Administrative Staff
John Jackson - Director
Gail Moore - Assistant Director
Preslie Specht - 2nd Assistant Director
Of the Infant/Toddler Center
Jill Roberts - 2nd Assistant Director

Mission Statement

Grace EEC, as a mission of Grace Community Church, exists to provide a Christ-centered environment to care for children of working parents in the East Texas community.

This will be done through a two-pronged approach of ministry and education. First, the EEC partners with parents to enhance their child’s spiritual development by meeting their basic needs of growth on a daily basis. This encompasses Biblical curriculum that introduces a child and their family to the basic principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, the EEC functions as an education center, where all elements of a day are learning opportunities for a child which prepares them for their elementary school experience. In addition to the training and education for each child, the EEC also believes in educating parents by providing them tools and resources to become Godly parents.

Through the use of media, technology, take-home family activities, our approach to learning and education in holistic, in that, all of what we teach has the primary focus of assisting a child and their family in discovering a life-long passion for Christ, not merely seeing it as a Sunday activity.

It is not our intention to replace parents in the role of raising their children. Our primary goal is always to point families to Christ and give them the tools they need to improve their spiritual and basic every day living.

We will notify you in writing of any changes to our operational policies or the enrollment agreement 30 days before any changes take effect.
Effective December 1, 2011, the following will be revised into the Grace EEC Parent Handbook.

Reminder for School Age Children
If the elementary school is closed for any reason and your child is going to attend Grace EEC on those days, please sign up with your child's teacher. If you sign up to attend all day care with Grace EEC, your account will be billed the $20.00 per day extra whether your child attends or not.

Our hours of operation are from
7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
We ask that you have your child at school no later than 8:30 a.m. Our actual teaching time begins at 8:30 a.m. and this allows the teachers to keep the class on a better routine and reduces disruptions throughout the morning. We realize there are occasions in which your child will be late for a doctor's appointment or any other emergency situation. If your child is going to be late, please notify the office at 903-593-3859 and we will notify the teacher.

Pick up time at Grace EEC is at 5:30 p.m.
If you are late picking your child up, you will be charge $1.00 per minute for every minute past 5:30 p.m. If you are late, the late pick up fee must be paid at the time of pick up before your child returns the following day.

History, philosophies and goals
In 1973 a group of families recognized a need for a community school that would serve the educational and spiritual needs of their children. Grace Community School was established. Grace Community Child Care was established for the children of Grace Community Church and Grace Community School families. Since that time, Grace Early Education Center has become a center for the community of Tyler to bring children for quality childcare in a Christ centered atmosphere. Led by the elder board, Grace Early Education Center operates in full cooperation with Grace Community Church.

Our facility is licensed through the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.

Admission Policy
Admissions are made as space is available. Our enrollment is open to families in the community who desire to have Christ-centered care for their children. We make every effort to accommodate children with siblings already enrolled in the school or day care, giving them opportunity.

Hours of operation
Grace Early Education Center opens at 7:30 a.m. and closes at 5:30 p.m. You are welcome to utilize the center during opening hours.

Enrollment
There are three terms per year; fall, spring and summer terms. A complete enrollment form or updated enrollment and fee must be received in the office by the due date for every new term. Updated information forms will be required at least twice a year to keep all information current. No child will be admitted to the Center that is not enrolled.
The following items must be received in the office 24 hours prior to the time of enrollment:

1. Complete Enrollment Form
2. Current Immunization Record
3. Doctor’s Statement (Infant to 5 years)
4. Registration Fee per Term (Fall, Spring, Summer—this fee is non-refundable)

**Tuition**

- Payment for care is due in the office by close of business on the Monday of the week that childcare is provided.
- We accept personal checks, money orders, and cashier's check. We cannot accept cash or credit cards.
- Grace Community Early Education accounts must be kept current to continue care.
- Should your account become 2 weeks delinquent your child will not be able to continue care until the balance is paid in full (subject to available space when balance is paid).
- Students who attend the ASC program will be charged $20.00 per day when in care on days Grace Elementary is closed for holidays, etc. This includes the end of summer before school starts for children not enrolled in the Summer Care program.

**Late Fees**

- A late fee of $15.00 will be accrued if payment is not received in the office by closing on Monday of the week childcare is provided.
- Final child pick up time is 5:30 p.m. Starting at 5:31 p.m. a late pick up fee of $15.00 will accrue.

**Attendance/Absence**

If your child is absent due to illness, vacation, school being closed, etc. you will still be charge for the days your child is scheduled to be here, according to the days and times reserved.

If you have further concerns you may contact the local childcare Licensing office at 903-595-4841, The Protective Services child abuse hotline at: 1-800-252-5400. The child protective Website is: http://www.tdps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/About_Child_Protection_Services/

Revision of handbook effective 10/12/2009:

As a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code includes section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009. Grace Early Education Center is regarded as a Gang Free Zone. A gang-free zones is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of Grace Early Education Center.

**Evacuation Plan – Chemical Spill or other Utility Emergency**

Call 911

In case of a chemical evacuation, students of Grace EEC will be transported, via designated drivers that are employees of the center, to a central location. All students will be taken to the University Blvd High School Campus. The school's personal van will be used to transport children. Individual drivers, which have cleared a current Criminal/FBI Background check and have a current copy of a valid insurance policy on file, will be allowed to transport children. Designated drivers will be appointed at the discretion of the Crisis Coordinator, John Jackson.

**Route to destination:** Exit left from the front of the school onto Old Jacksonville Rd. Follow Old Jacksonville to Loop 323, take a left. Follow the loop approximately 4 miles and take a right on University Blvd. The High School is on the right.
1. Plan your party for lunch or afternoon snack @ 3:30 p.m.
2. On a holiday, we try to plan all the class parties the same day.
3. NO BALLOONS AT ALL! There is too great a risk for choking.
4. Invitations for out of center parties passed out in class must include everyone in the class.

Personal Property Brought to the Center

Items for “show and tell” may be brought on the day planned by the teacher. These should not be valuable items or pets. Toys should be left at home unless the teacher has planned a special day for it. This lessens the possibility that your child may be distracted or misplaced the toy. Grace EEC is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Parent Concerns with Policies and Procedures

Many of our policies are mandated by the State of Texas Minimum Standards. If you have any questions or concerns about any of our policies, please feel free to speak with the Director. If you would like to review a copy of the Minimum Standards, a copy is available in the center office or via internet at: www.tdprs.state.tx.us/Child_Care Child_Care_Standards and Regulations

A copy of the most recent License inspection report is located on the bulletin board outside the center’s office.

on your enrollment form. No tuition adjustments are made for absences. Please notify the office if your child will be absent.

Withdrawal

If you are planning to move or take your child out of Grace EEC you will need to notify the office two weeks in advance. If notice is not given, two weeks of tuition from the last day of attendance will still be owed to the Center.

Programs offered

- **Early Education Center Care** - 8 weeks through 4-years-old
- **K4 Care** - Children in K4 may use the Center mornings and afternoons when they are not in school
- **After School Care** - Grades K5-5th are involved in a program of activities geared for their age and energy level to provide a safe environment both before and after school and on holidays.
- **Summer Care** - We offer a summer program for infants through 5th grade with supervised, planned curriculum based activities.

Curriculum

The desire of Grace Community Early Education Center is that all curriculum and activities be God centered and present truth from the Biblical perspective.

Days of Operation

Grace Community Early Education Center will be open for business five days a week, Monday through Friday, twelve months a year with the exception of the holidays listed:
- New Years Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
• Labor Day
• Thanksgiving Day
• Day After Thanksgiving
• Christmas Eve
• Christmas Day
Occasional in-service days (advance notice will be given). If changes occur in the above holidays, parents will receive written notice 30 days in advance.

**Bad Weather Days**

If the weather is bad and there is a question about the daycare being open, please check with your local radio and TV stations for this information. If the Grace Community School is closed, the Center could also be closed. Please call our office at 903-593-3859 for the most up to date recorded information.

**Procedure for Picking Up Children**

CHILDREN WILL BE DISMISSED ONLY TO THE PERSONS THE PARENT HAS AUTHORIZED IN WRITING ON THE ENROLLMENT FORM. (THIS INCLUDES OLDER SIBLINGS WITH A DRIVER’S LICENSE) IDENTITY MUST BE VERIFIED IF THE STAFF DOES NOT KNOW THIS PERSON.

This person will be asked to show his/her drivers license, the picture will be viewed, and the license number recorded. If the parent needs to add or delete names on the authorized list, they must put in writing and turn it into the office.

Grace Community Early Education Center has no legal authority to refuse either biological parent the right to pick up their child, with the following exceptions:

1. If a court has granted temporary or permanent custody to one parent or a third party, and Grace Community Early Education Center has been furnished a copy of the order bearing the court’s signature.

2. If the staff member feels the parent will be putting the child at risk due to drugs/alcohol or no car seat.

**Water Activities**

New State Minimum Standards have become much more restrictive in relation to water activities. Water activities such as swimming will only be available for our School Age Summer Program in accordance with Minimum Standards. Water play in classrooms and on playground such as water tables and squirt bottles are permitted with permission from the parent.

**Animals**

For everyone’s protection animals are not to be brought to the Center.

**Parent/Visitation/Participation**

Parents and grandparents are encouraged to visit the center any time. We maintain an open door policy. We ask if you are stopping by to see how your child is doing that you stop by the office and tell us that you are visiting. We have security policies in place and we now require visitors to check in with the office. Inside classroom visits can be made.

**Parties**

Holidays, birthday and other times that call for a celebration can be arranged through the teachers and the office of the Center. We enjoy helping our children celebrate a special occasion. We have a few rules that we require that everyone follow:
child’s room at least 48 hours prior to the date of the trip. All children will wear either a shirt or nametag which states they are from our Center along with the phone number.

**Transportation**

Transportation will be provided for approved field trips with signed approval forms on file from the parents. Grace Community Church and Grace Early Education Center driver guidelines and State Minimum Standards will be followed for any transportation of Center children. **No exceptions will be made.**

**Rest/Nap Time**

Children are required to rest, and some may nap. Mats are furnished and kept clean and sanitary. Due to limited storage space each child may bring a small blanket, small pillow and/or a small stuffed toy.

**Outdoor Play**

There will be outdoor play periods daily as weather permits and is at the discretion of the director. Of course if it is raining and obvious weather conditions do not allow for comfort outside, we will be indoors for play. Please dress your child in layers that can be adjusted for comfort to the weather should we decide to take a walk or play outside. If medical reasons (such as cough or runny nose, etc) keep your child from playing outside, it is best for him/her to be kept home and away from the other children.

**Arrival and Pick Up**

Please park in the regular parking space **and not by the curb marked Fire Lane or in a designated Handicapped Space** when bringing your children in the morning and picking them up in the afternoon. We need to keep these clear for the safety purposes in which they are marked.

Please do not leave purses or valuables in unlocked cars. We also ask that you do not leave your car running while you come in to get your children. Please us good judgment in these matters for your own safety.

ALL children are to be taken to their room or assigned area BY THE PARENT upon arrival. We do not accept responsibility for a child whose parents do not follow proper procedure. Always make sure our staff is aware of your child’s arrival.

**Illness and Exclusion Criteria**

- It is the recommendation of the Committee of Control of Infectious Disease of the American Academy of Pediatrics that children will not be accepted into the Center if they have any of the following:
  
  *Lethargy, abnormal breathing, rash with fever, 2 or more vomiting/diarrhea episodes in a 24 hours period (regardless of the cause), yellow nasal, eye/ear discharge and head lice.*

- Should your child become ill with any of any of the above named symptoms while in the center, you will be called to pick up your child. **Children should be kept home until ALL symptoms have ceased for at least 24 hours.** If your child returns before 24 hours you must have a signed note from your physician stating your child is not contagious.
• Please keep your emergency phone numbers current by notifying the office if there is a change so we can be efficient in contacting you. We must be able to locate someone who can pick up your child immediately after being called, if you are not available.

Contagious Disease

If your child becomes ill with a contagious disease (chicken pox, etc) please report it to the doctor immediately. We are required to follow recommendations of the Texas Department of Health concerning admission or re-admission of any child with a communicable disease.

Procedure for Dispensing Medications

Revised as of April 26, 2010, we will no longer be able to dispense over the counter or prescribed medications at Grace Early Education Center. Please make arrangements to give your child medications before or after school hours. Due to liability issues associated with distributing medications and a recommendation by our state licensing representative, we will no longer administer medications. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

The two exceptions are as follows:
1. Epi-Pens may be administered
2. Breathing treatments may be administered.

Breastfeeding

Rooms are available for breastfeeding upstairs during operating hours in the main building of the Early Education Center.

Immunization records

Your child’s shot record must be complete and turned in with your enrollment form at least 24 hours prior to the first day of attendance. If immunizations are not current, we cannot accept your child into our Center. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.

You will be asked to update immunization records each time your child receives any shots in order for us to comply with the Texas Health Department regulations. State mandates require us to have current records in order for your child to remain in our care.

Hearing and Vision Screening Requirements

The Special Senses and Communication Disorder Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, requires a screening or a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems for children who are enrolled in a childcare center.

First-time enrollees who are four years of age or older and all children enrolled in programs who are four years of age by September 1st of each year will be screened for possible vision and hearing problems prior to completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment, whichever is longest, or present evidence of screening conducted one year prior to enrollment.

Field Trips

Field trips are offered occasionally throughout the year for ages 4 and up. Permission slips are required to be signed by the parent and brought to the center before the child can be permitted to go with his/her group. There will be information about the field trip posted on the office window and at the
If your child has allergies such as peanut butter, milk or eggs or can not eat the provided snack it is the parent’s responsibility to send a snack from home. If a parent sends snack from home, Grace Early Education Center is not responsible for the nutritional value or meeting the child’s daily food needs.

**Allergies**

It is the desire of Grace Early Education Center to provide support and assistance in protecting students with allergies to the full extent of our abilities. It is our philosophy that students with severe allergies, along with their parents, should be ultimately responsible for their protection and avoidance of certain allergens. The following is a list of accommodations and guidelines for these students and their families:

- The parent should provide an emergency action plan from the student’s physician to the office.
- The student’s parents should supply several “safe” snacks to keep in the classroom for the teacher to give at her discretion.

The following is a list of accommodations that we are NOT, unfortunately, able to make at Grace Early Education Center for students with food allergies. This is not an exhaustive list:

- We are unable to seat the student at a separate table during lunch time due to limited space.
- We are unable to offer any kind of segregated accommodations for students with allergies, due to space limitations.
- We are also unable to change the snack menu to accommodate any allergies in the class.

In conclusion, Grace Early Education Center will make reasonable efforts to protect students with allergies to the extent allowed by its resources and given the number of different students it serves. Grace can not and does not guarantee or ensure that students will not be exposed to allergens while

**Procedures for Handling Medical Emergencies**

In the event of a medical emergency or accident, the center will contact the parents and the doctor of the child. If it is impossible to reach either and should emergency treatment be required, the child will be taken to the hospital designated by the parents on our admission form. The authorization and consent form for emergency medical treatment of a minor is included within our parent contract.

**Procedures for Parental Notifications**

Should your child receive a minor injury, including bites, while attending our center, an incident form will be filled out and waiting for you to sign at the end of the day when you pick up your child. If we question any injury we will have your child seen by the school nurse if she is available, or we will call you.

**Discipline**

Our goal for disciplining the child is positive reinforcement, seeing what a child does that is right and praising or reinforcing that behavior. There are occasions, unfortunately, when the child’s behavior is unacceptable. These are times when the child has not learned self-control and his/her behavior needs correction. We take care to ensure that correction is handled properly and without anger. Grace Community Early Education Center will take steps toward the correction of behavior such as:

- Actions that disrupt the class
- Actions that could harm the child, his/her classmates, or the teacher in a physical or emotional way.
- Behavior that violates a well-explained rule.
- Disrespect shown to the other students or teacher/staff.
- Unwholesome or profane language.

The steps of correction that may be taken include:

- Talking with the child about his behavior
- Time out which may include loss of play time
- Visit or time out in the office
- Phone call to parent to discuss discipline and/or pick up depending on behavior
- If behavior continues after phone call to parent, a “Notice of Concern” will be sent home and possibly a request for a parent conference.

Our efforts at working with the behavior of the children while they are in the center are dependent on the cooperation of the parents. We must have an open communication between the Center and both parents so that these situations can be handled in the best way possible. Corporal punishment is prohibited and therefore it is of the utmost importance that the parent is willing and available to assist in helping with these situations in behavior correction. Continual disruptive behavior and/or willful disrespect without progress toward resolution could result in suspension from the center 2 to 3 days or permanent dismissal from the Center.

Biting

Biting is a common problem with young children. The foremost concern is for the bitten child/children. Although it is difficult to make rules that will apply in every case, the following guidelines will be enforced:

1. First/second bite: time out, provide toys for the child to chew. Child will be closely observed to determine if the child is uncomfortable with teething or there is another cause. Parents will be notified on a daily incident report form.
2. Continual biting: (defined as more than one bite during a period or more than 3 to 4 days). This usually shows that the steps we are taking are not enough, and we will ask that the parent consult the child’s pediatrician for more assistance in the handling the situation. We will then work with all the information to try to come to a solution.
3. If for some reason the child does not respond to the correction guidelines after repeated steps are taken, it is the Center director’s responsibility to the other children to require that the biting child be removed the Center.

Our goal is to direct the child toward acceptable behavior and self-control. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of open communication between the parents and the staff to work toward a resolution in matters such as biting. In many cases, if handled properly, these incidences can be limited and ended in a short time.

Meals and Food Service Practice

All classrooms are equipped with refrigerators and microwaves for your convenience. Any items placed in the fridge must be labeled with child’s first name and last initial.

- Breakfast: Our center does not provide breakfast. Breakfast must be finished before entering the building or it will be saved for morning snack.
- Lunch:
  A. Infants - All food and formula must be ready to serve. Bottles and formula must be labeled with the child’s first name and last initial. Parents must give feeding instructions in writing, dated and signed by the parents. This must also be updated every 30 days or as changes are made.
  B. Toddlers through 2 years - Send ready to eat foods that your child can handle by himself, such as finger foods (precut for your child).
  C. 3 and 4 year olds and After School Summer Care - Send foods ready to eat. All lunch boxes and drink containers MUST ALSO be labeled with the child’s first name and last initial in permanent ink.
  D. A hot lunch program is available for your convenience. Sign-up information is available in the office. The cost is $2.00 per lunch for 12 months to 2-year-olds and $2.50 for 3 and 4 year olds.
- Snacks: A morning and afternoon snack will be provided by the center. The snack menu will be posted in the room.