



Employee Handbook

Updated Dec 2023



Grow With Me

Learning Academy

The Management of Grow With Me Learning Academy welcomes you and is proud to have you as a staff member of our team. Whether you are a new employee, or have been with us for some time, you are one of our most important and valued assets. We hope you feel comfortable with your work environment and with the people around you. Good Luck and best wishes for a long and satisfying career with our Center. Share your passion for children daily and your rewards will be many!

Sincerely,

Jordan Dunlap

Owner of Dunlap Christian Preschools, LLC

GROW WITH ME LEARNING ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

Grow With Me Learning Academy exists for the purpose of provide a thoroughly Christ-centered, bible believing, educational program to prepare students academically, physically, socially and spiritually for their best future and service to God. We promise to provide quality care for every child enrolled in our program. We promise to provide opportunities for each child to develop as an individual, and as a member of a group, in a positive nurturing environment. We promise to assist in building each child's self-esteem by creating a safe, healthy, loving atmosphere where each child can learn to socialize with peers and grow at their own pace, both emotionally and physically. We promise to provide educational opportunities for rich learning experiences using high-quality curriculum taught by a well-trained staff. And last but certainly not least, we promise to love others well.

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Employee Handbook

Welcome to the children's center at **Grow With Me Learning Academy!**

This center is a model center of quality in childcare and education. As an employee of the **Grow With Me Learning Academy**, you will be expected to exemplify excellence and quality of service and care. By following the employee policy and procedures outlined in this handbook, combined with NAEYC Code of Ethics, you will be well on your way to meeting the goal of excellence and quality. This handbook is just a broad tool for conduct. You will be oriented on more specific policy and procedures through our on-going professional development to help guide decision-making and best practices. Be sure to always keep the Code of Conduct at the forefront of all decision making concerning children.

Grow With Me Learning Academy provides a safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate program which fosters active learning, support for the whole child, and a child friendly environment.

- **We** foster innovation.
- **We** embrace team work.
- **We** strive for excellence.
- **We** respect and support families.
- **We** commit to service at all levels.
- **We** respect and appreciate diversity.
- **We** actively listen and seek to understand.
- **We** communicate openly and productively.
- **We** use resources creatively and responsibly.
- **We** abide by the NAEYC Code of Ethics and Statement of Commitment.

Grow With Me Learning Academy vision is to be nationally recognized as an outstanding childcare center.

At **Grow With Me Learning Academy**, each child in our care will be growing with us, every day.

PREFACE

We have prepared this Handbook to provide you with information about our policies, rules, and present benefits. Please set aside some time to become familiar with this Handbook. It will be very helpful in

answering many questions that arise. We recognize, however, that no handbook can answer every question. If you do not find an answer to your particular question in this handbook, or if you would like a particular policy or procedure clarified, please feel free to ask the Director or Owner. We will be glad to help you answer every question.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

AT WILL EMPLOYMENT

This handbook is prepared to provide you with information and guidelines. It is not a contract of employment between **Grow With Me Learning Academy** and you, as the employee. Since Texas is an at-will employment state, you are not under contract for employment. Thus, employment with **Grow With Me Learning Academy** is not for a definite term. The Center or you may terminate employment at any time, for any reason or for no reason.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Grow With Me Learning Academy strives for each employee to be treated with respect and in a fair and just manner. In keeping with this policy, all persons will be considered for employment, promotion or training on the basis of qualifications without regard to race, age, handicapping condition, color, creed, sex, or national origin.

Grow With Me Learning Academy guarantees fair treatment of all employees. The Center strives to maintain a work environment in which all staff are free from harassment, and expressly prohibits any form of unlawful harassment of employees and co-workers on race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or the presence of handicaps or disabilities. However, all employees must be physically able to safely supervise young children.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at **Grow With Me Learning Academy** will be based on merit, qualification and ability. **Grow With Me Learning Academy** does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, physical disability or any other characteristic protected by law. This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment,

compensation, discipline, termination and access to benefits and training.

Employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the work place are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Director. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful acts and/or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

NAEYC GUIDELINES

All teachers are expected to follow the NAEYC GUIDELINES. All staff is expected to adhere to the NAEYC code of ethics at all times. Teachers must provide warm, nurturing interactions on the child's level. Such interactions should be guidance and developmentally appropriate early education. Direct Supervision of every child is expected at all times. Failure to provide supervision will be subject to discipline up to termination.

State ratios are important indicators of quality. The center strives to keep state ratios at all times. Please be sure that you always adhere to the state ratios. Make sure that you receive additional help when the number of children approaches over limit. Ratio adherence is a dual responsibility between teachers and management. Never leave your group without any emergency assistance. Call the front desk for assistance when you need to leave the group and the total number of children in attendance exceeds the state ratio.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Due to the sensitive nature of information that you will know as a teacher of young children, it is imperative that you keep sensitive information confidential. Any information about children or their families must be shared on a "Need to Know" basis only. Thus, be very sensitive about discussing children's developmental needs and family information in public places such as lounge or hallway. This does not exclude off premise discussions and/or conversations. Follow the Code of Ethical Conduct and questions of major concerns should be forwarded to the Director. Protection of the interests of each child and family is vital in maintaining a standard of professionalism and privacy.

Also strive to be supportive of center efforts by avoiding negative or malicious discussions about center issues. Together we can achieve great child care and education for our parents and children. Stay positive and focus on the needs of the children in your care.

CURRICULUM

Grow With Me Learning Academy will use a state and nationally approved curriculum on a daily basis; which will provide all teachers with the instructional guidelines necessary for developing age appropriate learning activities for children.

ACCIDENTS

All accidents must be reported immediately to the Director/Assistant Director. Accident(s) reports must be written, signed by an administrator, given to parents, and copied for the child's file. Close supervision of children is the best anecdote to accidents. Use risk management to keep the environment safe and hazard free. **Grow With Me Learning Academy** strives to provide the best in equipment, that is kept maintained, and in overall good working conditions, so all children will be safe in the classroom or playground areas. Safety is a joint effort of all staff and employees requiring all of us to become risk managers.

STATE LICENSING RULES AND REGULATIONS

ALL staff is expected to be knowledgeable in The Minimum Standards for Child Care. Failure to adhere to these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

- Staff in our childcare center must be at least 18 years of age and have a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Note: A 16 year old that attends school can work as childcare assistant.

- Each staff member must have current training in first aid with rescue breathing and choking and CPR for infants and children.
- Each staff member must provide a statement informing the facility about any of the offenses listed in Appendix II in the Minimum Standards Handbook or the Texas Controlled Substance Act.
- Each staff member in our facility must execute and submit a completed Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Affidavit for applicants for employment.

EMPLOYEE POLICIES

SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

*Sexual harassment **will not** be tolerated in any way, shape or form. *

Grow With Me Learning Academy is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's

sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. As an example, sexual harassment (both overt and subtle) is a form of employee misconduct that is demeaning to another person, undermines the integrity of the employment relationship and is strictly prohibited.

Any employee who wants to report an incident of sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly report the matter to the Owner/Director. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.

Corporal Punishment is the infliction of physical pain on a child as a means of controlling behavior. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, hitting, shaking slapping, thumping, or pinching a child. (This **will not** be tolerated at all).

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

The mission of ***Grow With Me Learning Academy*** is to nurture all children entrusted to our care in a warm and loving environment. In keeping with that purpose, this policy seeks to assure that our center is continually working toward providing an environment safe from physical and sexual abuse for those participating in receiving and providing childcare services. All employees shall seek to provide open lines of communication with parents. We will operate with an open-door policy allowing parent access to programs at any time. When those who are employed at ***Grow With Me Learning Academy*** engage in any and all types of child abuse, sexual exploitation, or sexual harassment, they violate the terms of their employment.

GROSS MISCONDUCT:

Some offenses are so serious that they can result in termination without previous warnings. The following examples are listed for the guidance of all. This list is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all prohibited activity. The following actions may result in immediate termination:

- Inappropriate behavior toward parents. (All staff is expected to be professional and courteous at all times. If a parent is rude to you, please allow your Director to handle the situation)
- Neglect or physical abuse of a child
- Withholding of food, nap or other comfort from a child
- Failure to report to work without proper notification
- Falsification of center records (**i.e. employment application, time clock, and your records**)
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Smoking in prohibited Areas
- Conviction of a felony for any offense committed while employed by the center.
- Fighting, threatening violence or boisterous or disruptive activity in the work place
- Leaving a child unattended (**inside or outside**)
- Allowing a child to leave the center with an unauthorized person
- Sleeping while supervising children

- Habitual absenteeism or tardiness without notice or unauthorized absences from workstation during the workday
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or customer-owned property
- **Insubordination** that show gross disrespect such as threatening, profanity, or yelling
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment
- No cell phones allowed in the center during work hours per minimum standards
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the work place, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct
- Sharing confidential information about the center or any of its employees or families
- Promoting and sharing rumors or negative information about **Grow With Me Learning Academy**

There will be repercussions to any violation of the above rules. Depending on the severity of the offense and at the Director's discretion, violations may be followed by a warning, a **two** day suspension, and/or termination of employment.

Note: **Severe** offenses may result in immediate termination!

REPORTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

ALL employees must report all actual or suspected child abuse of any child attending the center as soon as possible to the Director.

Texas law requires caregivers to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services of law enforcement. Call 1-800-252-5400 to make confidential reports. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a crime.

Note: Employers are **prohibited** from retaliating against caregivers who make reports in good faith.

EMPLOYEE PRACTICES

EMPLOYEE STATUS

Full-time employees have a basic schedule between thirty-five (35) and forty (40) hours per week.

Part-time employees have a basic schedule between ten (10) and thirty-four (34) hours per week.

STAFF SCHEDULES

Hours of work, number of hours and shifts are subject to change by Director to meet the needs of our families and center. Any requests for days off must be given in writing **seven days** in advance for approval. Any requests for special days for consideration at the last minute will be honored whenever possible and when coverage is available.

TIME OFF/ABSENTEES

The center cannot operate effectively or efficiently unless its employees can be depended upon to show up for work on a timely and consistent basis. **Grow With Me Learning Academy** depends upon each employee, and when one person is absent, a replacement must be hired for the day. Thus, absenteeism has a particularly disruptive effect on both the center and the children. Employees, who take excessive time off, or abuse the benefits of sick, personal, and vacation provided are subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

Employees requesting leave related to any medical condition concerning the employee or family members will be required to provide a physician's statement verifying the condition, its beginning and expected ending dates, the need for the employee to be given or to provide care, and the estimated time required. This means a signed doctor's note must be brought on the day the employee returns to work.

Note: Foreseeable absences must be requested at least **7 days** in advance.

- Request for leave should be in advance for foreseeable events (at least 7 days) and as soon as possible for unforeseeable events. Requests for leave must be made in writing on the **Employee Time-Off Request Form**. Request will be evaluated based on a number of factors, including anticipated workload requirements, staffing considerations, and hardship to **Grow With Me Learning Academy** operations during the proposed period of absence. All requests must be approved. Requests that cannot be accommodated may be denied or deferred. Completing a request form does not guarantee time off.
- Absences due to illness, children's illness, or family emergencies must be called in AT LEAST two hours before employee is scheduled to work. Even sooner if at all possible!
- Car trouble is not considered an emergency. Please arrange for a ride from a friend or family member if the problem arises.
- Employees are required to call the Director. If the Director is not available, the designated person in charge must be contacted (number to be provided). Please try both numbers until the phone is answered. The following are not acceptable and could be cause for immediate termination:
 - ✓ Leaving a message on the answering machine at the Learning Center.
 - ✓ Calling or texting a co-worker.
 - ✓ Texting or leaving a message for the Director without talking to her directly on the phone.
- It is your responsibility to notify your Director personally BEFORE your starting time. State the reason for your lateness and when you expect to arrive at work. Failure to call in personally to report absence or lateness is a violation of center rules, and the absence or lateness will be considered unauthorized. Calls from friends or relatives on your behalf will not be accepted as

an authorized notice of absence or lateness; you may be required to submit evidence verifying the reason for your absence or lateness. Failure to provide the requested substantiation will result in discharge.

Please Note: All absences will be monitored. Excessive absences, or pattern of absences that begin to occur, will be addressed by the Director and could possibly be grounds for termination. It is important to understand that when we are short of staff, it is not only stressful on the other staff members, but affects the children as well.

- Without a doubt, working in a child care environment can sometimes be very stressful. Please let the Director know if a situation arises where time is needed to regroup or even a “stress free” day off needs to be taken. **Grow With Me Learning Academy** strives to be sensitive to the needs of its employees and will try to make arrangements to accommodate an over stressed staff member. Simply walking out or not returning from break leaves co-workers in a bind, but even more important, the children who are left are the ones who suffer.
- Any employee, who chooses to walk off the job or simply does not return after leaving for break and/or lunch, will be reported to Child Care Licensing for NEGLECTFUL SUPERVISION. This action results in the employee not being allowed to work in child care again. Also, the employee’s last paycheck will be mailed to the employee on the next pay period, paid out at the state minimum wage hourly rate and may not be picked up at the Learning Center office. This also applies to employees who simply do not show up for work and does not call or give notice of their decision to quit.
- If any employee plans to terminate employment with **Grow With Me Learning Academy**, a two week notice in writing is required. If this procedure is followed, the employee’s paycheck can be picked up at the Learning Center office and they will be considered for rehire in the future. Persons whom do not wish to give/fulfill a complete 2 week notice, will be paid out at the state of Texas minimum wage.
- Employee must be free of fever without use of fever reducers for 24 hours prior to returning to work.
- Employee who has been diagnosed with a contagious illness must present a physician’s note to return to work for the safety of children and co-workers in the center.
- Director may require a physician’s note for documentation of absences related to illness or injury.

TIME KEEPING

Accurate recording of time worked is the responsibility of every full time and part time hourly employee.

Federal and state laws require **Grow With Me Learning Academy** to keep accurate records of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits.

Employer will determine the hourly schedule for each employee. Employees should be sure to review any schedule changes noted. Employees should record the beginning and ending time of all work shifts, and any split shifts or other departure from work for personal reasons. IF THE EMPLOYEE FAILS TO CLOCK IN/OUT, IT IS NOT GUARANTEED TO BE CORRECTED. Make sure you are clock in and out according to your scheduled time for that day.

Note: Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee’s time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

OVERTIME/CLOCK IN AND OUT

Overtime is paid to non-exempt employees for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours per Monday through Friday work week. Overtime pay is one and one half times your regular hourly rate of pay and must be authorized by Director. It is the Employees responsibility to clock in and out properly. Any failure to clock in or out properly may result in a delay in payment of wages due.

ORIENTATION

All new employees are oriented to the **Grow With Me Learning Academy** policies and procedures. Such an orientation should begin on the first day of employment and continue throughout his/hers first 30 days. Each staff member will be assigned a mentor to make sure that all procedures are explained and demonstrated. A 90 day review will evaluate an employee's performance of all expectations explained during orientation. Any staff member may ask the mentor or director for further explanation or clarification of policies at anytime. It is each staff member's responsibility to uphold center expectations at all time.

The orientation program covers all of the following:

- Review of Center policies.
- Training in emergency procedures, including the operation of fire extinguishers.
- First Aid procedures.
- Job responsibilities and any other duties as assigned.
- Training in the recognition of childhood illnesses and infectious disease control, including handwashing procedures and universal precautions for handling body fluids.
- Schedule of **Grow With Me Learning Academy**
- Review of child abuse and neglect laws and reporting procedures.
- The procedure for ensuring that all **Grow With Me Learning Academy** employees know the children assigned to their care and their whereabouts at all times.
- Child management techniques.
- The integrity of children with disabilities into the program.
- Confidentiality policies.

TRAINING

- 8 hours of pre-service training must be completed by new staff without previous experience in a regulated childcare facility.
- All new staff must be oriented in the requirements in the Minimum Standards Handbook, the facility's child care policies, the procedures to follow in handling emergencies and exits, and the use and location of all fire extinguishers. Emergency Maps and Exits will be displayed throughout the center.
- All staff must obtain at least **36** clock hours for teachers and **44** clock hours for directors of training annually, exclusive of CPR and First Aid, selected from the following areas:
 - Child Development
 - Care of Children with Special Needs
 - Adult and Child Health
 - Nutrition and Safety

- Curriculum-Planning
- Risk Management
- Identification and Care of ill Children
- Recognition of Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Abuse and the Responsibility of reporting any incidents
- Cultural Diversity
- Professional Development

Note: It is the responsibility of each employee to pay for any costs that may result from these trainings (full or part-time).

INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

The introductory period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. **Grow With Me Learning Academy** uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Either the employee or **Grow With Me Learning Academy** may end the employment relationship at will and at any time during or after the introductory period with just cause to be documented and explained in a written notice to be signed by both parties. All new and rehired employees work on an introductory basis for the first ninety (90) calendar days after their date of hire. Any significant absence will automatically extend an introductory period by the length of the absence. If **Grow With Me Learning Academy** determines that the designated introductory period does not allow sufficient time to thoroughly evaluate the employee's performance, the introductory period may be extended for a special period.

Upon satisfactory completion of the introductory period, employees enter the established employment classification for their position.

EMPLOYMENT TERMINATION

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- Absence without a leave authorized by the Director of **Grow With Me Learning Academy**.
- Failure to report to work or from lunch breaks.
- Failure to return from an approved leave without notifying the Director will be considered a resignation without notice.

Note: Such resignation will result in immediate termination, and will render the employee ineligible for rehire by **Grow With Me Learning Academy**.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

An employee may hold a job with another organization as long as he or she satisfactorily performs his or her job responsibilities with **Grow With Me Learning Academy**. ALL employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to **Grow With Me Learning Academy** scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

If **Grow With Me Learning Academy** determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of the center, as they are modified from time to time; the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain with **Grow With Me Learning Academy**.

Note: Further more you cannot be employed by a competitor, as this will cause a conflict of Interest in your employment a **Grow With Me Learning Academy**.

COACHING AND/OR PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

You are expected to follow all policies and procedures for smooth operation and safety of the children in your care. However, everyone occasionally make mistakes or needs guidance for optimal performance of teaching duties. When an employee needs guidance, progressive discipline procedures will be followed. Those procedures may include, but may not be restricted to the following:

- Oral coaching or warning, written warning, written improvement plan, administrative leave with or without pay, up to termination. (Nothing in this policy or in the handbook is intended to limit in any way the center's right to terminate at any time, with or without cause and with or without advance notice.)
- Director may, at his or her discretion, place employee on an AT FAULT retraining period. An AT FAULT retraining is due to multiple or repetitive violations of the centers policy and procedure guidelines, in which the employee has previously been trained in. During this period of retraining the employee's hourly wage will be at minimum wage, until successful completion of retraining.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress, grooming and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the image **Grow With Me Learning Academy** presents to parents and their children, visitors and guests. Our philosophy is to provide a culture that allows staff to dress in a style which presents a neat, business-like appearance and that promotes confidence and professionalism to the public. We expect you to accept the responsibility of dressing appropriately for your position or situation. With that in mind, the following dress code will be implemented and enforced at all times.

All employees should wear appropriate tops, appropriate bottoms, and comfortable shoes, such as: tennis shoes.

- Jewelry should be conservative. Long chain necklaces or pendants should not be worn as they can present a safety hazard to small children. Earrings should also be small, conservative, and secure, to prevent children from grabbing and pulling loose. *No hoop-type earrings are allowed*
- Shoes must be neat and in good repair at all times. Tennis shoes or flats are best. Since you are expected to engage the children in activities on the playground the shoes should be appropriate for the situation. Open toe or open heel shoes are not recommended for safety reasons. (No Flip-Flops or slip ons)
- Clothing should be clean and in good repair at all times. You are hired to work with children and being down on the floor frequently is part of the job responsibility. Clothing must be appropriate to engage children in all types of activities throughout the day. Use a conservative outlook when deciding upon apparel. (All employees must wear their **Grow With Me Learning Academy** shirts on designated days and can be purchased upon hire.)
- Employee's are to be identifiable as Grow With Me staff at all times. Employees are expected to be in a logo t-shirt or scrubs at all times. (It is recommended to keep a spare uniform either in your vehicle or classroom at all times)
- Employees are permitted to wear blue-jeans and work related t-shirt as long as the bottoms are correctly fitting, without rips/tears/holes, on Fridays of each week. Shorts may be permitted given that they are at least finger-tip length when standing.

PERSONAL GROOMING

Employees are expected to meet hygiene requirements during business hours for the duration of their employment.

- Maintain personal cleanliness by bathing daily
- Oral hygiene (brushing of teeth) is required
- Use deodorant / anti-perspirant to minimize body odors
- No heavily scented perfumes, colognes, body sprays or lotions.
- Clean, trimmed fingernails. (1/4 in long or less)
- Frequent handwashing; after eating or using the restroom
- Neat, well-groomed hair. Long hair must be secured.

Note: Employees who report for work inappropriately dressed will be sent home and directed

to return to work in proper attire. Under such circumstances, employees will not be compensated for the time away from work. Consult your Director if you have questions as to what constitutes appropriate dress.

- Smoking or Alcohol is not permitted on the center premises at any time.
- Any scent of cigarette smoke WILL be cause for suspension considering we are working in close contact with the children

DRUG TESTING

Grow With Me Learning Academy is a completely drug free facility. All employees are to remain drug free AT ALL TIMES, whether on the clock or not. Random drug test WILL be administered by Any Lab Test now and a **requirement** to consent for further employment.

PROFESSIONAL Demeanor

Demeanor involves your manner and your non-verbal tone and gestures. At **Grow With Me Learning Academy** every teacher must be conscious of their emotional undertone that they are exuding.

Four Characteristics to Maintaining Professional Demeanor:

- Pleasant Smile
- Gentle Approach
- Friendly Greeting/Conversation
- Maintaining Professionalism

Note: All employees at *Grow With Me Learning Academy* will greet every parent and family with a smile; to let them know that you are truly happy to care for their child.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

DAILY SUPPORT- Employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals with the Director on an informational, day-to-day basis.

COACHING MEETINGS- *Grow With Me Learning Academy* will also support all employees with ongoing and regular coaching meetings to address any employment issues at which performance concerns may be addressed (on an as needed basis). These may also come in the form of staff meetings after regular work hours have ended. All employees are **strongly urged** to attend all staff meetings when announced.

SIX MONTH REVIEWS- Six month reviews are to be performed twice a year to measure individual performance of established objectives and personal growth goals for the coming six months.

INTRODUCTORY PERIOD EVALUATIONS- A formal performance evaluation will be conducted at the end of employee's initial period of hire, known as the introductory period (90 Days).

FORMAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS- Additional formal performance evaluations may be conducted to provide the Directors as well as the employee the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. The Directors will be responsible for coordinating evaluations through the appropriate the Director for providing necessary support.

VISITORS

A variety of visitors enter our building each day. All visitors must sign in at the front and wear an identification badge at all times. It is important for all employees to present a warm, welcoming, and professional impression at all times. To ensure a safe environment for the children, employees should notice that all visitors have an identification badge. If a visitor is not wearing an identification badge,

employees should politely inquire into the purpose of the visit and redirect the visitor to the front desk.

Suspicious persons or activities should immediately be brought to the attention of the Director.

Staff Guests

ALL personal visitors should be scheduled during the employee's break time and restricted to the front area until staff member is available. If an employee's child (who is enrolled in another classroom in the center) wishes to visit the parent, the needs of the parent's classroom take precedent.

PAY ROLL

PAYCHECKS

Paychecks are distributed on Fridays bi-weekly at **Grow With Me Learning Academy**. Your management team will distribute paychecks no later than the end of the day on the designated days.

****You do not have an option for direct deposit at this time.****

In the event of an emergency, you may designate someone in writing to be allowed to pick up your payroll check. You must provide a written statement with the persons legal name and date of birth to the Director. Your designated person must provide a state-issued photo ID to be able to pick up your payroll check.

PAY DEDUCTIONS

- The law requires that **Grow With Me Learning Academy** make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are applicable federal taxes. **Grow With Me Learning Academy** also must deduct Social Security taxes on each employee's earning up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security "Wage Base."

How Does This Works?

Grow With Me Learning Academy matches the amount of Social Security taxes paid by each employee. (If you have questions concerning why deductions were made from your paycheck or how they were calculated, your Director can assist in getting these concerns answered.)

ADMINISTRATIVE PAY CORRECTIONS

- **Grow With Me Learning Academy** takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday by the end of each individual employee's work day. **With this being said, if the error is from the employee's failure to clock in or clock out the difference in pay will be added to the following check.**

In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of the Director so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

EMPLOYEE CHECK LOSS POLICY

- If an employee loses his/her paycheck, **Grow With Me Learning Academy** will put a stop payment on that check and will rewrite another check for the same amount minus a \$50 deduction (to compensate for the \$50 stop payment fee that bank charges this facility.) It is the employee's responsibility to keep track of his/her paycheck and deposit within a reasonable amount of time.

ADDITIONAL DEDUCTIONS

- Any other loans owed such as but not limited to a childcare balance, company equipment, personal payday loans, or uncompletion of CPR training will shall be deducted as loans from the employees check at a set rate or to the completion in the event of a final check. Payday loans have a maximum of \$250, taken out over the following 3 paychecks and only one loan will be issued per 3 month time frame.

BENEFITS

CHILDCARE BENEFITS

Full time hourly employees are eligible for a 20% discount off the regular tuition for their own children.

Enrollment will be offered as space allows within state ratio and group size. This discount is not applicable for after school care.

Note: All staff parents must adhere to the same enrollment and attendance policies that regular customers observe, and the child or children must be the natural/adopted child or children of the employee, or must have legal guardianship to qualify.

FMLA

See Director (Family Medical Leave Act)

FUNERAL LEAVE

Employees may be given up to three (3) days for funeral leave of an immediate family member. You must notify the director of the time off request as soon as you are aware of the need. The Director may require the employee to provide documentation of the death and the employee's relationship to the deceased. Family includes spouse, son, daughter, mother, father, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, and grandchild of the employee or the employee's spouse. A Director need not grant all three (3) days per occurrence. Three (3) days is usually given in cases where there is considerable travel involved or other special circumstances.

MILITARY LEAVE

Grow With Me will grant full-time employees leave of absence without pay for attending military reserve duty or for any period of active military service as dictated by Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act, USERRA, 38 U.S.C. 4312.

PAY RAISES AND INCENTIVES

Employees will be hired on at an agreed upon hourly rate. After the initial 90-day introductory period, incentive pay will be offered per pay period on a tiered scale of .25 increments not to exceed \$1.50 per hour. This incentive pay is performance based; each pay period. Employees are eligible for ANNUAL raises up to 5% of their current hourly rate. Hourly rates will cap out after employee has reached an hourly rate that is deemed within current cost-of-living wages and after 5-7 years of employment, dependent on current hourly wage of each employee.

PAID VACATIONS

Vacation pay is earned after a year of service. Vacations are paid to employees who work a minimum of 35 hours per week and are considered full time. After the first anniversary date of hire, you earn 3 full days (24 hours) and after third anniversary date of hire the employee earns 1 week (40 hours). All vacations must be requested on a leave authorization form and approved by administration.

SICK PAY

Sick pay is earned after a year of service. Sick days are paid to employees who work a minimum of 35 hours per week and are considered full time. After the first anniversary date of hire, you earn 3 full days (24 hours) and after third anniversary date of hire the employee earns 1 week (40 hours). All sick days must be accompanied with a doctor's note OR require a director send home to be able to utilize this pay time.

DIVIDEND PAY

Dividend pay is eligible to employees whom hold at least three years of employment. Non-administrative employees are eligible for up to 3% and administrative employees are eligible for up to 5%. Dividend pay will be distributed within the first quarter of the new year for the previous year. Percentages are calculated on performance, attendance and evaluations throughout that fiscal year.

PAID HOLIDAYS

Grow With Me Learning Academy grants holiday time off to all full time employees for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and

the Friday after, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. You must work for three days before and three days after the specific holiday to qualify for holiday pay.

Note: These Holidays are paid only for employees who worked for six months and are current and continuous in employment ship.

JURY DUTY

Jury Duty is considered part of your civic duty, and thus the center will pay the difference between your regular pay and jury duty pay. If the center has a hardship during your assigned time, you may be asked to take the teacher pardon with help from Director. Proof of Attendance and wage earned for jury duty attendance must be submitted for the pay subsidy.

GENERAL POLICIES

USE OF TELEPHONE AND MAIL SYSTEM

Calls for or by you should be conducted either before or after a shift, or on a lunch break. Cell phones are not to be used in the classroom or on the playground. They should only be used on breaks when off the clock. In emergency situations, please advise the Director and she will be happy to make other arrangements.

CELL PHONES ARE TO BE KEPT IN YOUR VEHICLE OR IN THE OFFICE DURING YOUR SCHEUDLED SHIFT.

If you are found to have your cell phone in a classroom at any time, immediate termination will be enforced.

Personal use of center telephone for long-distance and toll-free calls is NOT permitted. There will be no personal phone calls while on duty at the Center. ***Grow With Me Learning Academy*** phone is for business purpose only. Our children should have your full attention at all times.

To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should always use the approved greeting and speak in a courteous and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller, and hang up only after the caller has done so.

When answering the telephone at the center, your approved greeting is: "Grow With Me Learning Academy this is _____, How may I help you?"

PARKING POLICY

Employees are to park their vehicles on the sides of the building or the row of parking closest to 69th Street. Employees are not permitted to park along the front door of the center. These spots are reserved for parents and guests of the center.

USE OF EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLE

Equipment and vehicles essential in accomplishing job duties are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines.

If you are requested to utilize the centers vehicle, you are to ensure the vehicle is in good working condition before leaving the premises. This includes checking: fuel level, oil level, tire pressure; checking for fire extinguisher and ensuring it is in date and at the correct pressure. If you have any noted deviations from the normal working condition of the vehicle, you are to IMMEDIATELY notify your Director.

Grow With Me Learning Academy has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy for utilizing a cell phone while operating a center's vehicle. This includes, but is not limited to: phone calls, texting, emailing, use of social media, use of cameras, et cetera. This includes while at a stop light, stop sign, while driving, or while standing.

In the event of an emergency, you are to pull over, bringing the vehicle to a complete stop, place the vehicle in park, then call for emergency assistance.

In the event of an emergency requiring medical assistance, police assistance; your first phone call is to 911, and your second phone call is to your Director.

NO SOLICITATION/ NO DISRTRIBUTION

In order to avoid annoyance to our employees and interference with our operations, no employee is permitted to distribute literature or solicit other employees for any purpose on Center premises during working time. The Center premises include all areas where employees perform their assigned work tasks. Working time includes the time during which you are actually scheduled to work, and does not include scheduled rest periods, meal breaks and other specified times when you are not expected to be working.

Non-employees may not solicit for any purpose, or engage in the distribution of literature of any kind while on Center premises.

EMPLOYEE CHILDREN (NOT ENROLLED)

ALL employees should make appropriate advance arrangements for their child (ren) care during their scheduled work hours. Children up to age 12, may not stay in any classroom or remain unsupervised at the center. On planned school vacations, school age children (up to 12 years old) may attend ***Grow With Me Learning Academy*** after school program, for a nominal fee, provided space is available and arrangements have been made with the Director.

MEALS

Your own meals are to be eaten in the lounge or in other areas where no children are present. You are to clock out for your lunch break unless otherwise authorized by the manager to work through the break. When the center is serving family style meals, staff is invited to participate by eating with the class during mealtime in order to model appropriate behavior, nutritional choices and manners. You are invited to only eat center food that is offered to all children in your care while in the presence of children. If you bring food from home or order out, please consume such food on your break away from the children. You would not want someone to eat something that smells delicious in your presence and not offer to share the food with you. Always avoid drinking hot beverages around the children to avoid possible burns. Any beverages other than those being offered to children must be consumed from a closed container and kept away from the children. (Please remember to keep respect for all of the children in your care.)

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I have received and read the **Grow With Me Learning Academy** Employee Policy and Procedures Handbook. I expect to be guided by the rules and policies contained therein. I further understand and agree that my employment with **Grow With Me Learning Academy** is at will and may be terminated by the Director of the **Grow With Me Learning Academy** at any time for any reason or without reason. I understand that nothing in the Personnel Policies and Procedures handbook or in any oral statement or representation by any employee or representative of **Grow With Me Learning Academy** shall be deemed to create a contract of employment or any other modification of the at-will employment relationship. I also understand that any or all of the provisions contained in the Employee Policy and Procedures Handbook may be modified, amended, or eliminated by **Grow With Me Learning Academy** at any time with or without notice.

Employee Signature

Date

Center Director Signature

Date