

Grace Academy

2025 - 2026

Preschool Handbook

SERVING CHILDREN AGES 1-5



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Grace Academy Preschool Parent Handbook 2025-2026

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Dear Parent(s) or Guardian,

It is with great honor I welcome you to be a part of the ministry of Grace Academy. We are excited about the start of a new school year! I want to say welcome back to those students who are returning and add a special welcome to those who are new to Grace Academy. We look forward to the time we will spend together as we provide a Christian education and teach Biblical principles that will help guide your child in the years to come.

We appreciate your interest and commitment to our school as we seek to fulfill our commitment to the education of your child. To accomplish this, Grace Academy is committed to providing a Christian education that is founded on God's Word as the basis for every academic discipline and extracurricular activity.

The faculty and staff are dedicated Christians who have committed themselves to the ministry of Grace Academy. We encourage parents to visit and ask questions as well as share suggestions. Understanding the absolute necessity of God's leadership and wisdom, we ask that you commit to pray for us and the ministry of Grace Academy. We look forward to having the opportunity to serve with you as we serve our Lord Jesus Christ.

Working together in Christ,

Grace Academy Administration

G.A. Board Members:

Scott Ginder – email: sginder@graceacademyrockwell.com

Tommy Young – e-mail: Tom@CECOFriction.com

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Grace Academy is a ministry of Grace Bible Church. The basis of our ministry comes from the same Statement of Faith.

We believe:

- In the word-by-word inspiration, divine revelation and final authority of the Holy Scriptures. 2 Timothy 3:16
- In one God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Matt. 28:19
- In the Lord Jesus Christ as true God and true man; His virgin birth, sinless humanity, substitute death, bodily resurrection, present advocacy, and His personal, imminent, bodily, visible, pre-tribulation, and pre-millennial return for His church. John 1:1, Luke 1:34-35, Heb. 4:15, 1 Cor. 15:3-4
- God created man in His image, in the fall of man by sin, resulting in his complete and universal separation from God and his need for salvation. Gen. 1:26, Gen. 3:6, Gen. 2:17, and Gen. 3:15
- In the personality of Satan. Matt. 4:1, Job 1:6
- That the Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood and died as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. 1 Cor. 15:3-4, Heb. 10:11-12, Luke 24:46-47
- That salvation is a free and everlasting gift of God by His grace, entirely apart from works; that every person is responsible to receive salvation by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; that a soul once saved can never be lost.
Eph. 2:8-9, John 3:16-18
- That the Holy Spirit regenerates with divine life and personally indwells the believer upon his faith in Christ for salvation. Titus 3:5, 1 Cor. 6:19
- Any moment Jesus Christ may return for His church (rapture) before the tribulation and the personal pre-millennial second coming of Christ. 1 Thess. 4:16-17
- In the bodily resurrection of both the saved and unsaved. In the unending life of the saved with the Lord, and the unending punishment of the unsaved in the Lake of Fire. Rev. 20:13-15
- In the responsibility of each believer, motivated by the love of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, to witness for Christ and to live sacrificially for the proclamation of the Gospel unto the entire world.
2 Cor. 5:14-15
- In believer's baptism by immersion and partaking of the Lord's Supper which are the two ordinances of the church in remembrance of Him. Acts 2:41-42

Mission Statement

Grace Academy is a non-denominational Christian school, and a ministry of Grace Bible Church. Our goal is to provide a quality Christian education consistent with Biblical principles (2 Timothy 3:16). Grace Academy is committed to providing students with an opportunity to discover their individual gifts and develop spiritually, socially and intellectually beginning in preschool through their preteen years.

History

Grace Academy started as Grace Preschool in August of 2001. Preschool started as a half day program with two classes running from 8-12, daily. The first year we were in operation we had 19 children. By the third year (2003) we went to a full day program with the operation hours of 7:00am -5:30pm. In 2014 we added two-year old programs to our offerings, and we currently have 9 two-, three-, and four-year old classrooms. As those initial preschool students concluded their time at Grace Academy, many families desired to continue attending school here, and an elementary program was born. After 15 years of ministry to elementary (and middle school!) students, demand for those programs began to wane and Grace Academy closed its elementary program in Spring 2020 to focus on preparing preschool students for success in primary school and beyond. In 2025 one-year olds joined our programs.

Purpose for the Program

The purpose for the Preschool Program is to provide a safe Christian “home away from home” for the children whose parent(s) work outside the home and need year-round care for their child. We offer a structured academic program, using the ABEKA curriculum. The program will provide your child with Bible lessons, scripture memory verses, songs and academics which include; phonics, reading, math, drama, poetry, games, and arts & crafts. Our desire is that your child’s time with us would be educational, fun and enjoyable. Our Summer Playschool also offers a structured learning environment using a theme-based curriculum.

Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy

Grace Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to the students at our school. Furthermore, it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies or school administered programs.

Child Abuse & Neglect

Abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. Abuse may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, medical care or discipline, or when a child is abandoned. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report the case to the county department of social services.** In addition, any person can call the Division of Child Development at 919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0829 and make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect in a childcare operation. Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith.

Grace Academy is required by the state of North Carolina to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. Rowan County Department of Social Services will be notified and a written report will be made. A copy of the report will be placed in the child’s file and remain at the center. All steps will be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the child.

Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abuse Head Trauma

At Grace Academy we believe that preventing, recognizing, responding to, and reporting shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) is an important function of keeping children safe, protecting their healthy development, providing quality childcare, and educating families.

Smoke Free Facility

Due to the acknowledged hazards to young children arising from exposure to tobacco use, it shall be the policy of Grace Academy to provide a tobacco- and nicotine-free environment for staff/visitors/parents/students. This policy covers the use of any tobacco; for the purposes of this policy “tobacco” is defined to include any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, and any other smoking product; and spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, spit less, snus and snuff, in any form; including, but not limited to, non-FDA approved cessation nicotine products, digital/electronic nicotine delivery systems e.g. “e-cigarette,” vapor products or anything that simulates or can be construed as being a smoking or smokeless tobacco product (i.e., herbal smoking products) and applies to employees and all non-employees including visitors and vendors.

Asbestos Notification

The US Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires all schools to inspect building materials for the presence of asbestos. AHERA excludes schools from the inspection requirement if the school was constructed after October 12, 1988, and has a signed statement from the architect or project engineer responsible for constructing the building housing the school stating that no asbestos- containing building materials were specified for use in its construction. Grace Academy has been provided with such a statement, and is, therefore, exempt from the requirement to conduct an asbestos inspection.

The EPA requires us to annually notify you that we are aware of the AHERA regulation, and that we are in compliance. The Management Plan is filed in the Finance office and is available for review at any time during normal business hours (Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:00-5:30 and Thursday 8:00- 1:00). The AHERA LEA Designee, Tammy Cale, is available to answer any questions you may have about asbestos in our building (704.279.6683).

Hours:

- Full Day care is available from 7:00-5:30 M-F
- Half Day care is available from 7:00-12:00 M-F
- 3 Day care available MWF 7:00-5:30 K1, K2, & K3 ages ONLY

NOTE: ALL students are expected to be in their assigned classroom no later than 8:00am each day.

Attendance:

Attendance and punctuality are important factors in quality education. In order for your child to gain the most from school he/she must attend class on a daily basis and certain designated programs. Please notify your child's teacher if your child is out due to an illness, an emergency, or for a vacation. **ALL students must be signed in and out daily and should arrive by 8:00am to not miss daily academics.**

Appointments:

Parents are asked to make appointments for conferences with the teacher and/or administration. Appointments will ensure that you will have uninterrupted time with the teacher and/or administration in private. Appointments also give time to gather all the information that may be needed for the conference. These appointments may be made through the teacher (for teacher conferences) and/or through administration. The Teacher and/or administration will usually be able to see parents the same week, or within a few days and will make every effort to meet as soon as possible. Contact the teacher or administrator via email or call the school office.

Visitors:

Visitors **must** sign in and out at the office. You will receive a visitor pass to wear for the time you are here. Parent volunteers are always welcome; however, you must sign in if you are here for extended activities such as birthday parties, school activities or helping out in the classroom. Visitors include parent volunteers, physical & speech therapists, etc...

Arrival & Departure:

K1 & K2 students please use Rakes Rd. (Driveway) and pull around to the back parking lot of the facility. Park and bring your child in through the Preschool Entrance located under the awning at the back of the building (rear parking lot). K3 & K4 students come in the front entrance off Hwy 152 near the spirit rock. Park on the side of the building and enter through the doors under the side awning. **Please drive slowly and carefully as parents will be entering and exiting the same drive.** Parents will need to sign students in and out daily. Classroom attendance will be taken by the child's teacher. Name/phone number and/or ID's may be requested when picking students up. When leaving the premises in the morning or afternoons, please drive slowly and carefully. Watch for children at all times. The traffic flow is designated on the map received in your parent welcome packet.

Inclement Weather Policy:

- In case of inclement weather or other emergency situations, view FACTS announcements, text alerts or visit channel 9 WEBSITE @ www.wsoc.tv or view Ch. 9 News. **Look for: Grace Academy Preschool – Rockwell.** Please check for updates often.
- If Rowan County Schools are delayed or closed due to inclement weather (i.e. Snow, Ice) or other emergencies, Grace Academy Preschool "MAY" also be closed. We will make every attempt to remain open.

Field Trips for ages 3-5 years only

- Field trips will be taken occasionally throughout the academic school year as well as during the summer. Chaperones will be needed for some of the field trips and a signup sheet will be posted outside your child's classroom.
- Additional fees apply for all field trips. Parent and student cost is based on the facility selected.
- Staff and students are to wear their Grace Academy t-shirts on all field trips. Field trip fees must be paid at the finance office or dropped in the payment box with the permission form, by the designated due date, or your child will not be able to attend the trip and you will need to make other arrangements for that day.
- **NO Field Trips off premises for 1 or 2 year olds.**

Snacks & Lunch:

- Our center will provide a nutritious lunch daily. A lunch menu will be provided online in FACTS as well as a physical copy at the beginning of each month. Lunches will include an entrée, vegetable, fruit, and bread.
- Children also have the option of bringing a lunch from home. ALL lunches brought from home must contain an entrée, vegetable, fruit, and bread.
- All children will be served milk at lunch. 1-year olds will be served whole milk; children aged 2-5 will be served 2% milk.
- If your child has an allergy to any food product or cow's milk, we will need a doctor's note stating the allergy and what the replacement is to be, i.e. soy milk, almond milk or lactose free milk. The parent is responsible for supplying the substituted item.
- Water is available to children at all times of the day.
- If your 1-year old requires a sippy cup or bottle, the parent is responsible to bring each day's supply of cups or bottles and to take them home daily to be cleaned. Bottles and sippy cups must be labeled with the child's name and the current date each day. **NO sippy cups are to be brought to preschool for any preschooler aged 2-5 years.**
- All students between 12 and 15 months old are required to have a written feeding plan on file. Grace Academy will supply the appropriate form to be completed and returned prior to the child's first day of school.

Birthday Parties & Special Occasions:

- Must be approved in advance with the teacher and/or administration. Must be simple and time efficient.
- Any and ALL food brought in for parties and celebrations **MUST** be pre-packaged & store bought.

Clothing / Nap Items:

- Send a complete change of clothing for your child including; pants/shorts, shirt, underwear, and socks in a Ziploc Bag with the child's name on the outside. These will be kept onsite for emergencies.
- Send a "small" blanket for nap time on the first day of the week. (Blanket will be kept at school during week and sent home on Fridays to be washed and returned on Monday) You may also send a "small" stuffed animal for nap time.
- Footwear: **MUST be Closed Toe**. Tennis shoes, sandals, and Croc's are permitted. NO flip-flops or slip-on sandals.
- Please label all personal items such as sweaters, jackets, hats, clothing, blankets, and pillows, etc. with your child's name.
- Pacifiers may be sent **with one and two year olds for nap time only**.
- One-year olds will need to provide wipes and diapers.
- While potty training, two year olds will need to provide wipes, diapers/pull-ups, underwear and spare clothing.

Dress Code:

- Grace Academy reserves the right to ban any extreme or offensive clothing. Clothing with offensive pictures, writing, or slogans ARE NOT allowed.
- Extreme hair styles or hair dyes are not allowed.
- Head coverings, bandanas, hats, hoods or sunglasses are not to be worn in class unless otherwise stated.
- Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.

Emergency Procedures:

- All staff and students practice fire and tornado drills monthly.
- G.A. also participates in “lock down” safety procedures with the Rowan Co. Sheriff’s Dept.
- Each classroom has an emergency exit and is used for emergencies only.
- In the event of an emergency or practice drill, K2, K3, and K4 students will line up, exit the room using the emergency door, and proceed to the assembly area. K1 students will be placed in evacuation cribs and transported to the assembly area. For classrooms in the main preschool building, the assembly area is the picnic shelter behind the building. For classrooms in the Family Life Center, the assembly area is in the front parking lot.
- In the case of a “real” emergency, parents will be notified immediately. If the parent cannot be reached the next emergency contact person will be notified.
- Emergency evacuation plans are posted throughout the center and in the classrooms.

Toys and Electronic Devices:

- Electronic devices such as smart devices, phones, iPad’s, DS’s, Tablets, Game Boys, etc. are not allowed.
- Grace Academy is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items.

Illness:

Grace Academy does not provide child care for ill children. If your child becomes ill or injured at school we will notify you immediately and we will do our best to comfort him/her. A child who has become sick will be separated from the other children while waiting for parent pick up. We will record the students name, date, symptoms, and parent notified on a Health Notice, which will be given to the parent.

To attend school your child must be well enough to function in a school/group setting.

The Division of Child Care rule 10A NCAC 09.0804 provides criteria for excluding children from childcare based on illness or other communicable condition. Based on that guideline, if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please do not bring him or her to school.

- Has a temperature of 100.4 or greater, measured by any method (axillary, oral, tympanic, etc.) within the past 24 hours, regardless of its cause.
- more than two stools above the child's normal pattern and diarrhea is not contained by a diaper or when toilet-trained children are having accidents;
- two or more episodes of vomiting within a 12 hour period;
- lice, until completion of first treatment;
- chicken pox or a rash suggestive of chicken pox; scabies;
- tuberculosis, until a health professional provides a written statement that the child is not infectious;
- strep throat, until 12 hours after antibiotic treatment has started and no fever is present;
- pertussis (whooping cough), until five days after treatment has started;
- hepatitis A virus infection, until one week after onset of illness or jaundice;
- impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has started;
- conjunctivitis (pink eye), until the time specified by a physician has passed (typically 24 hours after treatment via antibiotic drops has begun;
- an undiagnosed rash; or
- a physician's or other health professional's written order that the child be separated from other children.

In order to return to school, your child must be symptom free for 24 hours, **without the use of medication.**

Note: We ask that Grace Academy be notified with a diagnosis as soon as possible, so the notification can be sent out to inform parents of contagious diseases.

G.A. Preschool Behavior and Discipline Management Policy:

It is essential that Grace Academy maintain effective discipline. Teachers are vital to maintaining discipline, as the teacher is responsible for the care of the students. We give high priority to corrective discipline. The first few weeks of school are especially firm, as the classroom structure is being set for the entire year.

The best discipline is preventive discipline. Praise and positive encouragement of good behavior are important to effective discipline. We strive to be FIRM, FAIR, CONSISTENT, and LOVING.

Corporal punishment is not administered at Grace Academy. The teacher/administration will inform the parent of serious or consistent behavioral problems and seek parental suggestions before taking further actions.

General Rules:

We expect all our students to demonstrate the following general attitudes and behavior:

1. Respect and obedience to all school and staff members.
2. Reverence for God's word, the American flag, and the Christian flag.
3. Proper care of all school and church property.
4. Proper attire, speech, and actions.
5. Orderly, courteous conduct in the classroom and on the playground.
6. Show respect to classmates.
7. Chewing gum is not permitted on school grounds, in buildings or on buses.
8. No biting, hitting, kicking, or spitting on students or staff.

Playground Rules:

1. Students should walk to and from the playground in single file.
2. Swings and slides should be used by one student at a time.
3. Students should be seated when swinging or sliding.
4. Students are to go down the slides facing forward only.
5. Slide on bottoms only. After sliding, clear the space so others may slide.
6. NO swinging on the cross bars and NO jumping from the equipment.
7. Only one person should climb the slide ladder at a time.
8. NO playing with or throwing bark or rocks. Sand should stay in the sandbox.
9. NO climbing on the fence.
10. Students are NOT permitted to open the gate at any time.
11. No students are allowed behind the swings.
12. Use the picnic tables for sitting or eating.
13. Be gentle and courteous when touching others.
14. Do not imitate violent role models, i.e. Power Rangers, X-Men, etc...

Discipline Guidelines:

General guidelines for administration of discipline following an offense:

1. A direction is given to correct the behavior.
2. A privilege is taken away from the student or correction is administered
 - a. Stand against the fence, wall or next to teacher.
 - b. Note sent home.
 - c. Special classroom privileges or activities withdrawn
3. Student is sent to administration's office and spoken to.
4. Student sent to administration's office again and parent called.
5. Suspension from Preschool for 1 to 3 days.
6. Expulsion from Grace Academy Preschool.

Please note that there are some behavioral issues that will not follow these discipline guidelines and will result in an immediate dismissal for the day. It would be an insult to the creativity of children to attempt to list all such scenarios. However, they would generally fall into 2 categories:

- Violent actions toward another student resulting in injury (e.g., biting that breaks the skin)
- Any violent action (hitting, kicking, spitting, biting, pinching, etc.) toward a staff member.

Enrollment Procedures: Preschool ages 1 to 5

Enrollment is first open to all returning students, their siblings, GBC members and then to the public.

1. Complete online enrollment by visiting our admissions page of our website at www.graceacademyrockwell.com. There you will create an account in FACTS to apply and pay the application fee. The book fee must be paid at the finance office or once your FACTS account is set up.
2. If you wish to pay fees by check or cash please visit our Finance Office Tuesday-Thursday.

If you need assistance in setting up or using your FACTS account please contact Mrs. Sandy Phillips at sphillips@graceacademyrockwell.com

In order to apply for enrollment or re-enrollment, all accounts for a family must be in good standing. Grace Academy reserves the right to decline a student application due to a delinquent payment history.

Your preschooler must have reached the target age for his or her program before attending class. Students enrolling after August 31 must have reached the target age by August 31 of the current school year in order to enroll in that program. For example, a student turning 3 on August 20 may not begin in the K3 program until August 20, even though school may start on August 7. Also, a student turning 3 on September 15 is not eligible to enroll in the K3 program since he or she was not 3 years old by August 31.

NOTE: Two-year-old students will be beginning potty training during their K2 year. Our goal for your two-year-old is to successfully accomplish potty training so they may continue on to our three-year-old program.

Students in the K3 and K4 programs must be FULLY potty trained ("Pull-ups" are ONLY allowed for 2-year-olds.)

Three- to five-year-olds must be completely independent in the bathroom, without the help or presence of a teacher/assistant. It is our experience that some children who are trained at home may not be ready to use these skills consistently in the school environment. Our aim is to keep open communication with parents, and we will notify you if your child is having repeated problems in this area.

Physical and Immunizations:

Student Physical Exam and Immunization Records must be submitted to the admissions office within 30 days of child's first day of school; If forms are not turned in by a timely manner a student will not be able to return to school until forms are received and could lose their spot.

Tuition & Fees:

Monthly Tuition & Annual Book Fees:

The yearly tuition amount for each program is divided into 10 equal installments and charged at the beginning of each month from August through May. Therefore, the first monthly tuition will be due on August 1. Payments are late if not received by the fifteenth of the month. **A late fee of \$25 will be applied to your account after the fifteenth.** Please communicate with the finance office if there is any expected issue with on-time payment. We can plan together how to maintain your child's enrollment as you work through any unexpected financial situation.

Book Fees must be paid no later than May 31st or at time of enrollment.

Please see the admissions page of our website for the full schedule of current rates & fees.

Finance Fees:

Late Tuition Payment: \$25.00 (assessed on the 15th of each month).

Returned Check Fee: \$35.00 (NSF checks and fees should be taken care of in cash within one week of being returned).

Late Pick-up Fee: A charge of \$1.00 per child, per minute will be assessed for each minute past closing (5:30) and at ½ day pick-up (12:00 noon).

Collection Notice: Any account that becomes severely delinquent is subject to being turned over to a collection agency. Once any account reaches this status, a correspondence regarding payment of the debt will have to be made with the collection agency.

Payment Methods: (**Payment Drop Box** - located on the wall just outside the finance office)

Our preferred method of payment is via automatic draft. You will set this up during enrollment. If you cannot pay in this way, you will need to contact the finance office and will be expected to pay in one of the following ways:

1. Cash: Use an envelope for cash payments; write the child's name, dollar amount and what you are paying for on the outside of the envelope
2. Check: payable to Grace Academy, include child's full name on memo line
3. Debit/Credit Card: payments made in finance office or by phone
4. Online: using the FACTS family portal

* **Sibling Discount: 10% for 2nd child, 15% for 3rd child**

* **Annual pay discount: 10% off – Paid by August 10th**

* **Semi-annual pay discount: 3% off – Paid August 1st and January 1st**

