Grace Crossing Academy

Early Learning Center

105 FM 1488 Road
Conroe, TX 77384
gracecrossingacademy.com

We Care About Kids

2019/2020 Parent Handbook
Welcome to Grace Crossing Academy! The decision to entrust your child – your most valued possession – to Grace Crossing Academy is an honor we do not take lightly. By making the decision to educate your child in a Christian environment, you are laying a strong foundation for your child’s future; we are honored to be a part of that process. We at Grace Crossing Academy commit to helping your child grow in a well-balanced manner. Our goal for your child is that they are fulfilled and prepared in every way for the challenges that face each of us in everyday life.
Grace Crossing Academy Mission Statement

Grace Crossing Academy’s goal is to be the leading Early Education Center in Conroe. Our program gives children ages 6-weeks through Pre-K enriching opportunities to develop the whole child. We focus on learning through child-directed play experiences and curriculum time. We believe a balance of play and preschool enhances growth and development in all areas: physically, socially, emotionally, creatively, and intellectually. This is achieved in a safe, loving, faith-based environment with caregivers who are dedicated to enriching children’s lives. We are committed to providing a Christ-centered environment that creates an educational experience of challenges, provides security, growth, and fulfillment. Our principle goal is to work with the family and church to build a firm foundation for further development through educational excellence and Biblical values. We pray Grace Crossing Academy is a place away from home and family where children can feel a sense of love, security, and self-worth while learning about the love of God and His son Jesus.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

Grace Crossing Academy does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in admittance, education, or other administrative policies and extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

Required Policies from The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Grace Crossing Academy is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The following policies are required by Child Care Licensing per The Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers 746.501.

1. HOURS OF OPERATION

Grace Crossing Academy is open from 6:30 am-6:30 pm, Monday-Friday. The educational hours of operation are 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. GCA follows closely with the Conroe ISD calendar with a few exceptions. We close to observe the following holidays: New Year’s Day, MLK Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, the day before Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after Thanksgiving, the day before Christmas Eve, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Grace Crossing Academy will also have a few Teacher In-Service Days in which the school will be closed.

NOTE: In some cases, if the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, Grace Crossing Academy may close the day before or the day after the holiday. Parents will be updated on each year’s holiday schedule in February.
2. RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Per Texas state laws, parents have a right to access their child at any time. However, we request that parents drop off their children by 8:30 am each day so that the child can take part in our full educational program. In the event that a parent is unable to pick up their child, they may authorize another legal adult to pick up. Children will not be released to a minor under the age of 18. Authorized adults must be listed on the enrollment form to pick up and the authorized adult must bring a picture ID. Children will not be released to adults without a picture ID.

3. ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION POLICY

Children who are ill should not attend preschool. Grace Crossing Academy observes the standards set by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services for ill children. The most common standards for exclusion are:

1. Illness that prevents the child from participating in child care activities, including outdoor play. If a child is too ill to go outside, they must stay at home on this day. Per child care licensing 746.3601(1)
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children.
3. Tympanic (ear) temperature of 100.4 or higher, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
4. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrollable diarrhea, 2 or more vomiting episodes in 24-hours.
5. Contagious examples: Pink Eye, Rashes, Hand Foot & Mouth, etc.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will contact the parent immediately. We will care for the child apart from the other children with proper supervision and give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation practices.

Parents need to pick up children within 1 hour of notification. In the event of severe illness or injury, or if a parent fails to pick up their child within a reasonable amount of time, Grace Crossing Academy may call for an ambulance at the parent’s expense.

If a child is sent home sick from our program, they may not return until the child is symptom-free without medication for 24-hours.

If a statement is provided by the child’s health care professional, the document must state that the child no longer has an excludable disease or condition.
4. MEDICATION

Please inform your health care professional that your child is in full-day or part-day preschool and that you prefer to give medications at home, morning and evening. Knowing this, many doctors will order longer acting medications. Limiting medications dispensed away from home prevents medication errors. Please remember, Grace Crossing Academy is designed for well children.

If medications need to be administered at school, the following conditions must be met:

- **Prescription medication can only be accepted if it is in the original container and hasn’t reached its expiration date.**
- **All medications will be kept in the front office in a locked cabinet.** Topical ointments, inhalers, epi pens, and heart medications are kept with the child in their classroom. These must be kept in a location that is secure and out of the reach of children.
- All medications will also be administered in the front office. The exception to this is the above medications listed above are kept with the child in their classroom.
- Refrigerated medications will be kept in the Director’s office refrigerator.
- Nonprescription medication may only be administered by following the manufacturer’s recommendation on the label. A note from the child’s health care professional must be provided if manufacturer’s recommendations are not listed.
- Before any prescription or nonprescription medication can be administered, including sunscreen, GCA must have permission in writing by the child’s parent or guardian. Please fill out the medication forms and enter instructions into the Daily Medication Log Book, which is located in the front office. Please bring a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy.
- **Medication will only be given if prescribed three or more times a day.** If your child is prescribed medication once or twice a day, parents must administer this before dropping off and after pick up at home.

Health forms are required to be completed at the time of enrollment showing any allergies, physical handicaps, a statement of general health, and a current immunization history. These must be updated and kept current.

Medication may be given to children with a signed medical information sheet. These are located in the front office.

5. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING EMERGENCIES

In case of minor injury or accident, the staff will administer basic first aid. All injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented and reported to parents when the child is picked up at the end of the day.
In case of medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), the staff will call 911, giving location and nature of emergency. As appropriate, the staff will administer CPR or first aid measures. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified. All children must have an emergency medical release form on file in case of such an emergency.

If a child ingests or comes in contact with a poisonous substance, the staff will contact the Poison Control Center 1.800.222.1222.

6. PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

Open Communication with parents is very important to a child’s success. Grace Crossing Academy has multiple ways of communicating with parents. In some situations, parents may be asked to sign documents acknowledging that communication has taken place. Listed below are ways that Grace Crossing Academy may communicate with parents:

- Through weekly email notifications
- Written memos placed in your child’s weekly folders
- Our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/gcakids
- Smart phone notifications through Remind101
- Verbal communication with the child’s teachers and director

Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice a year in the Spring and Fall, and parents are encouraged to attend. Your partnership and understanding of our curriculum and expectations is imperative for the success of your child.

7. DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY

Grace Crossing Academy staff members are trained to use a positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. Just a few examples used in this situation are: praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only on unacceptable behavior; reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements and redirecting behaviors. Grace Crossing Academy staff will never use corporal punishment or negative discipline that may hurt or humiliate a child.

Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills which help them get along in their physical and social environment. This aim is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of inflexible rules. Giving children understandable guidelines and redirecting their behavior helps them to develop internal control of their actions and encourages acceptable behavior. Positive cooperation is required from the family when dealing with disruptive behavior. We feel that consistency from all parties involved is the best way to handle these issues.

In some cases, when the administration feels a behavior significantly disrupts the educational and/or spiritual environment, a child may be shadowed. Shadowing is the assignment of a caregiver for a child. The caregiver remains near the child at all times in order to redirect them.
and protect other children. In the event that shadowing requires the placement of an additional staff member, the parents of the child being shadowed will be charged additional fees.

8. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF CHILDREN

The safety of all children and employees is important to us. While our goal is to work with children and families, aggressive behavior may place others at risk. Grace Crossing Academy reserves the right to terminate care for aggressive behavior at any time. No reduction or refund of tuition fees will be given in these situations. Agression and violence toward staff is not tolerated.

9. SAFE SLEEP PRACTICES FOR INFANTS

Grace Crossing Academy follows the Infant Sleep Safety Guidelines as listed in the Child Care Minimum Standards and as outlined by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. All infants will be placed on their backs to sleep. To avoid suffocation, nothing is allowed in the crib but the infant, including blankets and stuffed animals. Sleep positioning devices are prohibited unless instructed by the child’s health care professional, in writing. An “Infant Sleep Exception” form must be completed by the health care professional. All cribs at Grace Crossing Academy meet the CPSC safety guidelines. Crib compliance documents are on file in the front office. Pacifiers are allowed; however, straps that attach to the child’s clothing and pacifiers with stuffed animals attached are prohibited.

10. FOOD SERVICE & PREPARATION

Grace Crossing Academy provides breakfast bars for all children present at 6:30 am. Children are to bring their own lunches each day. Lunch is served around 11:30 am. Snack times vary from class to class. Snack menus are posted in each classroom. Please advise the center of any allergies that have been diagnosed by medical professionals. If a child requires an alternative meal, milk or substitution, a note from a health care professional may be required. The health care professional’s note must include a recommended substitution which will be provided by the parent.

Grace Crossing Academy must be notified of all known food allergies. A Food Allergy Emergency Plan must be completed by the child’s health care provider. Children with known food allergies will not be allowed to attend until the Food Allergy Emergency Plan is completed and on file. Per the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the Food Allergy Emergency Plan must be posted where food is served and prepared.

The Food Allergy Emergency Plan must include:

- The child’s name
- What food the child is allergic to
- Sign of allergic reaction if given the food
- How to treat this reaction
Alternative food to be given when substituting
Signature from the child’s health care professional

11. IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Immunization records must be current for all children enrolled in Grace Crossing Academy. A copy must be in the child’s file. It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that your child’s immunizations are current. Failure to keep children current on immunizations may lead to disenrollment.

From time to time Grace Crossing Academy may have children enrolled that have not received immunizations due to personal belief. A notarized affidavit must be on file for these children. Per federal law, child care programs are prohibited from discriminating against a family’s personal belief, including immunizations.

12. HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

Hearing and Vision Screening for possible vision and hearing problems is required by the Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health & Safety Code, Chapter 36, for children who are 4-years old. Parents must bring in screening proof from their local health care professional.

13. ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Upon selecting Grace Crossing Academy to meet your child’s educational needs, all enrollment paperwork is required 3 days before the child is allowed to start our program. Incomplete paperwork will not be accepted. Paperwork required for enrollment includes:

- Enrollment Forms
- Consent Check List
- Acknowledgement of Policies Form
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Attention
- Physician’s Statement / Immunization Record
- Tuition Agreement
- ACH Draft Form or Credit Card Authorization Form
- Infant Feeding Preference (if applicable)
- Food Allergy Emergency Plan (if applicable)
- Infant Sleep Exception Form (if applicable)

Parents will be notified within 30 days of any policy change in writing. Signatures from parents may be required.

Parents must notify Grace Crossing Academy in writing of any change in enrollment information, such as telephone numbers, email addresses and home addresses.
14. WATER ACTIVITIES

“Splash Days" are held during summer camp sessions and occasionally throughout the year. This special event involving water play will be limited to the use of sprinklers, slip and slides and individual water dispensing handheld apparatus. State mandated ratios are followed for this special activity. Parents will always be notified in writing before water activities.

15. ANIMALS

From time to time, Grace Crossing Academy may have classroom pets that meet the requirements by Texas Child Care Licensing. A notice to parents will be posted outside any classroom door when a pet is present, which could also include Petting Zoo and special guests’ pets.

16. SUNSCREEN AND BUG REPELLENT

Grace Crossing Academy will apply sunscreen and/or bug repellant as needed. Sunscreen and bug repellant must be provided by the parent, must be in the original container, and must not have expired. A “Sunscreen/Bug Repellent Permission Slip” must be completed by the parent before these items can be applied.

17. QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

If parents have questions or concerns about our program, we encourage you to have open communication with your child’s teacher and the Director. Through open communication, we can ensure that all parties are well informed and working as partners in the child’s education.

18. PARENT PARTICIPATION

We encourage parent involvement, especially with all school events and helping with classroom parties. Before having direct access to children, Grace Crossing Academy will run a criminal background check on all volunteers. Parents must complete a “Volunteer Orientation” before participating in center events on a regular basis.

19. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

Grace Crossing Academy is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and GCA follow the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. Parents may review a copy of these standards in our front office or view the standards online at www dfps state tx us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/default asp Grace Crossing Academy encourages parents to view our compliance history with Child Care Licensing. Our most recent inspection is posted on our parent communication board or you
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may view this at:
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/ppFacilitySearchDayCare.asp
Parents may also contact our local child care licensing office at 512-438-4800.

20. STATE CONTACTS

Parents may access the Texas Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400.
Parents may access the Department of Family and Protective Services and Health and Human Services website at www.dfpd.state.tx.us/child_care

21. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Grace Crossing Academy has an Emergency Preparedness Plan that is located in the front office. Parents may request a copy of the full plan. A brief synopsis is listed below. Parents are encouraged to read this information carefully. In the event a parent is present in the building during an emergency, Grace Crossing Academy will ask parents to participate accordingly.

In all situations in this Emergency Preparedness Plan, "Director" refers to the director on duty. In the Director's absence, the Executive Coordinator on duty assumes the role of Director and then designates another staff member to assume the responsibilities of the Executive Coordinator. In all situations in this Emergency Preparedness Plan, the Director or designated person in charge will notify Child Care Licensing and/or the Health Department and/or call 911 as each situation dictates. In all situations in this Emergency Preparedness Plan, the Director or designated person in charge may delegate any portion of their duties to other staff members, volunteers or emergency personnel as they deems necessary.

Sign in and out sheets from all classrooms are to stay with each caregiver responsible for the group. In the event of an emergency evacuation, the caregiver and director will use the sign in and out sheets along with the emergency binder to contact each parent and verify authorized release of children once reunited. Grace Crossing Academy has two locations. Children will be evacuated to the Atrium in the Grace Crossing Church’s main building or the apartments directly north of Grace Crossing Academy.


22. BREASTFEEDING

Grace Crossing Academy will provide a comfortable place with a seat for mothers to breastfeed their child if they choose to do so. Parents may also provide breast milk for their child to be served while in our care.
23. CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW REQUIREMENTS

Grace Crossing Academy staff are REQUIRED by Texas State law and licensing requirements to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. Our staff receive annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse. Grace Crossing Academy has made a commitment to help increase awareness and prevention techniques to employees and parents through trainings, memos and monthly newsletters. Grace Crossing Academy will also coordinate with community organizations on strategies to prevent abuse and neglect.

The staff is prohibited under Texas law to notify parents when the police or CPS is called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of CPS or the police.

Some examples of abuse and neglect are: leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises on opposite sides of the body, and child hygiene issues.

If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html

The statewide Abuse & Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400, if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

24. WELL CHECKS

Grace Crossing Academy staff will do a visual check of the children upon arrival each morning. If a staff member notices anything unusual, they are required to point this out to the parent at that time. If your child has an accident overnight, please notify staff members when dropping off so that we can assist in watching the child for side effects. A Grace Crossing Academy staff member may complete an “Incident Report” to document these situations.

25. VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES

All Grace Crossing Academy employees are encouraged to receive an annual flu shot.

26. OPEN DOOR POLICY

Grace Crossing Academy has an open-door policy. Parents and legal guardians may visit the center at any time to discuss the care and education of their child with the center director and staff or to observe their child.
27. GANG-FREE ZONE

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a licensed child care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty.

28. FIRE ARMS

Fire arms are prohibited in an educational facility serving minors. Individuals who have an Open Carry or Concealed Hand Gun License may not bring these fire arms into our facility. Fire arms may be kept in the licensed individuals’ personal vehicle while on our premises.

Grace Crossing Academy Policies

29. TUITION AND FEES

Tuition is paid by ACH draft. All accounts are required to be set up on ACH draft or CC Draft. Tuition will only draft the balance on the account. If a family does not want tuition drafted, they may make a payment by check or credit card prior to noon on the first of the month. (There is an additional 3% charge for credit card use.) Grace Crossing Academy cannot turn drafts “on and off”. Declined credit cards, declined drafts or checks returned Non-Sufficient Funds will be charged $35. Tuition not paid on the due date each month will be charged a $50 late fee.

Tuition for the year will be divided equally into the number of months in the school year. Tuition drafts will be made monthly. Payment for the full month of tuition which will be due on the 1st or 15th of the month. Failure to pay tuition in a timely manner (within 5 days of agreed due date of 1st or 15th) will result in your child’s enrollment suspension until the account is paid in full. It is imperative that families in financial distress communicate with the director in order to create a financial plan that is mutually beneficial. Families with a balance at the end of the school year will not be eligible for reenrollment until the balance is paid. A tuition chart is available to determine your specific tuition charges.

AM Care is from 6:30 am to 8:30 am. During this time, children will be served cereal bars by 7:30 am. PM Care is from 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Snacks will also be provided during this time. Extended Care fees will be charged at the first of the month and must be paid in advance for children who regularly participate. Those not using Extended Care on a regular basis will be charged a Drop-In Fee if they use the service. The Drop-In Fee is $10/hour for PM Care Services.

Holiday Care is available during the Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break and Spring Break. We have extended the number of days that the school is actually open and reduced the number of actual Holiday Care Days. There will also be a new Holiday Care Package offered to families during registration. This will enable families to register in advance with a discount for the package. Holiday Care is non-refundable even when not used.
30. DISCOUNTS

Families that choose to prepay for the entire school year will receive a 5% discount on the tuition. In order to receive this discount, payment must be made prior to August 15th.

Families who enroll two or more children will pay full tuition on the oldest child. Each additional child enrolled will be given a 10% discount on tuition during the school year.

31. EXTRA FEES

A non-refundable annual registration fee of $150 is due at the time of enrollment. Returning families will pay a $100 registration fee for the first child and $90 for each additional child. A $100 curriculum / supply fee is due on September 1st and January 1st. The supply fee is not discounted for additional children enrolled. The registration and supply fees are also not prorated or refundable for the semester.

The registration fee and curriculum/supply fee are non-refundable.

Our program is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm. Grace Crossing Academy is only licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to care for children during these specified times. If you are late picking up your child, a $1 PER MINUTE late penalty will be charged to your account.

32. ARRIVAL AND PICK UP TIMES

Children need to be in attendance by 8:30 am each day so that they may benefit from our curriculum, routines, and rituals. Exceptions can be made when children have appointments with health care professionals or related services. GCA’s regular school day ends at 2:30 pm. Car line is available from 2:30-2:45 pm for classrooms two years and older. Parking is available next to the facility (use parking places only). The circle drive, fire lanes and next to the mailbox is not allowed. Parking in these areas are subject to fines from the fire marshall.

33. CONFIDENTIALITY

While your child is enrolled in our program, parents may come across confidential information about our program, our staff, and sometimes other children. All information received from Grace Crossing Academy must remain confidential at all times including, but not limited to posting confidential information about Grace Crossing Academy, our children, staff and/or families on social media. Breaching confidentiality may lead to disenrollment.
34. PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Please understand, young children are present in our building. Some adult language is not appropriate for young children. Grace Crossing Academy prohibits swearing or cursing on our property.

Threatening staff, children, or other parents will not be tolerated per Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Grace Crossing Academy has the right to terminate care in the event of disruptive behavior from a parent or guardian.

Grace Crossing Academy must follow particular rules on discipline and guidance as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. All adults, including parents, must follow these rules while on our property. Failure to follow discipline and guidance rules will lead to immediate termination of care.

In the event that a parent is dissatisfied with any situation at Grace Crossing Academy, parents are to maintain composure and handle issues professionally with the center Director and/or staff. Conversations that take place in the classroom must be developmentally appropriate for the children who are observing and must not be aggressive in tone. Any behavior that places a child at risk will lead to immediate dismissal from the program.

35. PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Children must be signed in and out by the custodial parent or adult person approved by the parent(s). Parents who fail to sign children in or out may be charged a $5 penalty for each occurrence. Please understand that due to liability issues, the staff of Grace Crossing Academy is not permitted to take children home from our center. Grace Crossing Academy employees may not be added as an authorized pick up or emergency contact for any child enrolled but their own.

In order not to confuse school toys with a child’s personal property, children do not need to bring playthings from home. Grace Crossing Academy staff cannot be responsible for lost or broken personal toys. Two exceptions to this are a stuffed animal for use during naptime by full-day preschool children and for Show & Tell purposes. You will be notified by your child’s teacher if and when the class will have Show & Tell.

There are several ways you can help us maintain the best possible teaching atmosphere for your child:

- Communicate any concerns regarding our program or your child immediately to the center Director.
- Pick up and read the notices and information left for you in your child’s folder and/or posted outside your child’s classroom, at the reception desk, or in e-mail.
• Pick up your child’s papers/projects. Their work is very important to them and provides another means of communication between parent and child. This can help the parent share in the child’s day.

• Please be aware of the scheduled meal times of breakfast and lunch. Make sure your child arrives in time to be included in those meals. Meals cannot be saved or rearranged for children who arrive after these times.

• Periodically check on your child’s supply of extra clothing. Please take home soiled clothing promptly.

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services do not allow smoking, vaping, or the use of any tobacco product on the premises, either indoors or outdoors.

36. WITHDRAWAL FROM PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

A Thirty (30) day written notice must be given for withdrawing a child from Grace Crossing Academy. If a family fails to give a thirty-day notice, Grace Crossing Academy has a right to draft the remaining weeks from the family’s bank account. Grace Crossing Academy has a right to refuse service to any family for any reason. Partial month tuition will not be refunded.

37. CUSTODY SITUATIONS

Grace Crossing Academy prefers NOT to get involved with custody disputes. Grace Crossing Academy will follow court orders exactly as written. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS. With this being said, it is imperative that all enrollment forms are completed with both parents information. A copy of a child’s birth certificate may be requested at the Director’s discretion. In the event that a custody dispute takes place on our property, the local police will be called and asked to handle the dispute. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk for our facility or staff, Grace Crossing Academy has the right to terminate care, including, but not limited to; decisions about the child’s care, health, and education. Parents must have these conversations at home and notify the center of any mutual decisions made by both parties involved.

38. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICIES

Grace Crossing Academy will follow the standard set by the Conroe ISD for inclement weather closures. In the event that the school closes due to inclement weather related issues, the closure will be posted on our school’s Facebook page, Remind 101, website, and parent email group. Full tuition is due during inclement weather times.

In case of serious emergencies such as earthquakes, fire, storms, or loss of power/water, parents will be notified, if possible, and children will be cared for until parents or emergency
contacts arrive. Please refer to our Emergency Preparedness Plan for more information on evacuations and relocation of children.

39. CURRICULUM

Grace Crossing Academy believes that children learn best through actively engaging with people and things in their environment. Children are involved in hands-on experiences, real-life adventures, and assisted discovery as they explore concepts through play. Grace Crossing Academy is a place where essential readiness skills are nurtured through play, investigation, and of course, fun! These programs provide developmentally and age-appropriate activities and materials for exciting and wonder filled environment.

40. CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Classroom assignments are based on each individual child’s chronological age, as of September 1st. Grace Crossing Academy typically will only do a transition during the school year for children in the infant and toddler classrooms on a needs basis.

41. CHILD TO STAFF RATIOS

Grace Crossing Academy follows national ratios set by the Association for Early Learning Leaders. These ratios exceed state ratios and licensing expectations. From time to time, GCA may follow state ratios, but will never be non-compliant unless under emergency situations.

42. NAP TIME

Supervised rest periods are provided for all children under five years of age who remain at Grace Crossing Academy for six or more hours a day, and for all other children who show a need for a rest time. Parents will need to provide a sleep mat to rest on for naptime. Please provide a clean blanket and sheet for naptime and take them home Fridays for washing. Parents may also bring in a special blanket, pillow, or stuffed animal if desired, but they must be able to fit in the child’s cubby. Child care licensing requires that all children be offered a nap or rest period.

43. CLOTHING / UNIFORMS

Preschool children must have a complete change of clothing, clearly marked with the child’s name, left in your child’s backpack at Grace Crossing Academy. Preschool children need to be dressed for the weather. Caps, mittens, and warm clothing must be worn during the cooler seasons for the daily outdoor playtime. Accidents can happen, even for the older preschoolers, or if they get wet on the playground. Flip flops, crocs, and cowboy boots are prohibited at Grace Crossing Academy for safety reasons.
We at Grace Crossing Academy believe uniforms provide a variety of benefits. In addition to promoting community spirit, uniforms promote safety and discipline on our campus and help students and faculty maintain focus on spirituality and academics. Therefore, children three years and older at the start of school are required to wear school uniforms. This policy does not apply to students who turn three throughout the school year. Uniforms are not required during the Summer Program.

Children Three and Older
- Boys: solid khaki or navy pants or shorts; solid dark green, dark navy, or white polo shirts.
- Girls: solid khaki or navy pants, shorts, skorts, or jumpers; solid dark green, dark navy, or white polo shirts
- Modesty shorts, leggings or diaper cover under all dresses or skirts

Likewise, parents and visitors are expected to dress appropriately when on school campus. Clothing that does not promote modesty is discouraged.

44. PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Parents must supply all bottles for their child. Please label everything with your child’s first and last name. Child care licensing prohibits children from walking with or sleeping with cups or bottles. During drop off time, parents are to ensure that children are sitting at a table if they are leaving their child with cups.

GCA uses washable crayons, markers and paint during art time, but the children’s clothing may get stained from just being kids! Please dress your children in play clothes since PLAY is what we do!!

Please leave all valuable items at home since Grace Crossing Academy cannot be responsible for broken or lost items.

45. OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is a regular part of the daily routine. Children should be prepared to play outside some part of every day. Please do not request that your child stay indoors. Per the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, children too sick to go outside should not be at school. Children may not wear flip flops due to the danger these shoes may cause on the playground.

46. BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Most children enjoy celebrating special events with their preschool friends (birthdays, new babies, and holidays). Parents may send a “store bought” treat to share with the class. Please
make arrangements with the teacher several days in advance. Your child’s teacher is aware of any allergy restrictions and can keep you informed as to what can and cannot be brought into the classroom. If parents wish to invite children in the classroom to private parties, teacher will only be able to pass invitations out if one is provided for all children in the class.

47. SCHOOL SAFETY POLICIES

Parents need to personally escort their child(ren) inside the building to sign in and out when their children enter and leave the facility. Parents are welcome to visit the center any time during the day to observe their child without prior approval. However, if you would like to stay and spend time with your child during activities, please see the office so we can do a proper criminal history check, as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Our facility is equipped with a fire sprinkler system and fire drills are practiced monthly. In the event that a parent is present in the building when the alarm system is activated, parents are asked to assist the center in emergency preparedness.

Parents will be notified of any incidents other than minor scrapes or bumps with a phone call. GCA will also give a written report at pick up time. A signature from the parent or responsible individual will be required acknowledging that this information was shared. First aid will be applied to minor incidents. In the event medical attention is required, we will notify you immediately. Parents are responsible for all medical fees.

48. CAMERAS

Grace Crossing Academy has closed circuit cameras located in various locations through the facility. A monitor is located in our front office for parents to view. Parents may request to view previous footage from the Center Director. The privacy of the children is very important to us. For this reason, the cameras are not available over the internet.

49. PHOTOGRAPHS

Grace Crossing Academy believes in the benefit of using real life pictures in our educational program. Photos taken of the children will be done with a school owned camera or phone and will only be used in our program. If parents choose to take pictures of events held at our program, they may only photograph their child, unless written permission is given by the other parent. Please note that during certain parent events, such as Kindergarten graduation, Christmas programs, and all school events, photographs may be taken. If you wish for your child to not be photographed, you may want to remove them from these events.
50. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees of Grace Crossing Academy are prohibited from outside employment with parents of the organization including but is not limited to, babysitting and/or nanny-type jobs. This is only allowed when both the parents and childcare staff sign a “Child Care Waiver for Worker” form which much be turned in to Grace Crossing Academy. A copy of this form will be kept in the child’s file and the teacher’s personal file.

51. SOCIAL NETWORKING WEB SITES

Cyber identity and social networking is very exciting these days. However, please understand that employees of Grace Crossing Academy are prohibited from participating in social networking with parents and children including but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat. Special closed classroom Facebook groups have been created so that parents and staff can communicate and share pictures from the day.

52. BITING

Biting is a common issue in early child development. The best way to deal with biting is consistency between providers and parents. Biting could occur for multiple reasons. Proper communication will help determine why a child is biting. Grace Crossing Academy will work with parents when biting becomes a problem. Every effort will be made to solve the issue as soon as possible. One solution may be to provide a “shadow” for the child who bites as a way to help train them. If this option is used parents will need to pay extra to help cover the cost of hiring a shadow for their child. Shadow cost will be dependant on the age or the child and the number of days they are in school.

53. POTTY TRAINING

Although potty training is not a part of the preschool curriculum, our staff will be happy to support you in your efforts. Because we know each child is different and develops at his or her own natural pace, GCA will not refuse admission of a child based solely on whether or not she or he is potty-trained. Please communicate your individual needs to your child’s teacher, who will assist you in a reasonable manner. Frustrated or distressed child will not be made to sit on the toilet. Staff will provide regular opportunities to go to the restroom and implement simple reward systems at the parent’s request. Non-flushing potty chairs and potty seats are not permitted. In potty training rooms the child will be placed in a pull up when accidents happen that may cause unsanitary conditions. The staff will keep a record of “incidents” to help determine when a child can wear underwear instead of a pull up. The standard is to go two weeks without any accidents.
Proper parent communication is imperative when working with young children. It is difficult to communicate when cell phones are in use. Effective December 1, 2010, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services passed new regulations prohibiting the personal use of cell phones in classrooms. Please end all calls prior to entering the building so that our staff can properly communicate with you. Teacher’s personal cell phone use is prohibited. Please call the school phone number and calls can be transferred to your child’s classroom.

We, at Grace Crossing Academy, know that you trust us with your most valuable treasure, your child, and we strive to serve our families the absolute best in early education and childcare. We believe that excellent early childhood development is the foundation for a bright future for our children at Grace Crossing Academy.