

2025-
2026

Grace Early Childhood Center
Parent Handbook



www.grace-ecc.com

614-431-8228

2025-2026

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Grace ECC Program Information

LOCATION

Grace Polaris Church
Grace Early Childhood Center
8225 Worthington Galena Rd
Westerville, OH 43081

PHONE & FAX NUMBERS

Phone: 614-431-8228
Fax: 614-431-8206

WEBSITE

www.grace-ecc.com

E-MAIL

ecc@gracepolaris.org

FINANCE OFFICE

P.O. Box 1650
Westerville, OH 43086
Phone: 614-796-0632

HOURS OF OPERATION

Our Center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday for the full-day, year-round program.

Half day preschool is from 9:00 – 12:00 p.m. and meets from the middle of August through the Friday before Memorial Day.

School year only students can come 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and meets from middle of August through the Friday before Memorial Day.

Grace ECC Program Policy & Procedures

TEXT ALERT SYSTEM

To help us better communicate closings and delays in a timely and efficient manner, we use the MOJO text alert system that allows us to notify parents and staff of any closures by sending them a text. Information on how to subscribe to our text alerts is provided in your orientation packet, or you can contact the ECC Office.

ELIGIBILITY

Grace ECC accepts children 6-weeks through age 6.

For preschool, children **must be 3 by September 30**. All preschool children must be potty trained before they can attend a preschool class.

REQUIREMENTS

- The following must be completed and turned into the ECC office before the child's first day:
- Options page
- Signed/initialed Child Enrollment and Health Information form (JFS 01234)
- Non-refundable application fee
- Child Medical Statement (JFS 01305) signed by the child's physician, including the date of the last exam AND record of immunizations
- Photo Release form
- Meet & Greet orientation with teacher (infant only)

Please note the Child Medical Statement is valid for 13 months from the date of the last well exam and must be updated annually.

TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

The center's tax ID number is available on the upper right-hand corner of your billing statement or upon request from the finance office.

PARKING

There are several parking spaces outside the ECC that are reserved for families dropping off or picking up. *If you plan to stay longer than 10 minutes, please park in one of the outer church parking lots.*

We ask that all our parents adhere to the following policies:

- **Cars must be in a parking space. Parking is NOT permitted:**
 - in fire lanes
 - in front of the ECC
 - in any area not marked for parking.
- Handicap spaces are reserved for people with a handicap sticker.
- **Dropping off children in front of the ECC is NOT permitted;** ALL children must be accompanied by an adult into the building.
- Toddlers and preschoolers must walk with parents. Please do not allow children to run out in front of you.
- Children should not be left unattended in a vehicle. Please bring siblings into the building with you.
- **Our parking lot speed limit is 5 M.P.H.**

SPECIAL CLOSINGS

Grace Early Childhood Center closes each year for the following occasions (these are subject to change):

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- July 4th Holiday (2 days possible for reserve)
- Staff workdays in August
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving – Wednesday through Friday
- Christmas Break – time off between Christmas and New Years

Grace ECC Purpose, Philosophy, & Goals

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We exist to help parents meet their responsibility of caring for and educating their children. We want to work closely with parents in meeting the needs of their children. We reinforce biblical principles and offer a biblically integrated and developmentally appropriate curriculum. Christ-centered education reflects the Christian worldview in every area of student, staff, and administrative activities.

PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy of early childhood education is that young children learn best through play, engaging in both structured and unstructured activities, all within a loving environment where they feel safe and secure. Every child is unique, and we encourage them to explore and learn from their surroundings. We are excited to be a part of your child's growth and development and look forward to seeing what God has planned for them.

CURRICULUM GOALS

The early years of a child's life are crucial for shaping their future learning and development. Our curriculum is designed to serve as a comprehensive framework that supports all areas of development for young children, from six weeks to six years old. It aims to address their social-emotional, physical, cognitive, language, and spiritual growth in an integrated and cohesive way.

ASSESSMENTS

Careful observation and assessment of children are crucial for our staff to gain insights into each child's development. This helps in setting goals and planning an effective curriculum. The Early Childhood Center (ECC) may request a meeting with prospective students and their parents before accepting them into our program. Throughout the school year, the ECC conducts informal assessments of preschool children. The findings from these observations are documented in our preschool progress reports, which are completed and sent home twice a year. Please note that this information is not shared with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

PROGRAM QUALITY/STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

High-quality early childhood education provides significant benefits to children. We are committed to offering you and your child a top-notch early education experience. Copies of the laws and regulations governing early childhood programs, as well as compliance reports, are available in the office. The toll-free number for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is posted on our license in the office and can be used by anyone wishing to report a suspected violation at the center.

At the end of this handbook, you will find important information required by the Ohio Administrative Code. Please take the time to read this information carefully.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

A key element of high-quality early childhood programs is the selection of staff. Our teachers are nurturing Christians who understand the needs of children. The administrative team carefully evaluates staff performance to ensure that children receive developmentally appropriate experiences in a safe and loving environment.

We seek employees who value teamwork with parents and colleagues. Each staff member undergoes an extensive background check and is approved to work in a childcare setting by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). Additionally, they must have a medical form signed by their physician. We aim for all PS teachers to have either an associate degree in early childhood education or a bachelor's degree in education or a related field.

Continuing education is an important aspect of working at the Early Childhood Center (ECC). Each staff member participates in regular training sessions that cover first aid, communicable disease recognition, child abuse prevention and recognition, CPR, and child development.

Daily Schedules

Teachers provide time for children to work and play individually, in pairs, in small groups, and as a whole group. Each classroom has a daily schedule posted on the board outside the room. Below are some examples based on different age groups:

SAMPLE INFANT DAILY SCHEDULE

Infants are fed according to their parents' preferred schedules, changed every two hours, and allowed to nap as needed. Throughout the day, infants are placed in various positions, such as in swings, exersaucers, and on play mats (both on their backs and tummies) to help exercise their entire bodies. They are also given time and space to play with age-appropriate objects such as books, balls, and plush toys to promote their fine motor skills. Additionally, talking, music, and reading are significant parts of their daily routine to support language development. Weather permitting, all infants will have outdoor playtime in the Infant Courtyard.

Around 12 months, children will start eating table foods and will have a more regular schedule for lunch and snack times. The 12–18-month class will take one daily nap, drink from sippy cups, and eat table foods for their meals and snacks.

Nursing mothers who wish to nurse or pump at the center can use the designated space available in each infant room.

SAMPLE INFANT DAILY SCHEDULE

	INFANTS
7:00-8:00	Welcome (Note-times between opening and closing are approximate and tailored to the individual needs of each child.)
8:00-9:00	Breakfast for children who eat as a group (based on class schedule)

9:00-10:50	Free Play (includes a rich environment set up indoors and outside so children have a variety of experiences that contribute to their individual learning, development and socialization)
9:00-11:30	Morning bottles, spoon feeding, napping, diapering (as needed)
10:50-11:10	Lunch Prep
11:10-11:45	Lunch for children who eat as a group
11:45-2:30	Afternoon bottles, spoon feeding, napping, diapering (as needed)
2:30-2:45	Afternoon snack for children who eat as a group
1:30-6:00	Free Play (includes a rich environment set up indoors and outside so children have a variety of experiences that contribute to their individual learning, development and socialization)

SAMPLE TODDLER DAILY SCHEDULE

	TODDLERS
7:00-8:00	Welcome/Exploration/Learning Centers
8:00-8:30	Diapering & Bathroom
8:30-8:45	Circle Time
8:45-9:15	Breakfast Snack
9:15-10:15	Outdoor Play or WOW Room
10:15-10:30	Story Time/Diapering & Bathroom
10:30-11:30	Exploration/Art/Learning Centers
11:30-11:45	Music/Dance/Bible Time
11:45-12:15	Lunch
12:15-12:45	Nap Prep/Diapering & Bathroom
12:45-3:00	Nap/Rest Time
3:00-3:30	Wake Up/Diapering & Bathroom/Snack
3:30-4:30	Outdoor Play/WOW Room
4:30-5:00	Diapering & Bathroom
5:00-6:00	Exploration/Learning Centers/Departures

SAMPLE PRESCHOOL DAILY SCHEDULES

	SAMPLE HALF DAY PRESCHOOL/ SCHOOL-AGE* SCHEDULE (*school-age refers to 5-6-year-olds enrolled in preschool)
9:00-10:00	Learning Centers
10:00-10:15	Bible Time

10:15-10:30	Circle Time
10:30-10:45	Art
10:45-11:00	Learning Centers
11:00-11:15	Recess
11:15-11:35	Story Time
11:35-12:00	Math Concepts, Numbers

	SAMPLE FULL DAY PRESCHOOL/SCHOOL-AGE* SCHEDULE (*school-age refers to 5-6-year-olds enrolled in preschool)
7:00-8:05	Welcome/Learning Centers
8:05-8:30	Breakfast Snack Served
8:30-9:00	Recess or WOW Room
9:00-9:20	Learning Centers/ Free Play
9:20-9:40	Circle Time
9:40-10:15	Language Arts
10:15-10:35	Weekly Theme or Letter Craft
10:35-10:50	Social Studies/Math
10:50-11:00	Clean up
11:00-11:30	Student Choice Centers
11:30-12:00	Transition to Lunch
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00	Recess
1:00-1:15	Story/ Bible Time/Journaling
1:15-1:30	Transition to Nap
1:30-3:00	Nap/Rest Time
3:00-3:30	Transition to Snack
3:30-4:00	Snack
4:00-6:00	Learning Centers/Recess/Departures

RATIOS

We believe strongly that the ratio of children to adults directly affects the quality of the early learning experience. Therefore, we follow state standards or a slightly higher standard:

Age Group	State Ratio	State Group Size
Infants (6 weeks-12 months)	1:5	2:12 (we prefer 2:8)
Infants (12 months-18 months)	1:6	2:12 (we prefer 2:9)
Young Toddlers (18 months-30 months)	1:7	2:14 (2:12)
Older Toddlers (30 months-3 yrs.)	1:8	2:16 (2:12)
3-Year-Old Preschool	1:12	2:24
4-Year-Old Preschool	1:14	2:28
Preschool Plus	1:14	2:28
School-Age	1:18	2:36 (we prefer 1:15; 2:30)

Staying Connected

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are encouraged to participate whenever possible in the activities at the center. Parents have access to areas of the building used for their child's care during our hours of operation. Until further notice parents need to drop off their child at the door of the classroom.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The center publishes a monthly newsletter for families. Your child's teacher will attach a link for you in their weekly update. Newsletters are also available at www.grace-ecc.com.

DAILY SHEETS

We provide written information on all infants and toddlers each day they are in attendance. Please be sure to sign in and out on these daily sheets.

CLASSROOM PARENT INFORMATION BOARD

Parent bulletin boards are located outside each classroom and contain classroom/center information, sign-up sheets, class schedules, lesson plans, the weekly menu, etc. Please allow time to check this board each day.

PARENT CONFERENCES

FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS:

- If you have any concerns about your child, we strongly encourage you to schedule a meeting with your child's teacher. Setting aside time for a meeting ensures that both you and the teacher can focus fully on the discussion. The administration is available to help facilitate these meetings if needed.

FOR PRESCHOOLERS:

- Preschool teachers will hold conferences with all preschool parents. Teachers will offer the option of either an email conference or an in-person meeting during the school year. These conferences will take place at a designated time in the school year. Occasionally, a teacher may request a parent conference at another time if there are specific concerns in the classroom. We consider scheduled conferences to be vital for discussing children's academic and social progress. However, due to the teacher's responsibilities to her class, she is unable to dedicate her full attention to unscheduled conferences.

EMAIL

Teachers are available via email to answer questions, schedule conferences, and discuss practical strategies for staff and parents to manage changes and challenges related to the child. The administration is also reachable through email to address inquiries, clarify policies, and explain procedures.

PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION

All parents have the option to share their name and contact information with other families enrolled at our center on their child's enrollment paperwork. If you need to obtain contact information for another family, please visit the office to request this information. We will not disclose the names or contact details (including telephone numbers and email addresses) of parents who have opted not to share this information.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS

Effective communication between parents and staff members is essential to ensure a shared understanding of goals for each child. When a parent has a concern, we kindly ask that they keep the following points in mind:

- **Communicate Directly:** Whenever possible, discuss any concerns directly with the teachers. If necessary, you can also speak with the director to facilitate communication. Please understand that if you raise a concern about a teacher, the program director will look into it by discussing the issue with the teacher.
- **Address Minor Issues Promptly:** Give teachers a chance to address minor issues. It's important not to allow concerns to accumulate. As issues arise, please communicate them to the teachers. It can be unsettling to discover later on that a parent had multiple concerns but didn't express them.
- **Share Suggestions:** While we may not always be able to implement requested changes due to various constraints, we value your suggestions and will consider them seriously. We pledge to respond to you in a timely manner.
- **Schedule Meetings:** If at any time a parent wishes to meet with their child's teacher to discuss ongoing issues, they can contact the teacher to arrange a meeting. We encourage scheduling a conference to explore issues in depth, rather than discussing concerns during drop-off and pick-up times.

Similarly, staff members are expected to follow the same policy when they have concerns. If a staff member has an issue with another staff member or a parent, they will:

- **Talk Directly:** Address the concern directly with the involved staff member or parent whenever feasible.
- **Involve the Director if Necessary:** If needed, they can consult with the director to assist in addressing the concern. The program director will investigate by speaking with those involved.
- **Address Minor Issues:** Give staff members and parents a chance to correct minor issues.
- **Act Promptly:** Do not let concerns build up. They will address issues as they arise.
- **Listen to Suggestions:** Staff members will listen to feedback, knowing that not all suggestions can be implemented.
- **Schedule Appointments:** Arrange a meeting with a staff member or parent to discuss any issues that may arise.

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to fostering positive communication within our community!

Guidance and Behavior Management

In guiding and disciplining young children, it is essential that we look to God as our example. He always guides and disciplines us with love, patience, and consistency. At Grace Early Childhood Center, teachers, with the support of parents, must recognize the individual differences of each child and choose appropriate practices accordingly. The home and the center should collaborate closely, helping one another to understand the child and reinforce or address specific behaviors, making early education a positive experience. It is important to note that state law prohibits the use of physical punishment or verbal abuse.

At Grace ECC, we teach children to respect themselves and others. We emphasize the importance of self-control and encourage children to take responsibility for their choices and actions, as well as to understand the consequences of those choices. We guide children in using toys and materials appropriately by setting clear limits and modeling desired behaviors.

The following practices may be used when guiding children's behavior, depending on the situation (all staff will follow these guidelines):

1. Reinforcement and praise for good behavior
2. Reviewing expectations

3. Redirecting behavior (verbally or physically)
4. Discussing consequences
5. Reflection (separation from the group, akin to a time-out) *
6. Removal of privileges (such as closing an activity)
7. Relocation and/or holding a child for a short period (like a protective hug) to help them regain control, especially if the safety of others is at risk
8. Parental conferences (via phone or in person)
9. Developing a behavior management plan
10. Requesting parental discipline and/or the removal of the child from school

*When using separation as a strategy, it should not last more than one minute for each year of the child's age. This approach does not apply to infants. When the child returns to the activity, staff will review the reason for the separation and clarify the expected behavior.

All staff and parents at Grace Early Childhood Center must adhere to the behavior management techniques outlined in Rule 5101:2-12-22 of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services childcare licensing rules.

If a child consistently engages in behavior that poses a danger to themselves or others, it may be necessary to withdraw the child from the program. Before any disenrollment, every effort will be made to work collaboratively with the child's family to address the behavior. This process may involve developing a behavior management plan in conjunction with the child's teacher, administrator, and parents.

Termination Rights & Procedures

At the Early Childhood Center (ECC), we prioritize the safety and well-being of all children and staff. We recognize that young children are learning how to interact socially, and occasional challenges are expected.

However, repeated disruptive or unsafe behaviors—such as hitting, biting, throwing objects, or ongoing defiance—may indicate that a child is not currently a good fit for the ECC environment.

In our classrooms, we have large groups of children in a shared space, which can lead to socialization and cooperation challenges. Our staff is trained to manage these dynamics in a way that supports a positive, respectful environment for all children. However, in certain situations, a child's behavior may present an ongoing challenge that disrupts the learning environment or compromises safety.

When concerning behavior persists despite staff support and communication with parents, the following steps will be taken:

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PROCESS

1. Documentation
Teachers will document behavioral incidents, and the strategies used to address them. All documentation will be kept on file and treated as confidential.

2. Director Review
The Director will review the documentation and meet with the teacher(s) to assess next steps.
3. Parent Conference
A meeting will be scheduled with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss the child’s behavior and to collaborate on a plan to support improvement.
4. Formal Classroom Observation
The Director or another qualified professional will conduct a formal, documented observation of the child in the classroom. This observation will assess the child’s behavior, interaction with peers, and response to teacher direction.
5. Two-Week Behavior Support Plan
Based on documentation and the observation findings, a written behavior support plan will be developed and implemented over a two-week period. This plan will include specific strategies and goals to guide behavior improvement.
6. Follow-Up Conference
Parents will return in approximately three weeks to review progress, based on updated documentation and staff input.
7. 90-Day Review Period
If there is meaningful improvement, the child will enter a 90-day review period. If disruptive or unsafe behaviors reoccur during this time, a final decision regarding continued enrollment will be made.

IMMEDIATE TERMINATION CLAUSE

The ECC reserves the right to bypass the above process and terminate enrollment immediately if a child’s behavior presents a serious threat to the safety of themselves, other children, or staff. Situations warranting immediate termination may include but are not limited to:

- Physical aggression that causes injury
- Repeated violent outbursts
- Threats of harm to others
- Damage to property

TERMINATION NOTIFICATION PROCESS

If a decision is made to terminate services:

- A written notice of termination will be provided to the parent/guardian.
- The notice will clearly state the reasons for termination and will include relevant documentation.
- Two weeks’ notice will be given, unless immediate termination is required for safety reasons.
- The Director will personally deliver the notice to the parent/guardian and provide an opportunity to ask questions or respond.

REPORTING AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Because the ECC is licensed through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), the Director will notify ODJFS of the termination as required. This ensures transparency, protects the ECC’s compliance record,

and documents the center's decision-making process. Communication with licensing agencies will remain professional and focused solely on the facts.

We are committed to operating with fairness, compassion, and professionalism. Termination of services is never taken lightly. However, in situations where the safety or well-being of others is compromised, we must act in the best interest of all students and staff.

Supervision of Children

SUPERVISION POLICY

Children will never be left unattended. They will always be within sight and hearing of a staff member during indoor and outdoor playtimes, naptime, and mealtimes. If a child is sick, they will be isolated in an unused area of the classroom or office, but still within sight and hearing of a staff member.

CHECK IN / OUT PROCEDURES

All children must be brought into the center and taken to their classroom by a parent or guardian. Please notify the teacher upon arrival so that they are aware the child has arrived. It is required for teachers to sign in students. When picking up a child, please inform the teacher. All students must be signed out by the teacher.

If you plan to stay in the building for more than 15 minutes, we ask that you sign in and out on the visitor clipboard located in the office.

VISITORS

When visiting the center, please sign in and out at the ECC office.

CHILD RELEASE POLICY

Grace ECC will only release children to parents, guardians, or individuals listed as emergency contacts on their enrollment forms. If someone other than those approved will be picking up the child, written or verbal notice must be given in advance. A picture ID will be required at the time of pick-up.

CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

We recognize that there may be special circumstances involving divorce, separation, or remarriage. However, Grace Early Childhood Center cannot legally restrict a non-custodial parent from visiting, reviewing records, or picking up a child without current legal documents that prohibit such actions. Copies of all legal documents must be kept in the child's file. Grace Early Childhood Center's policy is to remain neutral in all custody situations.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Grace ECC admits students of any race, color, religion, sex, or ethnic origin. It is also unlawful for the center to discriminate on the basis of disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information about children and their families is considered confidential and is the property of the church and the family involved.

CHILD ABUSE

All staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse. If any staff member suspects child abuse or neglect, they are required under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code to report it to the local children's services agency.

Classroom Procedures

TRANSITIONS

Young infant rooms are designated for children aged 6 weeks to 12 months. Older infant rooms cater to children aged 12 to 18 months. Young toddler rooms serve children from 18 months to approximately 2 years old.

Transitions to the next age group depend on several factors, including availability, staffing, and the individual development of each child, rather than solely on their chronological age. Transition plans will be developed by the office in collaboration with the child's current teacher and the new teacher. These plans will include a schedule for increasing increments of time for the child to visit the new classroom. Once the transition plan is finalized, parents will receive a copy to review, sign, and return to the office.

Older toddler rooms are for children who will be 2 years old by September 30 and are eligible for our preschool program the following fall, as they will turn 3 by September 30 of that year.

Our preschool program includes 3-year-old classes designed for children who will attend at least two years of preschool. To qualify for these classes, children must be 3 by September 30 of that school year and must be potty-trained. Transitions for these classes occur each fall.

The 4-year-old classes serve as a pre-kindergarten program for children planning to enroll in kindergarten the following year. Children must be 4 by September 30 of that school year to qualify for our pre-kindergarten program. Like the 3-year-old classes, transitions into the 4-year-old classes take place each fall.

Grace ECC also offers a 4/5 Enrichment program for students eligible for kindergarten but whose parents prefer an additional year of preschool, or students who have been recommended for placement by their preschool 3s teacher. Transitions into this class also occur in the fall.

NAPTIME

Naptime is set per classroom and is sensitive to the children's developmental needs. It most often occurs after lunch.

INFANTS – Infants nap as needed. All cribs are labeled and (daily) used exclusively by one child. Cribs are disinfected weekly, and sheets are washed as often as they become wet or soiled and every Friday evening.

Infants are placed on their backs to sleep. Any other sleep position (e.g., placed on their stomach) requires a Sleep Position Waiver form (JFS 01235) signed by the child's physician. Staff frequently check on and visually observe each child breathing while they are sleeping. Infants are removed from their cribs as soon as possible once they are awake.

Infants shall not be placed in cribs with bibs or any other items which could pose a strangulation or suffocation risk (i.e., pacifier straps, blankets, and stuffed toys). Devices designed to maintain sleep positions are permitted but must be approved by the child's physician. A Sleep Position Waiver form (JFS

01235) must be filled out and kept on file to allow us to use a sleeping device. If a child needs the comfort of a special security item to fall asleep, it must be removed from the crib within 5 minutes of the infant falling asleep.

TODDLERS – Each toddler is assigned a specific cot. Children may bring a special pillow, blanket, or security item from home. Personal cot items are sent home weekly to be laundered and are returned to the classroom each Monday. All cots are sanitized weekly or sooner if needed.

PRECHOOL – After an active morning each full-day child is scheduled for a time of rest. Children may bring a blanket, a small pillow, and **one** small stuffed toy to be taken home at the end of each week to be laundered.

BRINGING ITEMS FROM HOME

Children who are at the center for the full day may find it comforting to bring an item from home to help them throughout the day. This is encouraged as long as it supports the child's well-being. We advise you to clearly label all items brought to school. Please note that we cannot be responsible for lost or damaged items.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special occasions for children. On the day of the celebration, you may bring a packaged food item or non-food treats, such as stickers or small toys. We ask that all packaged food be free of nuts and peanuts.

If you are planning a birthday party at home and wish to invite children from the center, please do not distribute invitations at the center unless you are inviting the entire class. Instead, kindly mail or email invitations to parents, or call them at home. If you are inviting the entire class, you may place invitations in each child's mailbox, but this should be done by a parent.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

Clothing should be appropriate for the weather conditions. All shoes must have an **enclosed toe** (i.e., no flip-flops or sandals). Crocs are permitted providing the back strap is used. We request that you keep an extra change of clothing either in the child's classroom or in their backpack in case of accidents. If clothes are borrowed from the center, we ask that you launder and return them at your earliest convenience.

Nutrition

FULL DAY STUDENTS

At the ECC, we prioritize the quality of meals and snacks provided to our students. All students enrolled in our full-day program receive a hot lunch, along with morning and afternoon snacks. Each lunch includes a source of protein, a grain, a vegetable, a fruit, and milk. If you need to send a lunch from home, please ensure it contains an item from each of these food groups. Note that we do not have a microwave in the kitchen or lunchroom, and refrigerators are not available for individual lunches. Please use frozen cold packs when packing your child's lunch. For infants, when your child begins eating table food around six months of age, they are welcome to eat from our menu as well. Menus are posted in the main lobby and on our website.

FOOD ALLERGIES/RESTRICTIONS

Grace ECC is committed to providing a safe environment for students with severe allergies. Therefore, **we request that parents do not bring any nuts, peanut butter, or products that may contain nuts or peanut butter into the center.**

If your child needs to avoid a food item for medical or religious reasons, we ask that you follow the procedures outlined below. Whenever a food item is eliminated, please provide a suitable substitute that meets the nutritional requirements. Food substitutions must be clearly labeled with both the student's and teacher's names, should be self-cooled, and must adhere to the nutritional standards set by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the USDA. Remember that children do not have access to a microwave in the kitchen or lunchroom, and refrigerators are not available for individual lunches. Please use frozen cold packs when packing.

FOR MEDICAL REASONS

If your child requires a food supplement, medical food (such as an electrolyte solution), or a diet that eliminates all types of fluid milk or an entire food group, you will need to complete a Medical/Physical Care Plan (01236). This form must be filled out, dated, and signed by the child's parent or guardian and/or the child's physician.

FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS

If special diets are necessary for cultural or religious reasons, a Medical/Physical Care Plan (JFS 01236) must also be completed, dated, and signed by the child's parent or guardian.

HEALTH INSPECTIONS

Grace Early Childhood Center is inspected on a regular basis by the Department of Health. The most recent inspection information is located in the office.

Emergencies and Accidents

Grace ECC prioritizes preparedness for various emergencies that may arise. We have established a comprehensive emergency plan as follows:

1. **Stay Informed:** Office staff continuously monitors status alerts. When there is a heightened alert (for weather or other situations), we regularly check television, radio, and the Internet for updates. We will relay this information to you via text alerts, email, or our website: www.grace-ecc.com.
2. **Assess the Situation and Act:** Upon receiving relevant information or official notifications, a decision will be made to either move to a predetermined safe area within the building or evacuate as necessary.
3. **Communicate:** An intercom system is installed throughout the entire church campus, allowing us to send and receive status updates within each classroom and office.

In the event of a fire or tornado, staff will follow the written instructions posted in each classroom, which detail emergency evacuation routes and procedures to ensure that all children have safely reached the designated assembly area. A Medical, Dental, and General Emergency Plan is also posted in each classroom or space used by children, outlining procedures for various emergencies.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In the event of an emergency (fire; tornado; flood; weather condition; threats of violence; natural disasters; or loss of power, heat, or water) where the center needs to evacuate, our primary relocation site shall be Service Ministry Building C and our secondary relocation site shall be Worthington Christian Lower School (6670 Worthington Galena Rd., Worthington, OH 43085; 614-431-8210). Grace ECC will post a sign on the front door of the center indicating that we have been evacuated and the location where you may pick up your child.

Emergency contact information for each child is kept in the office. In the event of an emergency and after the necessary actions are taken, our staff will inform parents of the status of the children and the situation if warranted. If parents are unable to be reached, our staff will contact the emergency contacts listed on each child's enrollment paperwork.

First aid kits are located in various places throughout the center. Extra supplies are stored at the front office.

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT OR THREAT OF VIOLENCE

In the unlikely event of an environmental threat or a threat of violence, the staff will take the following actions: first, they will secure the children in the safest location possible. They will then contact emergency personnel by calling 911, and follow the instructions provided by the authorities. As soon as the situation permits, parents will be informed via text alert. Additionally, an incident report will be provided to the parents.

INCIDENT/INJURY REPORT

All accidents are documented on an Incident/Injury Report form (JFS 01299), which requires the signature of the parent, guardian, or individual picking up the child on the day of the incident or illness. An Incident/Injury Report will be completed in the following situations: when a child experiences an illness, accident, or injury that requires first aid; when the child suffers a bump or hit to the head; when the child needs to be transported by an emergency squad; or when an unusual or unexpected event occurs that jeopardizes the child's safety. If a child requires emergency transportation, the report will be available within twenty-four hours following the incident. The center will also notify the licensing personnel from the appropriate Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) office within 24 hours in the event of a "general emergency" or a "serious incident, injury, or illness." A written report of the incident will be submitted to the ODJFS licensing staff.

SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNESS

Teachers are certified in First Aid, Communicable Diseases, and infant/child/adult CPR/AED. In the event of a minor accident, the teacher and/or director will assess and treat the injury. For more serious injuries or illnesses, first aid will be administered, and parents will be contacted right away to help determine the best course of action.

If an injury or illness requires emergency medical treatment, 911 will be called, parents will be notified, and the child will be transported by EMS. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available health records if a parent or guardian is not present at the center. Staff members are not permitted to transport children in their personal vehicles. Only the child's parent or EMS will provide transportation.

If a parent declines to grant consent for emergency transportation on the Child Enrollment and Health Information form, the center will contact the parents to come immediately and take their child to receive emergency services.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire drills are held monthly to acquaint the children with proper and safe evacuation procedures. These practice drills are supervised and documented for state reporting. Evacuation routes are posted in each room.

Tornado drills are held monthly from March to September to familiarize the students with those safety procedures. Tornado drill instructions are posted in each room and drills are supervised and documented for state reporting.

Lockdown Drills are held quarterly to practice proper and safe procedures for safe shelter or emergency evacuation in the event an individual(s) poses a threat to our safety. Low, medium, and high-level lockdown drills are practiced throughout the year.

CLOSINGS

The ECC could close due to inclement weather conditions or when required by ODJFS (i.e., loss of power, water, or heat).

All inclement weather closings are at the discretion of the ECC Administration.



SNOW AND ICE POLICY

If school needs to be closed early in the morning due to inclement weather, teachers will be notified via text alert. All weather-related closures will be at the discretion of the ECC Director.

The ECC monitors Franklin County's severe weather alerts to determine whether we will be open or closed during inclement weather. If Franklin County is under a snow emergency, we will take the following actions:

1. Website Update: Our status will be posted on our website (www.grace-ecc.com) by 6:15 a.m.
2. Text Alerts: We will contact all parents and staff via **Mojotx** text alert by 6:15 a.m.

In the event that Franklin County is under any level of snow emergency, the following procedures will be enacted:



LEVEL 1:

Roadways are hazardous due to blowing and drifting snow, and roads may also be icy. Motorists are urged to drive with caution.

- ECC Status: **Open with a two-hour delay**. Our hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.



LEVEL 2:

Roadways remain hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads may be very icy, and only those who deem it necessary should travel. Drivers should use extreme caution.

- ECC Status: To be determined by ECC Administration based on current weather and road conditions.
 - **If** we decide to CLOSE, we will send a text alert and post this information on our website (Grace-ECC.com) by 6:15 a.m.
 - **If** we decide to be **OPEN**, we will follow a two-hour delay (the center will operate from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.) and provide childcare ONLY; **the ½-day preschool program will be CLOSED**. Full-day program students will not miss any regularly scheduled classroom activities.

LEVEL 3:

All roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel. Travel is only allowed in emergencies. Anyone traveling may be subject to arrest.

- ECC Status: **Always CLOSED at Level 3.**

If a snow emergency is declared while the center is open, we will take the following actions:

 **LEVEL 1: Close early.** The closing time will be included in a text alert and an email to parents.

 **LEVEL 2: Close immediately.** Parents will need to pick up their children within one hour.

 **LEVEL 3: Close immediately.** Parents will need to pick up their children within one hour.

To check whether the Grace Early Childhood Center is on a delay or cancellation, please follow these steps:

1. Visit www.grace-ecc.com.
2. The banner at the top will be color-coded to indicate the status of the center:
 - **GREEN** - **OPEN** as usual
 - **YELLOW** - **TWO-HOUR** delay
 - **RED** - **CLOSED** for the entire day

If it becomes necessary to dismiss students after school is in session, parents will be notified. The center will remain open until all parents are able to pick up their children.

SECURITY CAMERAS

Our center has security cameras located in each classroom as well as hallways, playgrounds, and all entrances to aid in the safety and security of our staff and children. These cameras are monitored in the office throughout the day.

Management of Illness

GERM PREVENTION

We make every effort to prevent the spread of germs. Non-porous gloves are provided for diapering, cleaning, and similar tasks, while food handler gloves are available for serving food.

We also practice and teach high standards of cleanliness. This includes mandatory handwashing for both children and teachers, using soap and water before snacks and meals, as well as after using the toilet.

Additionally, the ECC is cleaned nightly by professional cleaners. All equipment and supplies are cleaned and sanitized according to state licensing guidelines.

ILLNESS

The ECC understands that children may get sick occasionally. If this is your child's first experience in a group care setting, it's possible they may experience more frequent illnesses initially as their immune system develops. We monitor all children as they enter the ECC to quickly assess their overall health.

- **Please keep your child at home when they are sick.**

- **If an illness prevents the child from comfortably participating in daily activities, keep them home.**
- **If an illness would create a higher demand for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children, keep them home.**

Sick children will be sent home. Please plan ahead and have a backup care plan in place in case you are unable to take time off from work or school.

Grace ECC follows specific guidelines to protect both children and staff from contagious illnesses. If any of the following conditions occur while a child is in attendance, the child will be made comfortable and allowed to rest on a cot in a supervised, isolated space. Parents will be notified and are expected to pick up their child from the center within one hour:

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, they should not attend school:

- **Fever:** An axillary temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, especially when combined with other signs or symptoms of illness.
- **Vomiting:** Vomiting more than once or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness.
- **Diarrhea:** Two to three abnormally loose stools within a 24-hour period. This is a strict ODJFS rule.
- **Sore Throat:** Difficulty swallowing or persistent sore throat.
- **Eye Symptoms:** Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching, or eye pain.
- **Breathing Issues:** Difficulty or rapid breathing.
- **Cough:** A severe cough that causes the child to turn red or blue in the face or produces a whooping or barking seal sound.
- **Jaundice:** Yellowing of the skin or eyes.
- **Infestations and Infections:** Evidence of untreated head lice, scabies, or other parasitic infections; untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots, or rashes.
- **Urinary and Stool Changes:** Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool.
- **Stiff Neck:** A stiff neck accompanied by an elevated temperature.
- **Communicable Diseases:** Any recognized communicable disease (please refer to the communicable disease chart at www.odjfs.state.oh.us).
- **Other Conditions:** Any other condition deemed necessary by the director for the well-being of the child and the other enrolled children.

Please ensure that children stay at home until they have fully recovered and no longer show any symptoms.

THE 24-HOUR ‘SYMPTOM FREE’ RULE

One of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of disease is by enforcing strict policies related to excluding ill children from the center.

It is our policy that a child must be free of any symptoms of illness—such as fever, diarrhea, or vomiting—for at least 24 hours before being allowed to return to the center.

Fever-free means that a child is without fever-reducing medication.

Please note that if a child is sent home due to illness, they will not be allowed to return to the center the following day.

Decisions regarding when a child with a communicable illness may return are made in accordance with the Ohio Department of Health's Communicable Diseases Chart and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Child Care Licensing regulations. The communicable disease chart is available in our office, on the wall across from the office, and in the infant/toddler hallway. It can also be found on our website. The center reserves the right to require a doctor's statement before any child can be readmitted. **It is important to note that a physician's directions do not override licensing regulations.**

If you're unsure whether your child is well enough to attend childcare, consider the following questions:

1. Will my child need Tylenol or Ibuprofen to get through the day?
2. Did my child wake up in the middle of the night with a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea?
3. Will my child need to stay indoors during recess?
4. Is my child overly tired, clingy, fussy, or just not acting like themselves?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, it's best for your child to stay at home and get plenty of rest.

Communicable disease policies and procedures are subject to change or modification based on requirements from the Ohio Department of Health, Columbus Public Health and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE NOTIFICATION

An orange sign will be posted near the door of each class in which children have been exposed to a communicable disease.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Families who choose not to immunize their child are required to submit the Child Medical Statement (JFS 01305) signed by a doctor, including the date of examination. Parents must check the box on this form indicating their decision to decline immunizations and provide their signature and date below. Notifications for all communicable diseases are posted near the classroom door. Please be aware of any communicable diseases for which your child is not immunized.

MEDICATION

Grace ECC is authorized to administer only the following medications:

1. Emergency Medications: These are medications required to treat emergency medical conditions, such as epi-pens, Benadryl, inhalers, etc.
2. Diaper Cream
3. Non-Aerosol Sunscreen

All other medications, including Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Orajel, eye drops, Chapstick, and similar items, must be administered by a parent.

The center will only administer approved medications to a child after a parent completes and signs the Request for Administration of Medication form (JFS 01217). **This form can be requested at the office or found on our website (www.grace-ecc.com) under the “Documents” tab.** All sections of the form must be filled out completely, and the medication, along with the completed Request for Administration of Medication form, should be submitted to the ECC office.

Medications will be stored in a designated area that is inaccessible to children, either in the classroom or the office. Medications cannot be stored in a child’s cubby or bag. Additionally, school-age children are not allowed to carry inhalers or other forms of medication on their own. Only staff members listed on the Medical/Physical Care Plan are permitted to administer medications.

Parents are responsible for training all staff members who care for their child, as only trained staff can administer medication. The school reserves the right to refuse to administer any prescription or non-prescription medications at any time.

- **Prescription Medication**
Prescription medication must be provided in its original container and administered according to the instructions on the prescription label.
- **Over-the-Counter Medication**
All over-the-counter medication must be in its original container, complete with the original label and dosing instructions based on the child’s age or weight. **If the label indicates that the medication should be used “as directed” by a physician, a Request for Administration of Medication form must be completed and signed by a doctor.** The center will not administer a dosage that exceeds the manufacturer’s recommendations, and medication can only be given for a maximum of three consecutive days.
- Parents should label all medication with the child’s full name, bring it to the ECC office, and complete the required paperwork.
- **Nonprescription topical lotions (diaper cream and sunscreen)**
For nonprescription topical products and lotions, the center will also follow all manufacturer’s instructions and will not use a product for skin irritations for longer than 14 consecutive days. **Topical lotions should be used at home prior to being administered at the center.** Request for Administration of Medication forms for nonprescription topical products and lotions will only be valid for up to twelve months.

SCREENINGS

There are several community resources available for families who believe their child may need testing or additional services, such as speech therapy, hearing services, occupational therapy, or physical therapy. For children under the age of three, parents can contact Help Me Grow (Action for Children: 614-656-3322) if they have concerns about their child’s growth and development.

For children three years and older, parents should reach out to their local school district if they have concerns about their child’s learning or development. If teachers or staff have any concerns regarding a child, they will communicate these concerns to both the parents and the administration.

BITING INFORMATION

Why Do Young Children Bite?

Biting is a natural part of child development. Infants and toddlers often explore their world by putting things in their mouths, and biting and chewing can feel good during teething.

Toddlers and young preschoolers may lack the verbal skills needed to fully express themselves. As a result, biting can elicit a quick and dramatic response from those around them.

Children experience a range of emotions, both positive and negative, that they may find difficult to express or control. These emotions can stem from various factors, including excitement, frustration, fatigue, and fear of separation from loved ones.

Biting in a group setting can evoke strong emotions for everyone involved, regardless of the cause. It's important to be aware of potential biting issues before they arise and to have an action plan in place for when they do occur. **The staff at the ECC has developed the following plan to address biting incidents in our classrooms.**

For the biter:

- When addressing biting incidents, the child who bites is removed from the situation without displaying any emotion. Use clear, calm language such as, "Biting is not okay; it hurts." Avoid any immediate responses that might reinforce the biting behavior or draw attention to the biter. Instead, focus your caring attention on the child who was bitten.
- The child who bit is not allowed to return to play and is placed in time-out. During this time, talk to them at a level they can understand. For example, say, "I can see that you want that truck, but I can't let you hurt him. We don't put our teeth on people."
- Encourage the child to say, "I'm sorry," and to ask for forgiveness. Afterward, redirect them to other play activities.
- The teacher will write an incident report to inform the parents about what occurred.

For the victim:

- Separate the victim from the biter.
- Comfort the child.
- If necessary, administer first aid.
- Write an incident report to notify the parents of the incident.

Transportation of Children

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an important and enjoyable aspect of learning for preschoolers. They enhance the educational experience by providing opportunities that are not available in the classroom. All field trips are scheduled at the discretion of the director. Families will receive timely information regarding the times, dates, transportation, locations, and other relevant details.

ROUTINE TRIPS

Occasionally, our students will take routine walks or buggy rides (for infants and toddlers) around the church property. Before any child can participate in these routine trips, parents must sign a Routine Trip Permission Slip (JFS 01225). This permission form will be kept on file and needs to be updated annually.

The same supervision guidelines that apply to field trips will also be implemented for routine trips. Students will be supervised at all times, and staff will maintain state-required ratios. Each teacher or staff member will be responsible for supervising a specific group of students. Teachers will count students before leaving, upon arrival at their destination, before leaving that destination, and when returning. Additionally, student counts will be conducted throughout the trip.

Swimming

For our year-round, full-day students (toddlers to preschool), we will engage in water activities such as wading pools, sprinklers, and spray bottles during the summer months. Before any water activities take place, a permission slip must be signed by parents.

We will maintain state-mandated ratios during all water activities, and teachers will be positioned beside each station (water table, sprinkler, etc.) for supervision.

Parents are asked to send bathing suits, towels, and non-aerosol sunscreen with their child on water days. Additionally, to apply sunscreen, the center must have a completed sunscreen form on file.

Outdoor Play

It is important and beneficial for children to play outside every day. Therefore, we will provide outdoor playtime for toddlers and preschoolers daily. Infants will also have the opportunity for outdoor play in the South Infant Courtyard, as classroom time allows.

However, the amount of time spent outside will be limited during extremely warm or cold temperatures. Children will not be taken outside if the temperature exceeds 90 degrees (factoring in the heat index) or falls below 25 degrees (factoring in the wind chill). Additionally, outdoor playtime will be adjusted based on weather conditions such as rain and ozone warnings. On days when outdoor play is not possible, students will have the opportunity for large motor play in the WOW Room.

Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for outdoor activities each day. In the winter, this includes a coat, hat, gloves, and boots. In the summer, children should wear shoes with enclosed toes and heels or Crocs with a back strap; flip-flops, sandals, and similar footwear are not permitted at the ECC. Non-aerosol sunscreen will only be routinely applied to children during the summer months. To allow teachers to apply sunscreen to your child, a completed sunscreen form must be on file.

Tuition and Fees

ANNUAL REGISTRATION FEE

The annual non-refundable registration fee is required with your enrollment application and again for the next enrollment period: full-day enrollment runs from July 1 through June 30, while half-day enrollment runs from mid-August through May.

TUITION

All tuition rates are determined by a child's schedule according to the annual school calendar. Invoices are sent via email. We offer two payment options:

1. Annual Payment: This must be paid by July 10 for the upcoming school year, or within 10 days of the billing date for those enrolling midyear. A percentage discount is applied to those who choose this payment option.
2. Monthly Payments: These are due on the first of each month and are considered past due after the 10th.

Please ensure timely payments to avoid any late fees.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Grace ECC provides several options for tuition payments:

- Cash
- Check (make payable to GBC-ECC)
- Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) – please visit the office for the enrollment packet

Please note that there will be a \$25 fee for any checks returned due to insufficient funds (NSF) and for all returned EFT payments.

LATE PAYMENT FOR TUITION

Monthly accounts that are not paid in full by the 10th of the month will incur a \$25 late fee. If the 10th falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline for payment will be the next business day.

Tuition that remains unpaid by the 30th of the billing month will result in the child being withdrawn from the center, and their spot will be offered to a family on the waitlist. Once an account is past due, the entire balance must be settled, and the account must be brought up to date for the child's admission to continue.

LATE PICKUP FEES

Due to teachers having continuous duties throughout the day, children who remain after pickup times will be supervised in the office.

- Morning Half-Day Pre-K Pickup: 12:00 p.m.
- Full-Day Pickup: By 6:00 p.m.
- If you are ever late for pickup, we kindly ask that you accept an "Oops" slip and make your payment at the office the following day.

Our late fee policy is as follows:

- 1st Late Pickup: Grace (the late fee is waived)
- After the 1st Late Pickup: \$1.00 per minute

VACATION CREDIT

Grace ECC offers a one-week vacation credit for families enrolled full-time in our year-round, full-day program. To be eligible to request this credit, your child must be enrolled full-time for 12 consecutive months. Vacation credits for subsequent years can be applied no sooner than 12 months after your last request. You will receive one vacation credit per 12-month period, based on the program option your child is enrolled in. Please note that this credit is not available for families enrolled in our 9-month full- or half-day programs.

Vacation days must be taken as consecutive days within the same week.

Vacation credit forms can be obtained from the Grace ECC office. Please submit this form at least two weeks before your planned vacation.

PROLONGED ABSENCES

If you decide to withdraw your child for an extended period, the next family on the waitlist will be contacted to fill the open spot in the class. If there is still space available when you return, a non-refundable enrollment fee will be added to your bill at the time you re-enroll your child.

Alternatively, if you wish to keep your child's place during a prolonged absence, you will need to pay 50% of your regular tuition.

CLOSINGS DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS OR LICENSING STANDARDS

Your tuition is calculated solely based on the days we are scheduled to be open; holidays and non-workdays are not included in the total tuition amount. However, please note that we will not issue refunds for closures that are beyond our control. This includes:

- Weather conditions
- Requirements set by ODJFS (such as loss of power, water, or heat)
- Mandates from Columbus Public Health or the Ohio Department of Health (for example, COVID-related closures)

Additional Policies

ABSENCES

All preschool curriculum instruction begins at 9:00 a.m. To ensure that your child receives the full benefit of our program, we ask that all students arrive by this time. Please avoid dropping off your toddler or preschooler during nap time.

If your child will be absent for any reason, please call the Grace ECC office by 9:30 a.m. If your child is sick and later diagnosed with a communicable illness, kindly follow up with us so we can notify other parents of potential exposure to a communicable disease at the center.

Please note that there are no refunds for missed days, as billing is based on your child's scheduled attendance, not actual attendance.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Full-Day Students:

Parents who wish to withdraw their children from the full-day program must submit a withdrawal form by the 15th of the month. The child's last day in the program will be the last school day of that month. Please note that the full month's tuition will still be required, and there will be no credit for any missed attendance during this period.

Half-Day Students:

Parents intending to withdraw their children from the half-day preschool program should submit a withdrawal form before the 20th of the month. The child's last day will be on the 15th of the following month. As with the full-day program, there will be no credits for missed attendance during this time.

If you withdraw your child and later re-enroll them in the same academic year, you will be required to pay the non-refundable enrollment fee again.

WAITLIST POLICIES

Grace Early Childhood Center reserves the right to prioritize applications based on the following criteria: siblings of currently enrolled families, children of staff members, families attending Grace Polaris Church, and new

applicants. Enrollment within these groups is offered according to the date the applications are received and the availability of age-related openings.

When an opening becomes available, the family will be notified and given three business days to respond. If the family does not respond or declines the offer, we will move on to the next family on the list. If the offer is accepted, the family will have one week to complete all necessary paperwork and pay all applicable fees. Families on the waitlist will be asked each year if they would like to remain on the waitlist. If they wish to stay, each family will be required to update their enrollment paperwork. Failure to respond by the requested date will result in removal from the waitlist.

RE-ENROLLMENT

Re-enrollment takes place every January and February for all current students, during which an annual non-refundable re-enrollment fee is required. Open enrollment for the public starts on March 1st.

If your child begins attending the center after January 1, you will be responsible for paying the annual re-enrollment fee by the fall.

DISENROLLMENT

Disenrollment from the center may occur in the following situations:

- Tuition is not paid by the 30th of the billing month.
- A behavior management plan has been unsuccessful, or parents are not willing to work together with the center to resolve behavior issues.

CENTER PARENT INFORMATION

The center is licensed to operate by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), and this license is prominently displayed for review.

A toll-free phone number is provided on the center's license, which can be used to report any suspected violations of licensing laws or administrative rules. The rules governing childcare licensing are available for review at the center.

According to Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, the administrator and every employee of the center are required to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Parents of children enrolled in the center are allowed unlimited access to the center during operating hours. This access is for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided, or assessing the facilities. Upon entering the premises, parents or guardians must notify the Administrator of their presence.

The administrator's availability hours and child-to-staff ratios are posted in a visible area within the center for review.

The licensing record, which includes inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from ODJFS. Inspections can also be viewed online at <http://childcaresearch.ohio.gov/>. Parents may search for a specific program and sign up to receive notifications when the latest inspection results are posted online.

It is illegal for the center to discriminate against children during enrollment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq. To file a discrimination complaint, please write to or call the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or ODJFS. HHS and ODJFS are equal opportunity providers and employers.

Write or call:

HHS

Region V, Office of Civil Rights

233 N. Michigan Ave, Ste. 240

Chicago, IL 60601

(312) 886-2359 (voice)

(312) 353-5693 (TDD)

(312) 886-1807 (fax)

(614) 995-9961

Write or call:

ODJFS

Bureau of Civil Rights

30 E. Broad St., 37th floor

Columbus, OH 43215-3414

(614) 644-2703 (voice)

1-866-277-6353 (toll free)

(614) 752-6381 (fax)

1-866-221-6700 (TTY) or

For more information about childcare licensing requirements as well as how to apply for childcare assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>.

This information must be given in writing to all parents, guardians and employees as required in 5101: 2-12-07 of the Ohio Administrative Code.