

PARENT HANDBOOK
2018-2019



Greater Grace
Learning
Center

Training Up The Next Generation

A Ministry of Greater Grace Church

6011 Moravia Park Drive | Baltimore, Maryland 21206
443-451-1329

www.ggwo.org/ggic

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR	3
MISSION STATEMENT	4
SECTION ONE	5
Educational Philosophy	
Screening Reports	
Discipline Policy	
SECTION TWO	8
Illness and Health Policy	
Signs of Illness	
Absences	
SECTION THREE	9
Parent / Teacher Communication	
Arrival, Departure	
SECTIONFOUR: MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES	10
Items to bring, not to bring	
Nap Time	
Clothes and Shoes	
Outdoor Play	
GGLC Photographs	
SECTION FIVE	11
School Closings	
Evacuation Procedures	
Celebrations, Holidays	
Special Occasions	
Field Trips	
SECTION SIX	13
Payment Options	
One Time Extended Care Option	
Late Pick Up Fees	
Withdrawal	
Financial Policy	
Addendum SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY	

Dear Greater Grace Learning Center Families:

It is a privilege to welcome your family to the early childhood education ministry of Greater Grace Learning Center. We look forward to another year of serving you and working with your family towards the goals you have set for your child's early childhood education. Our teachers work diligently to prepare exciting and age-appropriate learning activities and lessons to help your child discover his/her potential. It is our honor to work alongside your family to help your child grow mentally, physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

We thank you for choosing Greater Grace Learning Center for your child's early childhood education experience, and look forward to a close relationship with your family. Please pray with us for a year of special memories.

Blessings,

Kim Yanosky
Director

MISSION STATEMENT

- The mission of the Greater Grace Learning Center (GGLC) is to disciple young people, by word and example, in the Spirit of God to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind and strength.
- GGLC will minister to parents by assisting them in fulfilling their God-given responsibility to train their children.
- We provide a Christ-centered, Bible-based environment and curriculum through which our students acquire the skills needed to succeed in life.

SECTION ONE

Educational Philosophy of Greater Grace Learning Center

As part of the ministry of Greater Grace World Outreach, GGLC is committed to honoring the uniqueness and value of each child entrusted to our care. Our program is designed to provide Biblically based, age-appropriate learning experiences to allow each child to develop at his/her own level with confidence. It is our commitment to honor the trust you have placed in us to work with your child through his/her early childhood education experience.

The Program

We utilize a Christian curriculum that encourages children to learn and play in a variety of centers planned to enhance the learning experience. Monthly posts will keep you informed about weekly Bible stories, learning themes, and academic units. Weekly themes include learning opportunities in art, literature, mathematics, science, music, home living, dramatic play and manipulatives. There will be special days that include show and tell, special guests and field trips. Notices will be sent home prior to any special events. Social skills are developed through sharing, taking turns, thinking, reasoning, and problem solving. Spiritual training occurs through the telling of Bible stories, activities which incorporate spiritual truth through discussion, and sharing/relating of God's Word verbally and in written form and play-acting. Greater Grace Learning Center admits children of any race, color, national or ethnic origin. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its policies.

Screening Reports (K4 class only)

Written developmental screening takes place twice a year (K4 class only). If developmental or behavioral concerns arise in the classroom, parents will be notified immediately. Again, teacher/parent conferences may be scheduled as needed.

We teach our children the historic orthodox Christian faith summarized in the following:

ABOUT THE BIBLE: All scripture contained in the Old and New Testaments is verbally, plenary, and inerrantly inspired by God. It is the authoritative guide for all Christian understanding, life and ministry.

ABOUT GOD: There is but one God eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each is infinite, eternal and almighty.

ABOUT JESUS CHRIST: We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son, is fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and He lived a sinless life. He died; shedding His blood in His substitutionary death for sinners, then was buried, arose from the grave, ascended into heaven, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT: The Holy Spirit, Who is Lord and giver of life, convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, and unites man to Jesus Christ by faith. We believe the Holy Spirit seals and indwells all believers. The filling of the Holy Spirit is not an unconditional promise to all believers; the indwelling is.

ABOUT MAN: Man was created in the image and likeness of God. It was by man's free volition that he disobeyed God, incurring physical and spiritual death (separation from God). Each human being is born with a sin nature. Because of this each human is a sinner by nature and is in need of a divine salvation.

ABOUT SALVATION: Salvation is a gift from God. This was accomplished by Christ's substitutionary death; all who believe in Him are justified by the shedding of His blood. Because salvation is given by grace, the believer's salvation is eternally secure.

ABOUT THE BAPTISM: The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is sent upon all who believe in Jesus Christ. This takes place in each believer at the moment of salvation. Continual infilling may follow. Each gift given by the Holy Spirit is for the edification of the Body of Christ, and is still present today.

ABOUT THE GREAT COMMISSION: We believe that the fulfillment of the Great Commission is the responsibility of all believers.

ABOUT THE CHURCH: The church is the body and bride of Christ. It is dedicated to the worship and service of God and the observance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The primary task of the church in all ages is to teach all nations and to make disciples through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God.

ABOUT ETERNITY: Christ will return to rapture His church. Immediately following this event will be the seven-year tribulation period. Concluding this, Christ will come again to the earth and establish His rule for a 1,000 year period. The Great White Throne judgment of the unsaved, coupled with Satan being cast into the lake of fire, will then allow Christ to establish a New Heaven and a New Earth. This is the consummation of all things.

Discipline Policy

Discipline is teaching a child to redirect himself/herself and bring his/her actions into control.

Discipline is a process that takes time, patience, and prayer.

Discipline is guidance with love, trust, care, understanding, and acceptance of each child as a person of worth.

The ***Discipline Policy*** of GGLC is to guide children in a positive way by setting limits and boundaries, by letting them know they are accepted, and giving respect.

Boundaries are necessary to help the children learn self-control. These boundaries help them function safely in a classroom with others. Teachers set these boundaries the first day of school and consistently reinforce them. Reasonable boundaries give children an opportunity to choose their behavior. Our staff ensures that all children know that they are important and respected.

Thus, discipline within the school setting will seek to:

- reinforce the positive behaviors of the child
- listen carefully to the child as they express their feelings
- model appropriate Christ-like behavior (actions, words)
- provide choices with realistic boundaries
- provide logical, natural consequences

These Following Techniques are taught to and used by our staff for the edification and safety of our classrooms:

“Praise and Encouragement” - Positive, kind words are used that acknowledge appropriate behavior, reinforcing future practice of the desired behavior.

“Modeling”- Staff members seek to model positive attitudes, words, and appropriate behavior. Behavior is *“more caught than taught.”*

“Redirection” - This action is used to help a child move to another activity when the teacher sees a problem about to occur.

“Reflection” - *Children sometimes need to be removed from an area to a quiet place to think about their actions.* This action is taken after the teacher has spoken to the child about his behavior. The child sits apart from other children for 2-5 minutes (1 minute per age). At this time the teacher talks to the child about the inappropriate behavior and better solutions to the problem.

“Parent Involvement” - The teacher will sometimes call the parent about the child's behavior. Working together usually helps the child want to change their inappropriate behavior.

“Sending the child home” - This is done only if the child is in an uncontrollable state. This will be a last option when all other methods have failed.

Dismissal of a Child

The program reserves the right to dismiss any child if, after entering, he/she is unable to participate in group experiences or if tuition and fees have not been paid according to the financial policy.

SECTION TWO

Illness and Health Policy

All state forms, including medical/immunization records, must be completed prior to the start of school.

For the protection of your child and the other children, any child who appears ill cannot be accepted in school. Please **DO NOT** medicate children to bring fever down so they may attend. Children must be free of fever and other symptoms for 24 (twenty-four) hours prior to returning to school. If a child has been under a doctor's care, please obtain a doctor's release to return to school.



Signs of Illness*

- **Fever 99.4 degrees & over (under the arm) within the previous 24 hours**
- **Vomiting and/or diarrhea -must be symptom-free for 24 hours**
- **Common cold (including runny nose)**
- **Sore throat**
- **Unexplained rash or any skin infection**
- **Pink eye and other eye infections**

**These recommendations were taken from the Report of the Committee on Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics.*

Children who become ill during the school day will be isolated and the parents will be contacted to pick-up the child immediately. **Please always have a back-up plan. Young children will get sick.**

Medications

The Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care, permits the administration of prescription and non-prescription medication to children under certain conditions in our facility. Prior to administering medicine, written permission from the child's parent is required. It is preferable that all medications be administered at home whenever possible, but if medication is required during hours of attendance, a "**MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM**" must be completed by the parent and signed by the child's physician. This state form must be completed or no medication may be given.

Medication must be kept in the office for the safety of the children. Please do not leave any medication in your child(ren)s backpacks.

Absence

Children with colds, fever or signs of contagious diseases will be expected to remain home. If he/she contracts a contagious disease, such as mumps, chickenpox, measles, strep throat, head lice, etc., and he/she may have exposed others at the school, please call the center immediately. This allows us to inform other families, so all concerned will have the opportunity to take timely precautions or treatments as necessary.

SECTION THREE

Parent/Teacher Communication

We strongly discourage lengthy discussions and visits at arrival and/or dismissal. This distracts the teacher while welcoming and caring for children. Parents are encouraged to communicate non-urgent matters via Classdojo (for a full description of Classdojo, please see your child's teacher). A parent may also request a meeting with the teacher. This should be arranged by calling our office at (443) 451-1329.

The learning part of our program takes place between 8:00 A.M. - 11:30 A.M. It is **very important** that your child arrive on time to participate in this scheduled portion.

*Doors open at 11:30 for pick up, parents who arrive before will be asked to wait outside. If you need to pick up early for an appointment, please inform the office.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Arrival

GGLC opens the doors for early arrivals at 7:30 A.M. The parent or responsible adult should sign the time of arrival/departure and signature on the "Sign In/Out Sheet". At arrival, please make sure the child is taken directly to their classroom.

For departure

The parent, or responsible adult, must sign the name and exact time of pick-up on the "Sign In/Out Sheet". The teacher or staff must be aware of the child's departure.

If someone other than authorized adults will be picking up your child, this change should be *in writing* and given to the office. The written change should be dated and signed by the parent.

Teachers release children only to persons whose names are listed on the child's "*Pick Up Authorization*" card. Please do not be offended if a staff member requests your identification. Your child's safety is our priority.

11:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 Dismissals

The dismissal times for children attending the center are 11:30 A.M., 3:30 P.M. and 5:30 P.M. Parent or authorized adult should come to the child(ren)s classroom to sign the child out. Anytime a child is picked up beyond the time on the registration form, **late fees apply**.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If there are any court orders that affect your child such as possession orders, guardianship, etc., please notify the director. A copy of any court order should be placed in your child's folder for the protection of all concerned with your child's care. Your child's protection is a priority, and it will help us to meet that need if we are aware of any special circumstances.

SECTION FOUR

Items to Bring

Each child should have:

- Large zippered backpack that is *easily opened* to bring home school projects, items and papers. Your child's name should be **clearly marked** on the outside of the backpack.
- Change of clothes (according to the season) in zip-loc bag, labeled with the child's name on each item (top, bottom, underwear, socks).
- Disposable diapers for children not potty trained.
- A well balanced lunch if staying for aftercare - we refrigerate all lunches; we do **not** warm cooked items. Lunch boxes should be clearly marked on the outside of the lunchbox.

Items Not to Bring

No toys should be brought from home. We will have "Show and Tell" days designated on our monthly calendar requesting special items from home as part of our curriculum.

Children should not wear jewelry. Jewelry presents a choking hazard to children and may be lost during play. Girls may wear small post earrings. Teachers will not be responsible for lost jewelry.

Nap Time

Parents are to provide a blanket and a pillow for each child staying for aftercare. Parents are to bring these nap items home to wash at the end of the week, and return them to the Center the next scheduled day.

Clothes and Shoes

Washable play clothes are recommended for weekday activities. Children should be free to play without worry of getting dirty during play. Close-toed shoes are mandatory for safety and hygiene reasons.

Children who are toilet training (or toilet trained) should be able to manage their clothes easily. Elastic waist bands on bottoms with NO BELTS or BUTTONS are requested. It enhances a child's sense of accomplishment and self-esteem to be able to manage their personal needs on their own, and it may help reduce accidents.

Outdoor Play

We spend time outside each day, weather permitting. Dress your child appropriately to enjoy God's beautiful creation. If weather does not allow us to go outside, large muscle activity is conducted in our Learning Center. Please label your child's jacket; outdoor wear.

GGLC Photographs

Individual and class pictures will be taken during the year. Parents must sign a *Permission to Photograph and Display Pictures* form to give permission or decline permission to display photographs taken of your child(ren) in the facility or in the centers advertising.

SECTION FIVE

Weather Related and Other School Closings

The safety of our staff and families will be the deciding factor when weather related closings are determined. Announcements will be posted on GGLC Twitter feed and on our website. There are no reimbursements for emergency closings or delayed openings.

Parents seeking most current information regarding closings and/or delays are encouraged to sign up for Twitter text message alerts through our twitter account. Simply send a text message

To: 40404

Message: Follow gglc1

Send

No registration is required, no need to go on Twitter website to sign up.

We do not close according to the Greater Grace Christian Academy, GGCA schedule. For the convenience of our working parents, we will remain open until it becomes unsafe to keep the center open.

If the weather changes during our normal hours of operation, the GGLC staff will call parents to consider picking up their child(ren) for early dismissal. Please have a back-up plan for someone to be available to care for your child during this time.

Evacuation Procedures

GGLC follows GGWO Plaza Emergency Protocol and Code System. If GGWO declares an Evacuation Code, we will evacuate to a designated safety area in Greater Grace Christian Academy. If the Plaza becomes unsafe, and evacuation to an outside location becomes mandatory, we will relocate to Faith Baptist Church, 7378 East Furnace Branch Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21060 by bus or car. Parents will be notified immediately by a phone in such a situation.

Faith Baptist Church
7378 East Furnace Branch Road
Glen Burnie, MD 21060

Holiday Celebrations

Any center celebration will be announced to the parents ahead of time. We encourage and welcome parents to volunteer in event planning. Regarding party favors, treats, etc. we do ask that our policies about particular holidays be honored. This will help us to fulfill our commitment to you in providing a distinctly Christian learning experience. Any questions regarding celebrations may be directed to the Director. State Health Laws **prohibits any homemade items** to be served to the children. Suggested snack items for party days are ice cream cups, cookies, pre-packaged finger foods and pre-made cupcakes or cakes.

Harvest Theme is celebrated instead of Halloween. No costumes, ghosts, witches, or other scary Halloween symbols will be used during this time. We display the whole

armor of God. Families are encouraged to join the annual Greater Grace World Outreach, GGWO Harvest Night.

Thanksgiving is celebrated with a class celebration, emphasizing the Christian heritage we share with early settlers of our country.

Christmas celebrations focus on the birth of Jesus as our Savior. Your child(ren)s class may have a Christmas Celebration with a gift exchange. Events are announced directly to the parents by the class teacher.

Easter is the most important of Christian holidays! No make believe aspects associated with Easter, such as the Easter bunny, will be used during this special season.

Special Occasions

Parents are welcome to help us celebrate the child(ren)s birthdays, and other special occasions. Parents may provide special snacks for their child's class on birthdays. State Health laws prohibit any homemade items to be served to the children. All items must be pre-packaged. Suggested snack items are ice cream cups, cookies, fruit snacks, other pre-packaged finger foods, and 100% fruit juice. Special plates, napkins, or cups may be sent. We will do our best to make each child's birthday a special day.

Field Trips

GGLC arranges two annual field trips. All students are encouraged to take part in the Field Trips as GGLC will only open in the afternoon on those days.

There will be two Field Trips during the 2017-18 school year; in the fall, a trip to a farm, in the spring, to the Baltimore Zoo.

To ensure the safety of the children, all field trips require parent participation. Therefore, parents/guardians will:

- Provide transportation to and from the Field Trip.
- Meet GGLC with their child/ren at the scheduled Field Trip venue.
- Remain with the child/ren for the duration of the Field Trip.
- Provide transportation to return to GGLC if afternoon care is needed.

The Learning Center will open in the afternoon on Field Trip days until 5:30 PM for the child/ren in need of afternoon care.

Field trips will be planned and announced well in advance.

A one-time fee of \$20 per child at registration covers the cost of the trips. This fee does not cover parent entry fees and or additional siblings.

SECTION SIX

Payment Options

If you choose to pay in full, you will receive a 5% discount on tuition. You may also choose to make payment via a FACTS agreement, or a credit card on file. If you are a GGCA parent with an active FACTS agreement, this amount can be added to that agreement.

You will not receive a monthly statement.

We are a non-profit service to the community. Please do not request for adjustments to your child's tuition. If an unusual circumstance arises in your family, speak to the director or the finance office and share your needs so we may work together to make arrangements for payment.

We do accept Purchase of Child Care vouchers from the State of Maryland. It is the parent's responsibility to determine eligibility and begin the application process.

A copy of the financial policy is included at the back of the handbook for your reference.

One-Time Extended Care Option

GGLC offers a last minute drop off service for current GGLC students only. Space is limited and available on a first come first serve basis. The parent may sign up ahead of time, or the morning of.

To sign up for one-time extended care:

1. Fill out the One Time Extended Care Form at GGLC Office
2. Choose Pick Up Time
3. Make exact payment by cash only

Extended Pick up Option is charged at the rate of \$5 per hour.

Late Pick-Up Fees

If your child is not picked up on time at dismissal times (11:30 A.M., 3:30 P.M. and 5:30 P.M.), a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed.

An additional "Late Pick-up Reserve" fee of \$50.00 will be on your Registration Form. This amount will help pay the late pick-up costs. If this amount is not used throughout the year, the \$50.00 (or the remaining balance) will be refunded at the end of the school year.

Please call the Center Office at (443) 451-1329 if you know you will be delayed from picking up your child at the scheduled time, so we may reassure your child of your arrival.

Withdrawal

A signed GGLC Withdrawal Form is required. Please see Angie at front desk for form.

GREATER GRACE LEARNING CENTER **Statement of Financial Policy**

1. Payment plan must be set up either on the 5th or the 20th of every month to debit your bank account. (If you are a GGCA parent with an active FACTS agreement, this amount can be added to that agreement.) No invoices will be mailed.
2. If the learning center is closed for holidays/inclement weather or if your child is absent, tuition will not be discounted or refunded and the child cannot “make up” days they missed due to illness or vacation.
3. A \$25 fee will be assessed for any changes in schedule. This fee **must** be submitted with a “Change of Registration” form before the change can be processed. Verbal changes or e-mails in schedule will not be accepted.
4. Withdrawal – A “GGLC Withdrawal” form must be completed, signed and returned to our office. Any emergency situation should be discussed with the Director. GGLC reserves the right to withhold student records if any tuition/fees are left unpaid. Future registrations for a child and/or sibling will not be accepted if a prior balance exists.
5. **If a child is picked up after their scheduled dismissal time at 11:30 A.M., 3:30 P.M., or 5:30 P.M., a \$1.00 per minute fee will be assessed.**

PARENT AGREEMENT

I, _____, whose child
_____ is enrolled in the **Greater Grace Learning Center**, have received a copy of the Parent Handbook. I have read and understand the policies and procedures described in the Parent Handbook, and I agree to abide by them.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Special Needs Policy

We will provide inclusive child care by giving the best early childhood education and care to all children, including those with special needs and disabilities, by ensuring each child feels welcomed and important. By providing an inclusive environment it will allow children to learn together in an atmosphere that supports and nurtures the individual strengths of each child and allows participation in the daily routines and activities of the program.