

Grace Education Ministries Parent Handbook



Grace Educational Ministries
615 N. 22nd Street
Lafayette, Indiana 47904
765-447-2204

www.GraceDayCare.net

www.gracereadiness.org

Mrs. Anne Hough gdc@lafgraceumc.org

Mrs. Holly Black hmwb26@aol.com



“Do no harm, do all the good we can, do the things that keep us close to God”

*Please read, sign and return the signature page at the end of the handbook.

Revised: 2016, 2018, 2019,2020,2021,2022

Table of Contents:

Introductions	3	Rest Time	10-11
Mission	3	Toilet Training	11
Admission	3	Change of Classroom Transition	11
Fees	3-4	Breast Feeding Policy	11
Tuition Policy	4	Food Program	12
Vacation Policy	4	Readiness Preschool Snacks	12
Late Fee Policy	4-5	Birthdays	12
Schedule Changes	5	Halloween	12-13
Readiness Preschool	5	Readiness Preschool Thanksgiving Program	13
Field Trips	5	Christmas	13
School Pictures	5	Valentine's Day	13
Purdue Speech & Hearing Screening	5	Week of the Young Child	13
Items from Home	6	Week of the Young Child	14
Sign In & Out	6	Readiness Graduation	14
Release of Children	6	Classroom Donations	14
Building Security	6	Guest Speakers	14
Hours of Operation	6	Readiness Preschool Show & Tell	14
Holiday Closures	6-7	Lockers & Extra Clothes	14-15
Readiness Preschool Schedule	7	Outdoor Play	15
Building Closures	7-8	Confidentiality	15
Readiness Preschool Closures	8	Guidance & Discipline	15
Staff	8	Student Evaluations	15-16
Health & Safety	8	Communication	16
Illness & Communicable Diseases	8-9	Social Media	16
Illness Outbreak Protocol	9-10	Curriculum	16-17
Prescription Medication	10	Schedules	17
First Aid	10	Grouping	17
Abuse & Neglect Reporting Policy	10	Suggestions & Criticisms	18
Emergency Evacuation Drill	10	Parent /Guardian Signature Page	19

Introduction

Welcome to Grace Education Ministries (GEM). GEM is a non-profit community service located within Grace United Methodist Church (GUMC). It is part of the church's ministry with children. GEM is licensed by the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration and meets State and County requirements and regulations for health, safety, nutrition and program. GEM has an open-door policy for all families during normal business hours. We are NAEYC accredited, Level 4 Paths to Quality provider.

Mission

We believe a child's love for learning begins with positive early learning experiences. Our objective is to provide safe, loving care that will enable young children to feel secure and comfortable while away from parents and home. It is also to provide developmentally appropriate activities within a Christian environment. The program at GEM includes quiet as well as active times to ensure positive mental, physical and emotional, social and spiritual growth and development. Our program prepares children for school by providing activities for listening and following directions, activities for getting along in a group, and by providing language and learning experiences. Our program incorporates the zoo-phonics program as well as weekly themes. We include prayer before meals and a weekly chapel.

Admission

GEM serves children between the ages of infant and six who may benefit from our program. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis, and when there is availability. GEM will not admit or maintain any child whose needs we cannot meet, or whose behavior would be dangerous for the children or staff in the center.

Fees

Annual Registration/Supply Fee per program/child: \$50.00

Annual Dual Enrollment (includes Readiness Preschool) Fee: \$75.00

Any Child enrolling January or later for the current year: \$35.00

(The fee is non-refundable, covers special events, visitors, supplies, and a key fob and insures a place in our enrollment. Your child is not enrolled until this fee is paid, and paperwork has been submitted.)

Additional Key Fobs: \$15.00

Lost/Replacement Fobs: \$25.00

(All key fobs must be returned when your child completes our program).

Weekly Tuition for Additional Child in family: 10% discount on oldest child

Program	Monthly	Weekly Rates	Half Day Rates	Daily Rates
Infants (Younger & Older)	N/A	\$195.00	N/A	N/A
Toddlers (1.5-2.5)	N/A	\$175.00	\$37.00	\$45.00
3-5-year-old	N/A	\$160.00	\$29.00	\$39.00
T/Th Preschool	\$110.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
MWF Preschool	\$125.00	N/A	N/A	N/A

Tuition Policy:

Tuition fees are due weekly/monthly depending on the program/schedule of your child. If payment is not received for the current week/month, a \$20.00 late fee will be added to your account. If your account falls more than 2 weeks/1 month behind your child will not be admitted to GEM until the account is paid in full. Your tuition is what reserves your child's spot. Therefore, full fee is due regardless of holiday, illness, days off and building closures. Please remember that our school expenses continue when one or more children are absent. Part time children that need care on an unscheduled day may pay for an additional day if there is space available and on a first come first serve basis. We do not allow children to switch days. If you need care on a day your child does not attend, we require the request in writing and will let you know if space is available. All declined credit cards will be charged a fee of \$3.50. A \$25.00 charge will be assessed for each returned check. If a check is returned **all** future payments to GEM are to be in the form of cash or money order.

Vacation Policy:

After your child, is enrolled at GEM for 1 full year, you will be granted 1-week tuition credit for family vacations. This credit can be used at any time of the year and is available on the anniversary of your child's enrollment. If your child withdraws for the summer, you are not eligible for a vacation credit since you are not enrolled for the full 12 months. Readiness Preschool does not offer a vacation credit.

Late Fee Policy:

Children picked up after 5:30 will be charged a late fee of \$2.00 for each minute late and will be charged to your account. Please note the staff

have families and appointments to get to. Please make sure to be on time.

Schedule Changes:

If your schedule changes and you do not inform us, you will be charged normal tuition for when your child is scheduled to attend whether they attend or not. A (2) two-week written notice must be given when withdrawing your child from GEM. If proper notice is not received, regular tuition will be charged for those two weeks.

Readiness Preschool

Children that are 2 years prior to Kindergarten and Must be 3 by August 1st Can enroll in our Tuesday and Thursday preschool class. Classes are from 9:00-11:30 (T/TH a.m.)

Children that are 1 Year prior to Kindergarten: Must be 4 by August 1st Can enroll in our Monday, Wednesday and Friday preschool class. Classes are from 9:00-11:30 (M, W, F a.m.) or 12:30-3:00 (M, W, F p.m.). **All fulltime children that opt for dual enrollment in Day Care & Readiness will attend the MWF pm class. This is also on a first come, first serve basis. Regular enrollment procedures will apply.**

Field Trips

Transportation or entrance fees will be charged for field trips. These trips enrich our learning experience. Children attending must be 4-5 years old. All children must have written consent to attend trips.

Readiness Preschool Field Trips

Parents will provide transportation for their own child for all scheduled field trips. Notice of field trips will be in the monthly newsletters and on TV announcements at carline. We ask that you do not bring younger siblings as we expect your attention to be on your child. Please also, refrain from using your cellphone while monitoring the children. For liability purposes carpooling will not be allowed.

School Pictures

Individual school pictures and class composites are available in the Fall. Parents are under no obligation to purchase the pictures.

Purdue Speech & Hearing Screening

We offer Purdue Speech and Hearing screening in the Fall. The audiology department will administer the screening with parent consent and payment. Screening Information will be sent home closer to the date for sign up.

Items from Home

Items from home such as toys, money, jewelry or candy, etc. are not permitted at school.

Sign In & Out

We require parents to sign children in and out daily via the ProCare App. This is a requirement by law and a document we use for emergencies, court cases and voucher verification. All authorized individuals receive a specialized code to sign your child in/out or you can use the curbside feature. Please send photos of all authorized individuals to gdc@lafgraceumc.org. Children enrolled in the CCDF/OMWPK voucher program are required to sign in/out as well as swipe their Hoosier works card.

Release of Children

We only release children to authorized individuals on your emergency contact list. It does not matter who brings your child to school. They must be on your list to pick up. We will request picture ID for anyone we do not recognize. You may add or remove any of your contacts at any time. Although, to remove a parent we will need a court order to decline release to a parent.

Building Security

GEM is a secure facility. All authorized pickup individuals for the Day Care ONLY must have a fob. Day Care families receive 1 fob with paid registration fees and parents can purchase additional fobs for \$15.00 each. Fobs are to be returned on your child's last day of attendance. All fees for fobs are nonrefundable. If you lose your fob, you will need to replace/purchase a new one for \$25.00. Please note that the doorbell is not guaranteed to be monitored after 4:00 p.m. Readiness Preschool families will not be supplied fobs as they do a carline drop off and pick up. GEM is equipped with video surveillance for internal use only.

Hours of Operation

GEM is open from 6:30 am to 5:30 pm. Readiness Preschool begins at 9:00 Staffing is based on the arrival/departure times you list on your registration form. If you need to drop off earlier than the time stated, then you need to verify with the office that is acceptable, and we have proper staffing. Your child's attendance may not exceed 10 hours a day. ***Due to staffing shortage, we will operate on a 7:00-5:30 schedule until we can hire and train qualified staff.***

New Year's Eve	New Year's Day	Martin Luther King Day	President's Day	Good Friday	Memorial Day	Juneteenth	4 th of July
Labor Day	Columbus Day	Staff Development Days 11/23 & 12/22	Veteran's Day	Thanksgiving Day	Friday after Thanksgiving	Christmas Eve	Christmas Day

Holiday Closures

GEM closes for all Federal holidays. If a holiday falls on Saturday, we will close on Friday; if a holiday falls on Sunday, we will close on Monday.

During the holidays and LSC breaks we reserve the right to alter our building hours (7:30-5:00).

Readiness Preschool Schedule

First Day of School	August 22 nd & August 23 rd
Labor Day	September 5 th
Columbus Day	October 10 th
Fall Break	October 17 th -21 st
Veteran's Day	November 11 th
Thanksgiving Break	November 23 rd -25 th
Christmas Vacation	December 19 th -January 3 rd
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	January 16 th
President's Day	February 20 th
Spring Break	March 27 th – 31 st
Good Friday	April 7 th
Last Day of School	May 10 th

Building Closures

GEM will NOT ordinarily be closed for bad weather, however, in severe weather situations if we need to close or have a delay, we will alert our ProCare app and the following television & radio stations for delays and closings.

*WLFJ-TV 18 *WASK-K 105 FM * WKHY 93.5 *WXXB-B102.9 FM

If GEM is closed part or all day for bad weather, our policy states that we pay scheduled staff, therefore regular tuition is due. Please notify GEM by 9:00-9:30 am if your children will be absent, late or if there will be a change in routine (such as someone other than the designated persons picking up your children). This allows us to prepare the proper lunch servings and staff the building appropriately. **GEM reserves the right to**

follow the LSC school closings and delays for bad weather. The safety of our children and staff is our main priority.

Readiness Preschool Closures

If LSC closes, preschool will also close. In case of a 2-hr delay preschool will operate on a regular schedule. We do not make-up days missed for severe weather.

Staff

An effective program cannot be conducted without qualified staff. The Director and lead teachers have degrees and experience working with young children. Assistant teachers, aides and other staff have a minimum of a high school diploma plus training and/or experience in preschool and childcare education. All staff are first aid and CPR certified, have a yearly TB tests and Universal Precautions training. Applicants are screened carefully during the hiring process. References, education, and previous work experiences are verified. A national criminal history check is done through the FBI, and drug testing is required of all staff as a condition of hiring.

Health & Safety

If an intoxicated or impaired person insists on removing children from GEM, the staff will immediately report the incident to the local Police agency. Each child must have a signed, written verification of a physical examination by a physician or a nurse practitioner within thirty (30) days after enrollment or no earlier than twelve (12) months prior to enrollment. This must include a current and complete record of immunization history showing month, day and year of each immunization.

Illness & Communicable Diseases

If children become ill during the day, are vomiting, have 2 loose stools or a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, we notify the parents to pick them up. Child may not return until they are fever and symptom free for a full 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. Any child hospitalized for an illness, will not be charged until your child returns with a doctor's note stating the reason for stay and if the child is free to return to school. If your child is not at school for more than 2 consecutive days due to an illness, GEM will require a doctor's note for your child to return. Keep children home if they:

- have a fever, chills, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting in the previous 24 hours
- have a heavy nasal discharge or green in color.
- have a constant cough, sore throat or congestion.
- Shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing.

- seem fatigued, overtired, fussy, cranky, not their usual selves
- have symptoms of a possible communicable disease, such as sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, or muscle or body aches, especially if accompanied by fever and/or spots

Please notify GEM if children have a communicable disease. Likewise, we will keep you informed of exposure to communicable diseases.

Illness Outbreak Protocol

In the event of a serious illness outbreak (ex: H1N1 flu or COVID-19), GEM will make every effort to remain open. We encourage frequent handwashing and sanitizing, as well as coughing and sneezing into elbows. Children and adults must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to school. If we cannot maintain safe child-teacher ratios, GEM will close for a temporary time or alter operation hours to 7:30-4:30. We notify families, State Licensing Agency, and County Health Department if we close. We will follow guidelines and recommendations from Licensing and Tippecanoe County Health Department for reopening. If a positive case of COVID 19 is found in any staff member, child or family of GEM or GUMC, all families will be informed and should monitor for symptoms. All positive cases will be handled case by case following the most current guidelines from Licensing and County health. All tuition policies will remain as normal even in the event of a closure or illness related absences.

- All children and adults aged 3 and older masks will be optional and encouraged during cold/flu season.
- A carline drop off will be at door #6 from 6:30-9:30 for Day Care and 8:45-9:30 for Readiness.
- Parents will be permitted to enter the building at door 5 for afternoon pickup from 2:30-5:00. If you pick up after 5:00 p.m. you will be required to use the carline at Door #6 so we can clean and close the building. All fobs will allow access into the building from 2:30-5:00 ONLY. Readiness Preschool will continue with the afternoon carline at Door 6 from 11:30-11:45.
 - If you need to pick up earlier, please call the center at 765-447-2204 to let us know you have arrived, and we will meet you at Door 6.
- All families will be required to clock in/out on the tablets provided or use the curbside check in/out.
- All families that have CCDF vouchers are required to swipe CCDF cards DAILY. The CCDF machine will be available in the office and will not be available for the 5:00-5:30 p.m. carline.
- All tuition payments are to be made via www.myprocare.com unless you are enrolled in the automatic tuition withdrawal tuition express.

- Carline Instructions: Enter the GEM property from the East (Elizabeth Street) and exit from the West (22nd St). Pull under the carport at door #6. Take your child out of your car and meet a GEM staff member at the walkway for intake.
- All children and staff are required to wash hands upon entry of the building.
- All Day Care children need the following items in a sealed plastic bag. Ex., diapers, wipes, bottles, 2 sets of extra clothes.
- No stuffed animals, pillows, toys, backpacks or other extra items will be permitted.

Prescription Medications

We can administer prescription medication only. If the medicine does not contain a pharmacy label, a written authorization must be presented by the child's physician, or it will not be administered. Creams, ointments, and other topical products are applied on children if authorized by parent and/or physician.

First Aid

In case of minor injury, the staff will administer appropriate first aid. Parents will be contacted immediately if an injury is more serious. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or paramedics. Until a parent, physician, or paramedic arrives, the Director or a lead teacher will be in charge and make all decisions about care of the child. It is to your child's benefit to keep us updated with all current emergency contacts, phone numbers, and medical information.

Abuse & Neglect Reporting Policy

Suspected child abuse or neglect will be reported to the proper authority whether the suspected abuse took place while a child was in the care of the childcare, or whether the suspected abuse took place elsewhere. Confidentiality of all information will be maintained. The staff is trained yearly in recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect.

Emergency Evacuation Drills

GEM conducts monthly fire, tornado and earthquake drills. The staff will follow instructions from the Lafayette Police Department in the case of a lockdown. If you see our Red Octagon Symbol in the window, please know that your key fob will not work, and no one will be admitted or dismissed until we get an all clear from the Lafayette Police Department.

Rest Time

All children are expected to take part in a daily rest time. GEM supplies each child with a blanket that is washed onsite each week. The cots are

labelled with each child's name and disinfected weekly or as needed. Soft, calming music is played while, children are encouraged to sleep, or at least rest quietly, but after the first hour they may be allowed to look at books or engage in a quiet activity if they do not fall asleep.

Toilet Training

Parents are required to supply all wipes, diapers, ointments and extra clothes for all children. The teachers will let you know when your child needs supplies filled. We assist families with potty training to ensure all children have success. We ask that when your child shows an interest to please communicate your desire to begin potty training with your child's teacher. Indicator's that your child might be ready are:

- Your child can pull his or her pants on and off with little or no assistance.
- Your child tells you when he or she is wet or has had a bowel movement.
- Your child can sit without support for five to ten minutes.
- Your child can follow simple directions. This may include "Sit on the potty."

Remember that learning to use the toilet is a process that requires many skills and can take time and patience. If you are struggling with potty training challenges and would like free help to call The Child Care Resource Network to speak with an Infant Toddler Specialist 765-742-7105 Readiness Preschool students should be fully toilet trained prior to enrollment.

Change of Classroom Transitions

Typically, we graduate children to the next classroom in January and June. Although, we do move children based on development and need throughout the year. Please note when your child moves to a new class to verify classroom protocol with your child's new teacher. Each teacher has set up an environment that is best suited for the age and development they teach. Feel free to communicate any needs or concerns prior to the class change. We work hard to be a team with our families.

Breast Feeding

We support and encourage parents to come to GEM and breast feed when able. We offer infant parents the comfort of the infant room rockers or our lounge for breast-feeding.

Food Program

Our food program is a kid- friendly, well-balanced meal that is prepared at GEM by an experienced cook. A breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack are served daily. Menus are posted on our ProCare app, the parent bulletin board and on each classroom's hallway board. According to State licensing we may not serve any food items not prepared in our kitchen (this excludes infant meals). We serve breakfast as our morning snack at 8:30. Polite table manners and good eating habits are encouraged. Children are expected to try a bite of each food and beverage served. Seconds of foods and milk are available. All infants are required to have an individualized feeding plan signed by the physician. It may be updated by the parent as the child grows and is introduced to new foods. We will only feed your child per their feeding plan. Parents are required to supply all foods for infants until they are old enough to eat the GEM menu.

Readiness Preschool Snacks

We will send home a snack lists each month for parents to provide a snack for the class. Water is provided. We do our best to assign snack days close to the children's birthday. Take home birthday treats are also acceptable. Please note all snacks need to be store bought and in the original container. If you chose to send in cupcakes, please send in mini cupcakes as they are easier for the children to manipulate and less messy than the large ones.

Readiness Preschool Drop off/Pick up

Children will be dropped off and picked up at the northwest door #6 under the portico. Carline drop-off is from 8:45-9:30. Pick-up is from 11:30-11:45. Cars are to form a single carline. Two cars can pull under the portico at once if the first car pulls completely up. The children are not permitted to walk to you or their car without holding a teacher's hand. Please remain in your car, as this keeps the flow. As you drive through our parking lots, please obey all traffic signs and go slow.

Birthdays

If children wish to bring treats for birthdays, please let us know in advance. Nutritious treats are encouraged. All treats need to be store bought and in the original sealed container. Homemade foods are not permitted due to Licensing regulations. Non-edible treats such as stickers, pencils, etc. are an alternative to bringing food.

Halloween

Our annual Halloween party is typically scheduled the last Friday before Halloween. Children may come to school dressed in costume on this day.

We prefer the costume over his/her clothes as it makes changing more convenient. Please refrain from scary or age-inappropriate costumes. No masks, weapons or accessories are permitted. Please label all parts as many times we have more than one of a specific character. Readiness Preschool children are to create a homemade mask in lieu of costumes for their party day.

Readiness Preschool Thanksgiving Program

The Monday before Thanksgiving, the Monday, Wednesday, Friday classes present a short program during the last 45 minutes of class time. Children will sing several Thanksgiving songs, recite a poem and tell their version of the First Thanksgiving. Children come to class at the regular time. Family and friends are invited to join us in the Sanctuary at 10:45 in the morning class and 2 :15 in the afternoon class. Each child is to bring 1 piece of fruit to class that day. The fruits are combined into a large fruit salad. Following the program, children and families join in a “feast” of fruit salad, corn bread and apple juice in the snack room.

Christmas

Parents are asked to purchase a gift between \$8.00-\$10.00 for our party day. Children enrolled in both programs will need a gift for each class. Please see the list below regarding gifts for parties as each class does something different.

Infants & Toddlers: Parents bring a wrapped book for their own child.

Hurricanes & Sunshine Kids: Parents bring a wrapped gift for their own child.

Raindrops & Thunderbolts: Parents bring a wrapped gift for each child to exchange with a friend. Boys bring a boy gift/Girls bring a girl gift.

Readiness Preschool: Parents bring a wrapped gift for each child to exchange with a friend. Boys bring a boy gift/Girls bring a girl gift.

Valentine's Day

We do not do a Valentine card exchange as we celebrate with activities and special snacks. Readiness Preschool children can bring valentines for their classmates. Cards should not be addressed with names but should be signed by your child. They are also required to bring a homemade mailbox for the party day.

Week of the Young Child

We celebrate the week of the young child annually. You will be informed when the week is scheduled. Classrooms will incorporate the NAEYC themes into lesson plans and may request specific items for that week. For example, Tasty Tuesday: Bring a piece of fruit to share.

Readiness Preschool Graduation

Monday, Wednesday, Friday students present a Graduation program on Tuesday evening before the last day of school. This event is held at 7 pm in the church sanctuary. Children are to arrive in the Readiness classroom by 6:45, where they will line up. They perform several songs and diplomas are presented. Many crafts and work items are on display in the classroom. A cookies and punch reception are held following the ceremony, in Fellowship Hall. Family and friends are invited to attend.

Classroom Donations

We gladly accept donations. If you have something specific to donate, please see the director to arrange it. If a classroom is doing a special project, they will send a note or message via the ProCare app. Donation suggestions: tissues, disinfectant wipes, glue sticks, magazines, old cellphones, dress up clothes, purses, jewelry, etc. We also collect box tops and soda can pull tabs.

Guest Speakers

Parents are urged to share knowledge and talents with the children. Parents whose occupations coincide with aspects of community service that the children can relate to or add enrichment to the current lessons are particularly valuable. For example, artists, dentists, doctors, firefighters, musician, police officers, veterinarians, bakers, chefs, florists, nurses, mail carriers, engineers, etc. Please let us know if you would like to share your work or skill with the children. We would be happy to schedule a visit anytime. For special events, we could schedule special visitors such as Santa.

Preschool Show & Tell

Show & tell is the 1st Thursday & Friday of each month, except for May. The date will be posted in the newsletter and on the TV announcements at carline. This is the only time when children should bring an item from home to school.

Lockers & Extra Clothes

Lockers are provided in the hallways/classrooms for coats and personal belongings. Your child needs to bring the following items to school:

- A full set of extra clothes appropriate to the current season clearly **labelled with your child's name.**
- A family photo for the classroom wall.

We recommend that you send children to school in clothing which is comfortable and appropriate for play. Your child will spend time playing, learning and will get dirty. We use non-toxic paint, markers. In warmer weather, please do not send children in flip-flops or slip-on sandals **without**

an ankle strap. Children need sturdy shoes for negotiating stairs, running and climbing on the playground. **Please check** your child's locker daily for items to go home. Readiness Preschool children need to keep a set of extra clothes in your child's backpack.

Outdoor Play

Children love our large, park-like outdoor play area. This fenced, shady playground has play centers with slides, swings, climbers, and sandboxes. We are required by State licensing regulations to go outside each day, if weather is above 25 degrees and not excessively cold/hot or windy. In the winter and during bad weather, the children play in our indoor romper room.

Confidentiality

It is our policy to keep all family and children information and records confidential. We will not share information with anyone. Any information we attain is solely used for educating and caring for you and your child.

Guidance & Discipline

Discipline is handled by emphasizing and praising positive behavior and by using positive statements. It is not our policy to use corporal punishment. Instead, we talk things out, give reminders, sometimes verbal reprimands, and redirect children to more appropriate behavior. Our goal is to help children to use their own words and solutions to solve interpersonal conflicts and assist them to make good choices.

If those methods are not effective, we may remove a child from the situation for a few minutes. Usually this gives children a chance to calm down and regain control. Our children may lose a privilege, not be allowed to participate for a short time, or be separated from another child. In cases of consistent or more severe misbehavior, parents will be contacted so that we may work things out together. We work with First Steps, developmental therapists and pedestrians that assist with implementation and support for children who might need more assistance beyond the teachers means. We will not permit children to interfere with the learning process or safety of our staff or other children. If the misbehavior continues, and things cannot be worked out, the Director will contact the family to create an action plan for the child.

Student Evaluations

The teachers keep an observation log. This log is a quick reference for behaviors, goals and achievements they wish to note about a specific child. These small group observations assist the staff when getting to know a new student and how to best prepare lessons to engage and help the child grow emotionally, socially and developmentally. We present the

families with a non-formal progress report in early fall and have a more detail evaluation completed 3 times a year. At the end of the final evaluation, parent/teacher conferences are held to discuss the child's growth academically. Parent conferences are scheduled in late April. Readiness Preschool evaluations are completed once a year and are sent home in the Spring prior to Kindergarten Round-Up.

Communication

Daily communication with parents is important. This is usually done verbally and with occasional messages or notes. All children receive a daily report concerning his/her day via the ProCare app. All families will receive an email invitation to sign up for the Procare Connect App. A monthly newsletter is sent via the app the first of every month for families to stay informed of all our special dates and activities, we ask that you communicate to us any changes within home or family which may affect how children feel or act at school. If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns, please bring them to our attention as soon as possible. Please use the GEM phone number to reach us. However, if the line is busy, and there is an emergency, the Church number and email is below. You may also email the director at any time.

GEM: 765-447-2204 gdc@lafgraceumc.org

Preschool: 765-447-2204 hmwb26@aol.com

Grace Church: 765-447-4152 office@lafgraceumc.org

Social Media

GEM does not permit personal connections between parents and staff that currently enrolled on social media sites such as Facebook. That relationship is misinterpreted from professional to personal. Our policy is to treat all families and children in our care with respect and professionalism. If you wish to communicate with your child's teacher regarding the events in the classroom, please use the ProCare app which is monitored by the director. Parents are not to communicate with the staff regarding attendance, scheduling, classroom situations or other students via Facebook or text messages. This policy is for your personal protection and the protection of all employees.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is theme based with the incorporation of zoo phonics, hands on learning which aligns with Indiana's Early Learning Foundations. Each class offers various activities that enrich the child's learning through large and small groups. They can explore individual learning styles through center activities such as math, science, art, dramatic play and sensory. The role of the teachers is to:

- Provide an array of materials and activities from which a child can explore.
- Involve the children with planning, to assist them with choices and problem-solving skills.
- Ask questions and make suggestions for experiences that will stimulate a child's thinking.
- Offer a balance between adult initiation and child initiation.

Schedule

Each class has an age-appropriate schedule based on the development and needs of the children. You will receive a welcome packet from your child's teacher which will include a daily schedule. The schedule below is an example of the daily activities the children experience.

Readiness Preschool Schedule

9:00 AM/12:30 PM	Readiness Preschool arrival
9:00-9:45/12:30-1:15	Free play
9:45-10:15/1:15-1:45	Circle time
10:15-10:45/1:45-2:15	Class time
10:45-11:00/2:15-2:30	Story/music
11:00-11:30/2:30-3:00	Snack
11:30/3:00	Readiness Preschool Dismissal

Grouping

Children at GEM are placed in groups per their ages and development. The following chart gives the names of the groups, ages, maximum number of children that can be in each group, and the minimum number of teachers with each class. This grouping is subject to change per need and enrollment. Please note we have a policy in place if a classroom becomes over ratio.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u># Of Children</u>	<u># Of Staff</u>
Infants	8 wks-1 ½	8	2
Tornadoes	1 ½ -2 ½	10	2
Hurricanes	2 ½-3	14	2
Sunshine Kids	3-4	20	2
Raindrops	4-5	12	1
Thunderbolts	4 ½-5	12	1
Readiness Preschool MWF	4-5	24	2
Readiness Preschool T/TH	3-4	20	2

Suggestions & Criticisms

Your suggestions and constructive criticism are most welcome at any time. We are not and probably never will be infallible, but we do care about our children and the education and care we provide them. You can help us by letting us know what you like and do not like as we are always striving to make our program better. We also ask that you complete a NAEYC evaluation annually.

Parent/Guardian Signature Page

**Please sign and return to the office*

I, _____ have read and
I agree to comply with **ALL** rules and regulations as documented in the
GEM Parent Handbook. Please sign below and return to the GEM office.

Parent/Guardian _____ Date

Parent/Guardian _____ Date