nap.

**DISCIPLINE**

A copy of our Discipline Policy is included in the enrollment packet.  We require that you sign and date that you have received this information. A copy of our Discipline Policy is included in the enrollment packet. We require that you sign and date that you have received this information.

**Difficult Behavior**

We will make every effort to work with the parent or guardian to ensure a cooperative approach for children having difficulties with behavior. We are here to serve and protect all of our children! A parent may be called at work or home at any time the child exhibits uncontrollable behavior that cannot be modified by the center's staff. The parent may be asked to take the child home immediately. The following steps may be taken regarding children who display chronic disruptive behavior, upsetting to the emotional or physical wellbeing of another child or an adult.

Initial Consultation:

The director may request that the parent or guardian meet for a conference. The problem will be defined on paper. Intervention strategies will be discussed. The best solution toward solving the problem will be agreed upon by the center director, teacher, and parent or guardian.

Second Consultation:

If the initial plan for helping the child fails, the parent will again be asked to meet with the director and teaching staff involved. Another attempt will be made to identify the problem, and establish a new, or revised, approach for solving the problem. Parents may be asked to consult outside professionals or bring in behavioral specialists to help identify the problems or provide new strategies, in order for Gracey Learning Center to continue care. Our goal is to work as a team to better serve each child.

Disenrolled:

When the previous attempts have been followed and no progress has been made toward solving the problem, the child may be disenrolled from the center at the discretion of the center director.

NOTE: Corporal punishment will not be allowed. This is defined as the use of negative physical touching (spanking, slapping, pinching, etc.), exclusion from large motor or outdoor activities, or exclusion from any learning activity. No unusual punishment will be allowed such as humiliation, ridicule, threat, or coercion.

**ENROLLMENT**

An interview between the parent or (both parents), the child, and the Director is required prior to enrollment.  This interview is for both the family and the Director to meet and have a clear understanding of Gracey Learning Center.

**TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT**

A 30 days’ advance notice, in writing, will be required in order to terminate a child’s enrollment from the center.  If a notice is not submitted, the next week’s fees are due and payable. Gracey Learning Center reserves the right to terminate clients should the situation deem it necessary at any time with or without prior notice. In cases where Gracey Learning Center has to terminate services, deposits are not refunded.  Should you have any questions regarding the content of this program description, contracts, or our services, please discuss it with the Director immediately. We appreciate this opportunity to provide childcare services to your family and sincerely hope that you will be satisfied.  If not, please tell us, NOT OTHERS.  This is important if we are to maintain a good working relationship.

**EMERGENCY TERMINATION**

In the event of a disaster such as fires, flood, tornado, etc. that affects an enrolled child or the center, an emergency termination will be accepted by the other party.  No advanced notice or fee would be required if you and/or your child develop a sudden and prolonged health problem and childcare arrangements need to be changed. In the event that we will need to relocate the building, we will go to the Katy Community Church by the East side of our building.

**Emergency Drills**

Emergency drills are held periodically to acquaint your child with evacuation procedures. This may make quite an impression on your child the first time a drill is held, but your child will soon become accustomed to it and know just what to do in event of an emergency. Fire drills are practices monthly

**HOURS OF OPERATION**

Gracey Learning Center is open from 6:30a.m and close promptly at 6: 00p.m Monday through Friday, January to December. Gracey Learning Center follow Katy ISD calendar.  We do not provide childcare at night or on weekends. Parents of children remaining in school after 6.00 p.m. will be charged a late pick up fee of $10.00 for the first 10 minutes and $2 .00 for each minute after that.  This is due at the time of pick up.

**TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

We provide daily transportation to and from public schools, prioritizing the safety of all children. The director ensures all necessary precautions are taken during transportation, and it is mandatory for all children to wear seat belts. Children who fail to comply with this rule may face suspension from riding the school bus.

If your child will not be attending school on a particular day, please notify the center before 1:00 PM. Our teachers will follow their route; however, if a child is not found on board, we will return to the school to locate them. Please note, there will be a charge of $5 for each additional trip made to find a child.

This policy is designed to ensure the safety and accountability of all children transported to and from Gracey Learning Center

**SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY**

Before enrolling their child, parents must inform Gracey Learning Center of any special needs. This allows us to assess if our staff and program are suitable for the child.

For each child with special needs, we require written documentation from a qualified consultant before enrollment and annually thereafter. This consultation covers recommendations for the child's program, equipment, facility, staff ratio, and staff training needed to support their specific needs.

Parents are responsible for providing any special equipment, supplies, or food required to meet their child's individual needs.

This policy ensures that we can provide appropriate care and support tailored to each child with special needs at Gracey Learning Center.

**HOLIDAYS**

* 2 In-service/ Staff Development Days
* Fourth of July
* Winter Holiday (December 25)
* Early Dismissal (December 24, 2019 @3pm and New Year’s Eve)
* Thanksgiving Break (Thanksgiving Day & Day after)
* Labor Day
* New Year’s Day
* Martin Luther King
* President Day
* Good Friday
* Easter Monday
* Memorial Day

Gracey Learning Center uses KatyISD Calendar

**VACATION**

Families can take vacation throughout the year. We do not offer vacation or tuition credit when a child is absent. Tuition must be paid in full before taking vacation.

**TUITION POLICY**

***Weekly tuition fees are due in advance on Friday for the upcoming week.*** If tuition is not paid by 12 Noon Monday evening, a $35 late fee will be charged. If not paid by 12 Noon Tuesday evening, we reserve the right to disenrollment your child /children from the center and/or assess an additional $25 late fee for each day tuition remains unpaid.

**REGISTRATION POLICY**

Families are able to register your child throughout the year. Once you have visited our school you will be able to sit and meet with the director or assistant about registering your child/ children. At the time of registration, families are expected to pay supply fee and first month’s tuition. ***(See Tuition Fee Schedule)***

**PAYMENT PROCEDURES**

We accept payments in the form money orders, personal & cashier’s check, credit card, and bank automatic draft.

***Please note: Families using credit cards will be charged a processing fee of $2.00 per transaction. If you choose to have your tuition automatically drafted out of your account, you welcome to do so.***

**NUTRITION MEALS & SNACKS**

At Gracey Learning Center, we do not provide food for children. It is the responsibility of parents to bring all necessary food, snacks, and beverages that their children will need during their stay at the center.

Food should be brought to the center in the same way it will be presented to the child. This policy applies to regular days as well as special occasions. All food will be served to the children as it is received at the center.

This policy ensures that we respect dietary preferences, allergies, and cultural considerations while maintaining consistency in food handling and presentation at Gracey Learning Center

**Food Allergy Policy**

At Gracey Learning Center, the safety and well-being of children with food allergies are our top priorities. To ensure this, we have established the following guidelines in accordance with state regulations:

* Parents of children with food allergies must fill out a form accurately and completely. This form will be displayed in each child's classroom and in the kitchen to inform caregivers and staff. Upon request, parents can also access this information.
* Gracey Learning Center does not administer treatment for food allergies but follows strict procedures in case of an allergic reaction. This includes promptly contacting parents and, if necessary, calling 911 as indicated on the child's file.
* Communication between the center's Director and parents is maintained to stay informed about any allergic reactions or concerns.

This policy aims to create a safe and supportive environment for all children, particularly those with food allergies, by emphasizing awareness, communication, and prompt action in emergencies.

**Communication**

Proper communication between our parents and the teachers and staff of Gracey Learning Center is extremely important. Teachers will be sending home information on a regular basis. Infant and toddler parents will receive daily reports. You are welcome to call to arrange a meeting with your child's teacher--even just to become better acquainted! Concerns about any aspect of our program, or your child's care, may be expressed to the center director. Each child is provided with a mailbox and/or cubby. Please check these

**Birthday Celebrations**

Parents are welcome to send in a treat to share with their child's classmates on birthdays or special occasions. Some classrooms have strict allergy guidelines. Inform your child's teacher in advance about what kind of treat you plan on bringing. This is for the safety of all the children. Ask your child’s teacher for suggestions. Parents are always welcome at their child's birthday celebration. If a birthday is to be celebrated away from school and the entire class is not invited, please mail the invitations. If the entire class is invited, you may distribute the invitations into the cubbies. Our center will not distribute mailing lists or phone numbers.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information received by the center, while caring for your child, concerning individual persons and their families will be kept strictly confidential with the exception of suspected abuse. In order to ensure confidentiality, we will not release any information concerning our clients over the telephone. We will follow a verification procedure to verify parental knowledge and inform you of any inquiry about your child.

**Custody Orders**

Until custody has been established by a court action, one parent may not limit the other from picking-up a child in our care. The center must be notified immediately of any changes in custody orders. Certified custody orders must be given to the center director.

**CHILDRENS PRODUCT CERTIFICATION**

As required, Children’s Product Certification or recall, posted in the parent information area (form 2885) or for additional information you may contact US Consumers’ Product Safety Commissions 1(800) 638-2772.

**PLEASE BE SURE TO READ THESE POLICIES CAREFULLY, AS WE OPERATE THE CENTER UTILIZING THESE POLICIES WITHOUT EXCEPTION**.

Parents will be required to update their child’s enrollment forms once or twice a year.  Policies and procedures regulated by TDPRS that mandate changes will routinely be updated as the need arises.  Parents will be required to complete new packets and/or read and sign updated information.  The center reserves the right to update, change, and/or amend these policies and the tuition schedule at the same time.  It is the desire of Gracey Learning Center to maintain up-to-date and accurate records.  We apologize in advance for any inconvenience this may cause and thank you in advance for your cooperation. Failure to enforce these terms does not constitute a waiver.

**Water Activities**

On occasion Gracey Learning Center may have summer water activities. Parents will be notified in writing via the parent information bulletin board or correspondence sent home regarding the requirements and safety precautions necessary for children to participate in water activities. The activities will include:

* Splash Day with water hose
* Slip and Slide
* Sensory table (year around)

**Field Trip**

In addition to our regular program, field trip will be planned. The director will inform you ahead of time on these activities. All field trip activities will be posted in the family board one week before the trip. Parents will have to sign a permission form prior to the trip. Parents who wants to attend a field trip must be cleared through criminal history process.

**ANIMALS**

Some of the classrooms may have small class pets such as fish, birds, or other small animals on occasion. You will be notified when animals are a part of the classroom environment. If we have a visitor who is sharing animals with the children, we will post it 48 hours in advance on the parent information bulletin board. When animals are present, the Center will ensure that they do not create an unsafe or unsanitary condition for children in care. Animals that show signs of illness will not be allowed in the Center. All employees and children will practice good hygiene and hand washing after handling animals. Also, we will ensure that all animals have been vaccinated before coming in contact with children. If your child has any allergies associated to animals, please inform the director immediately.

**TOYS/SECURITY OBJECTS**

If your child has a security blanket type object, which he/she needs to help ease the transition from home to school, please allow them to bring it in the beginning. We will help with the transition by suggesting that he/she leave it in a cubby, thereby gradually weaning them from it. Please do not allow your child to bring guns, other toy weapons or money to school. All toys should be left at home. We cannot be responsible for items brought to school, but we will try to help your child get home with it. Labeling everything will help us return your child’s belongings.

**GANG-FREE ZONE**

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a childcare center in a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

**SEVERE WEATHER, FIRE OR OTHER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

An emergency preparedness plan is designed to ensure the safety of children during an emergency by addressing staff responsibility and facility readiness with respect to most likely to occur in our area including but not limited to natural events such as tornadoes, floods or hurricanes, health events such as medical emergencies, communicable disease outbreak, and human-caused events such as intruder with weapon, explosion, or chemical spill. If an emergency situation develops, such as severe weather, fire. Physical problems to the building, or power failure, the children’s safety is our first and utmost concern. Fire drills is conducted every month, while severe weather drill is conducted at least once every three month; which must be documented so that in the event of an emergency situation, the children may not be alarmed due to the awareness of procedures. The Center is equipped with a fire alarm system and fire extinguisher in each room, kitchen, hallways and other necessary location in case of an emergency situation. Should there be power failure at the center and we are determined necessary to close the center, parents will be notified to make immediate arrangements for early pick up of their children. In case of an emergency that has to do with relocation, parents will be notified as soon as possible through phone calls with the emergency numbers that is on file with the center, as well as 911 and DFPS (7139403009). We will quickly evacuate with all essential documents, which includes first aid box, admission information, attendance sheets for proper accountability for all kids in our center as at the time of the emergency. Gracey Learning Center relocation diagram on file shows both the primary and secondary exist in case of an emergency. Babies and kids who are unable to walk by themselves will be assisted with passengers’ strollers. On the whole, RCCG Mercy Hall located at 24814 Saddlespur Lane, katy, Tx 77494 is our relocation place.

**Photography & Videography**

I understand that photographs/videos of the children in our programs may appear in news-papers, magazines, brochures, publicity materials and/or educational trainings. Your child’s photo will also be posted on our classroom and center information board and Facebook sites. I understand that they are to be used without compensation.

Parent/Guardian Signature: ------------------------------------------------Date

Logo, company name

Description automatically generated

**Food Allergy Emergency Plan**

This plan must be signed and dated by your child’s Health Care Professional

\*Gracey Learning Center will not be providing food for children at center\*

Child’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE COMPLETE ONE FORM FOR EACH KNOWN FOOD ALLERGY

Food child is allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Possible Symptoms if exposed to this food: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Specific steps to take if the child has an allergic reaction to this food:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, the parent or guardian of this child gives Treasure Cove Preschool permission to post the child’s food allergy in the child’s classroom.

Dr. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Center Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

For licensed center use:

\_\_\_\_ Food Allergy Emergency Plan has been posted in Classroom

\_\_\_\_ Food Allergy Emergency Plan is in “Go Bag”

Logo, company name

Description automatically generated

**PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I have read and understood the Parent Handbook Operation Policies. I have had an opportunity to discuss these policies and procedures with a ***Gracey Learning Center*** administrative staff member. I am aware that ***Gracey Learning Center*** reserves the right to make changes and update the Parent Handbook throughout the year. Parents will be notified in writing should a change in polices occur.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Director’s Signature Date: