

Grace Pointe Child Development Ministries



PARENT HANDBOOK 2023-24

**A Ministry of
Grace Pointe Church of the Nazarene**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Organization ... 4
 - Purpose and Goals ... 4
 - Christian Teaching ...4
2. Hours of Operation ...4
3. Administration Procedures4
 - Payment of Fees ...5
 - Classroom Placement ...5
4. Absences ...5
 - Extended Leave Options ...6
 - Holidays ... 6
 - Vacations ...6
5. Program ...7
 - Infant Program ... 7
 - Toddler Program ... 8
 - Two-Year Old Program ... 8
 - Three-Year Old Program ... 8
 - Pre-K Program ... 8
 - Special Programming - School Age Summer Camp... 8
6. Communication ...9
 - Emergency Closing ...9
7. Daily Arrival and Departure ...9
 - Withdrawals ... 10
 - Issues Regarding Divorce, Separation & Re-marriage ... 10
8. Illness/ Health ... 10
 - Communicable Diseases ... 10
 - Medical Testing Request ...11
 - Head Lice ...11
 - Injury & Insurance ...11
 - Bathroom Training ...11
 - Fingernail Clipping ...11
9. Discipline... 12
 - Dealing with Repeated Discipline Issues ...12
 - Biting Policy ...13

10. Security System & Cameras ...13

11. Parent Involvement ...13

Parent Visits ...13

12. Meals, Snacks, Celebrations ...14

Birthdays ... 14

13. Clothing/Personal Items ...14

Coat Bag ... 14

Toys and Money ...14

14. Nap Time ...15

Acknowledgement ...16

1. Organization

GPCDM is one of many ministries of Grace Pointe Church of the Nazarene. GPCDM is sponsored by the church and governed by the GPCDM Board and Grace Pointe Church of the Nazarene Church Board, which acts as the Board of Directors. GPCDM is registered with Indiana Family and Social Services Administration and the State Fire Marshall's Office. This registration means GPCDM complies with state laws and regulations concerning health, nutrition, sanitation and fire prevention.

GPCDM is a non-profit organization. Monies received in excess of operational expenses are used for expansion and maintenance of the facilities and purchase of equipment.

Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the Grace Pointe Child Development Ministry (GPCDM) is to love and nurture children in a Christian culture while helping them develop in an appropriate manner physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. We will operate in keeping with the guidelines of the State of Indiana, Hendricks County, and Grace Pointe Church of the Nazarene. It's our desire to minister to people at their point of need and show them how Jesus can meet their need.

Christian Teaching

It is the objective of GPCDM that each child becomes aware that God made the world and cares for it and the people who live in it. Our goal is to provide experiences in which love for God is expressed through music, prayer and conversation. GPCDM is distinctly Christian in nature and expression. Children in the 2 through K-4 classes participate in chapel weekly. Stories from the Bible are taught in each chapel time.

2. Hours of Operation

GPCDM is open from 6:15 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. each day, Monday through Friday, throughout the year. You may leave your child at your convenience during that time period. A late pick-up penalty fee of \$2.00 per minute is charged when children are picked up after our official daily closing at 6:00 p.m.

3. Administration Procedures

- Application for admission must be filled out completely before a child may be added to the class list.
- The Registration Fee must be received prior to enrollment.
- Curriculum Fees (Age 2 and up) must be received prior to enrollment.

- Registration to use the ProCare App
- Submission of Acknowledgement of Parent Handbook Form
- A Current copy of immunizations is required by the Indiana Dept. of Health.
- Parents must determine, before enrolling their child, that they will agree with and accept the purpose and policies of GPCDM.
- No child will be denied enrollment due to race or ethnic background.
- **The first 30 days of enrollment** will be considered a trial period for new children. During this time children will be observed for appropriate emotional and social development and a determination will be made if GPCDM will be a good fit for a specific child. There are times when the needs of a child are beyond what GPCDM can provide, and we will need to decline a continued relationship.

Payment of Fees

- Invoices for tuition will be sent the beginning of each week. Payment of tuition is due Thursday for the current week. Payment can be made using the Procare App, or by check or cash. Checks and cash should be placed in the locked "Payment Box", located in the office. Please put your child's name and what it is for on your check, or sealed envelope containing cash. This helps ensure it is credited to the proper account.
- Any account with an outstanding balance at 6:00 p.m. on Friday of each week will be assessed a late payment fee of 10% of the amount owed per week. Any account that is in arrears more than (10) business days is required to be paid in full or the child will be removed from GPCDM. To have the child re-admitted, the account must be paid in full.
- If two non-sufficient checks/payments are received, payment of the entire amount is due immediately in cash and for all payments going forward. ALL fees incurred by GPCDM related to a non-sufficient fund check will be charged to the child's account.

Classroom Placement

Placement for children currently enrolled shall be determined by:

- We thrive to place the children in the classroom where they will thrive and grow emotionally, cognitively, and socially in preparation for the next step in their developmental journey. Particular attention will be given to personality types and styles.
- A child enrolling in GPCDM for the first time shall be placed in an age-appropriate classroom setting. There are no exceptions.
- The child's birthdate
- GPCDM Administration

4. Absences

If your child is not going to attend GPCDM on his/her scheduled day, for any reason

please notify us via the ProCare app or by phone prior to their scheduled time. Tuition is still due while your child is absent.

Extended Leave Options

From time to time, it may be necessary for families to request an extended leave of absence for their child. The following options are available for these requests:

- Parents/Guardians may take an extended leave of up to 4 weeks. In order to hold the child's spot, they would be responsible for 50% of their weekly tuition (Paid weekly on each Thursday via ProCare.) While this guarantees a spot upon return, it does not guarantee the original placement, but a placement in an age-appropriate class.
- Parents/Guardians may choose to withdraw for a leave of absence but there will be no guarantee of an available position. Curriculum Fee, Registration Fee will be necessary for re-enrollment.

Holidays (Tuition is charged for National Holidays) **

GPCDM will be closed on the following days:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day & Day After
- From Christmas Eve thru New Year's Day. (see below)
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- The Week of July 4th. (see below)

Vacations

- There are two "SHUT DOWN" vacation weeks. One is between Christmas and New Year's Day. The second is the week of July 4th. GPCDM is closed during these weeks. ALL accounts **NOT** in good standing on Christmas Eve Day or by the time the childcare closes for Christmas Break **will be charged for the week we are closed**. All accounts **NOT** in good standing at the beginning of the July 4th week **will be charged for the week we are closed**.

(Exact dates announced on the Annual GPCDM Calendar)

- GPCDM children are eligible for a (2) week vacation, to be used at your convenience annually provided the following set of criteria are satisfied:

The child's tuition account is in good standing, meaning a (0) balance is obtained and verified by the director or assistant director at least 24 hours in advance of the planned vacation.

- The child must be in attendance for a minimum of (3) months, (90) days.
- Vacation is from enrollment anniversary date, not calendar year.

- Vacation may not be rolled over from year to year.
- Vacation must be taken (1) week at a time.
- The office must be notified at least (5) business days prior to the requested vacation dates to ensure proper credit to your account.
- If a child is in attendance, there is NO option to count that week as a vacation and not pay tuition.

5. Program

Full time childcare is available for children ages (8) weeks through pre-kindergarten year-round. Lunch, (2) snacks and lesson plans that are age appropriate are provided. Children aged two through five years of age participate in learning centers that include: language arts, creative arts, manipulative play, science, math, social studies, imaginative play, indoor and outdoor play.

It should be emphasized that GPCDM is an educational environment. Each day is designed to provide constructive learning experiences through a planned curriculum and activities. The Abeka curriculum is used at GPCDM. This is a Christian curriculum taught in Christian settings and preschools across the country. The curriculum enables GPCDM to provide a foundation in basic learning skills, as well as to instill Christian values throughout the child's time as a student at GPCDM. The activities include creative expression, simple nature experiments, time for conversation and indoor/outdoor play.

Infant Program

Children are accepted into the infant program once they are (8) weeks old. Children stay in the infant room until approximately 14 months.

Infant Room placement will not be held for longer than 12 weeks. In order to reserve a position for your child in the infant room, you must pay the registration fee and first week's tuition at the time of enrollment. **Both fees are non-refundable.** The first week's tuition payment may be moved out (4) weeks from the projected start date. For instance, you enroll in advance for September 1st, but because of going over-term you do not need infant care until the 15th, then the first week's tuition payment is moved from the 1st to the 15th. However, if you end up not needing care until sometime in October, then the 1st week's tuition credit will be lost.

The State of Indiana requires that parents provide a sufficient supply of prepared bottles, baby food, bibs, pacifiers, diapers, and wipes. Each of these items must be clearly marked with the child's name. Staff in the infant room shall notify parents when resupply is needed. In the event a child runs out of a needed item, the parent will be called immediately to remedy the shortage. At NO time will another child's supply of the above listed items be used for another. Diaper, wipes, and baby food must be presented in unopened commercial packaging. ALL prepared bottles MUST be clearly marked with all the proper information; child's name, amount, and date prepared or pumped.

The infant room is different from all other program in that each child has his/her own schedule. It is beneficial for the teacher if you write out a detailed list of your child's feeding and sleeping habits so that we can give your child continuity. On your child's first day, you may wish to arrive 15 minutes early so you can discuss any concerns you may have with staff.

Toddler Program

Children are moved to the toddler room at approximately 14 months. The age for moving to the toddler room may be slightly less or slightly more depending upon the individual child's rate of development. The child must be walking, eating solid foods, and drinking from a sippy cup in order to transition into the toddler room.

Two-Year-Old Program

All children who are two years of age will be placed in a class specifically designed for that age group. Children do not have to be potty trained to be in this class. Parents will need to supply pull-ups and wipes in unopened packages. The teachers will work with YOU throughout the year to assist in potty training. We understand children may experience occasional accidents. Reverting to pull-ups only serves to confuse children in the training process. The goal is to complete said training by the time they are promoted to the (3) year old classroom.

Three-Year-Old Program

Children are expected to be fully potty trained by the time they enter the three-year-old classroom, as teachers are beginning to focus more on curriculum. A variety of curriculum materials are used.

Pre-K Program

The pre-kindergarten program is designed for children who will be four years of age by August 1st of the current year and will be eligible to enter kindergarten the following school year. Most promotions take place at the beginning of the new fall term. A variety of curriculum materials are used.

Special Programming (School Age Children) Summer Camp

Full time care is provided on a short-term basis for children graduating kindergarten through fifth grade during elementary school's summer break. Information will be available each Spring.

6. **Communication** - PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S CUBBY DAILY!

Please send all messages in writing via ProCare or paper. Messages to the teacher and administrative staff may be hand delivered or left in the childcare office. Using ProCare for communication provides a long-term, reliable record of communication.

Classroom communication to and from your child's teacher is completed through messaging in the ProCare app. Parents may also call the office at (317) 837-3307. Please feel free to leave a message. Please feel free to email office staff at office@gpcdm.org Phone messages and emails are checked daily.

Emergency Closing

- GPCDM will remain open unless Hendricks County declares a travel emergency in which only essential workers are allowed to travel on the roadways and travel to our facility is deemed too dangerous. If this situation occurs, GPCDM is allowed (2) days of weather-related closure per year without refund.
- Two-hour delays and emergency closings will be announced via our Facebook page and ProCare app. Should it become necessary to close during the school day, parents will be notified individually, via ProCare and our Facebook page.
- Hendricks County Health Department:
- In the interest of safety GPCDM follows closely ALL requirement of Hendricks County Health Department. Should the HCHD require or strongly suggest closure of the day care for a quarantine period, GPCDM is allowed (2) days of closure health-related closure per year without refund. Any additional closure (tuition) will be adjusted accordingly. The day care will cover 2/3 of the daily tuition while parents will be charged 1/3 of the daily tuition.

7. **Daily Arrival and Departure**

Children are checked in and out by GPCDM staff via our communication in the ProCare app. Each child must be brought into the classroom by a responsible adult who must stay with the child until the child has been received by GPCDM staff. NO child, regardless of his/her age is to be dropped off at the entrance of the building. NO child is to be allowed usage of the elevator without an adult with them at all times.

A child may not leave GPCDM until they have been properly SIGNED OUT and the departure announced to the GPCDM staff on duty. Your child will be released only to those whom you authorize on the application form. If someone other than an authorized person is picking up the child, we must have a written note, ProCare email, or phone call from the parent. If a situation develops where you have already sent your child to school, then discover you will need someone else to pick up the child in the afternoon, we will need an email via ProCare or telephone call advising us of the person who will be picking your child

up. Please advise the individual, picking up, that GPCDM staff on duty will require proper picture identification before the child will be released.

Withdrawals

A two-week notice is required before a child is withdrawn from GPCDM. Notice should be given to the director, in writing. If a child is withdrawn without a two-week notice, two weeks' payment is due.

Issues Regarding Divorce, Separation and Re-Marriage

It is our hope that every family stays together as one. However, we understand that from time-to-time divorce, separation, re-marriage and shared custody come into the lives of our GPCDM family. It is important that you understand GPCDM's policy concerning these situations:

- GPCDM does not advocate for one parent over the other. If specific information is requested of us by an official agency as it pertains to your case, we will answer questions to the best of our knowledge.
- GPCDM cannot honor the request of one parent to not allow the other parent access to your child unless we have a court document, on file, which indicates such.

8. Illness/Health

Any child running a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more, is vomiting, has diarrhea or exhibits any other symptoms of infectious illness is required to be absent for **24 hours** from the time the fever breaks and vomiting or diarrhea has ceased without the assistance of medications. Should your child display Covid type symptoms Hendricks County Health rules will be adhered to.

We understand and allow for the following;

- Diarrhea is caused by antibiotics or teething
- Low grade fever, diarrhea, or runny nose is caused by teething
- Vomiting is caused by drinking water too quickly after the child has played vigorously
- Vomiting is caused by phlegm in the throat

If the director or staff member requests that your child see a doctor before admittance back into GPCDM, then you must present a doctor's note indicating the child's status and/or diagnosis.

Communicable Diseases

Policies to control the spread of communicable disease among children are:

- All staff members with communicable illness shall be excluded from work.
- All children with communicable illness shall be excluded from attending GPCDM until a physician recommends their return to the group.
- All toilet facilities, furnishings, toys or other articles used by an ill child will be disinfected.
- Bodily discharges will have proper disposal to prevent the spread of disease.

Medical Testing Request

If a child travels to a country that is endemic for tuberculosis, we request that the child have a TPD test performed upon returning to the US. Please submit a copy of the result to the childcare office. Tuberculosis poses a significant community risk to all children.

Head Lice

If a staff member identifies head lice on your child during his/her hours at school, he/she will be cared for in an area separate from the other children. A parent or guardian will be called, and the child will need to be picked up as soon as possible. You will be asked to treat the child. Before the child is re-admitted, he/ she will have to be checked by a staff member. We have a "nit-free" policy.

Injury and Insurance

Parents will be notified immediately if there is a major injury that may need medical attention. In an emergency, the child will be transported to Hendricks Regional Health's Urgent Care or IU West Medical Center by car or ambulance after a telephone consultation with the supervising physician. **The majority of employees at GPCDM have current First Aid and CPR training.** There is always at least one staff member present at any point during the day with current training in CPR. No forms of medication for injury will be given by GPCDM staff without legal guardian consent.

GPCDM carries liability insurance on the children and the staff, during participation in GPCDM activities.

Fingernail Clipping

Young children's fingernails can be razor sharp and harbor germs. Therefore, it is important that each parent or guardian keep child's nails clipped appropriately. Short fingernails help to prevent children from accidentally scratching the other children and spreading viruses.

9. Discipline

The goal of discipline at GPCDM is to help a child establish and develop self-control. Child training and discipline are handled with kindness and understanding and in accordance with Christian principles as set forth in the Bible. The rules for proper classroom behavior are appropriate for each age group. Both the rules and the consequences for breaking them are carefully explained to each child.

Playground rules, as well as those for the classroom, are enforced to ensure the child's safety and well-being. These rules are school-wide. The use of incentives (stickers, stamps, prize boxes) are sometimes used to encourage good behavior and foster positive attitudes. Teachers and staff work to set up situations in which children can make small achievements, which in turn, help to increase their self-esteem.

Dealing with Repeated Discipline Issues

- Corporal punishment is not used at GPCDM.
- A verbal warning, which is appropriate to the situation will be given. (Please use that correctly, you will need to find a better way to use that or in case of danger STOP NOW!)
- To avoid embarrassment, the child will be separated from the group and then appropriate behavior will be discussed.
- If negative behavior continues, the child will be given a time out where he can be observed by the teacher. Time out is generally equal to one minute per age of the child.
- Difficult issues will result in a request for help from the director. Such events will be discussed with the child's parents.
- When discipline issues continue to be disruptive to the educational process in the classroom the following steps may be followed:
 - Parents will be notified when the child has been sent to the office. This is done via the daily report in each classroom.
 - When a child is brought to the office for a **second** time in one week, at the discretion of the director, a parent or guardian may be contacted by phone to discuss the child's behavior.
 - Following a **third** visit in one week to the director's office, a parent may be required to come to GPCDM to assist with the child.
 - If extreme issues continue to exist, the child may be dismissed with a one-week notice to the parent or guardian.
- It is requested that parents reinforce positive behavior at home when the child demonstrates such behavior at GPCDM. Parent support and follow up of unacceptable behavior is also encouraged.

Biting Policy

Biting is not acceptable at GPCDM. Children are dealt with on an individual basis. Developmental issues and age of the child are considered. Children who bite are discouraged, and age-appropriate consequences are provided such as separating the child who is biting from the other child for a time-out appropriate to their age.

Parents are informed of the event, and in some cases will be asked to contact First Steps for guidance or evaluation. We require documentation of this evaluation. In severe cases, when a positive solution and all other options have been exhausted and the child continues to bite frequently, the child may be dismissed from GPCDM.

10. Security System & Cameras

The purpose of the card security system at GPCDM is to provide control over who enters the building. Only parents, regular pick-up people, and staff are to have access to this card. Other persons who pick up a child on an occasional basis, such as friends, grandparents, and older siblings (16 and older) knock on the door to gain entrance. It is requested that parents not give this card to anyone. This helps ensure the safety and well-being of the children while they are in our care.

Upon enrollment, parents are issued (2) proximity (door key) cards (included in the registration fee). Lost cards may be replaced at a cost of \$20 increasing by \$5 per incident. If cards are lost or stolen, please let us know immediately so that we can deactivate the card.

Please do not hold the door open for other persons wanting entrance. They will need to have their own card. This helps to improve security for you and your family.

11. Parental-Teacher Meetings

Parents are encouraged to have pre-arranged conferences with the teacher and/or director. Please do not try to talk to a teacher about something you have a concern about while she is getting her class settled into the morning schedule. Teachers will set up a time for conferences, either at the school or by telephone. Your concerns are important, and the teacher will make every effort to talk with you at the earliest convenience.

All discussions regarding your child will need to be discussed in private with your child's classroom teacher. Such matters are **not** to be discussed in front of other children or parents.

Parent Visits

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit GPCDM during the hours of 6:15 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with pre-approved scheduling. We suggest taking extra time for observations at the regular drop-off or pick-up time. We ask that you be mindful of the outcome it could present to your child when you are ready to leave. This could leave the teacher trying to console your child while still having a class of other children she/he is responsible for.

12. Meals and Snacks

Snacks are served in the morning between 8:10 and 9:15 a.m. Afternoon snacks are served between 3 and 3:30 p.m. Lunch is served in the cafeteria each day and is served between 11 a.m. and noon. Children eat in shifts in our cafeteria beginning with the younger-aged children rotating through at the earlier times listed.

If your child is not here by their appointed snack or lunch time, please feed them before they come or they will have to wait until the next snack or lunch.

Children with a food allergy may need to bring in substitute food for lunch and snacks. While we will keep GPCDM a peanut and fish free location, we are unable to provide for a broader number of food allergies. Children having such a need may present a doctor's note explaining the allergy along with a list of suggested alternatives. Parents shall provide the alternative in unopened packages for the kitchen staff to use, clearly labeled with this child's name and classroom.

Birthdays

Children enjoy celebrating their birthdays with classmates at GPCDM. Parents may bring in treats for the occasion. Please notify your child's teacher of your plan to provide a treat before bringing them in. Cupcakes or other edible party items **MUST** be store bought and in the original packing.

13. Clothing

Dress your child appropriately for the weather and seasonal conditions. The children will be playing outside and will need to dress appropriately for the weather conditions. Children should wear clothing that can withstand a long day at school, also considering there will be outdoor play, gym time and activities that can be messy. **A complete change of weather appropriate clothing MUST be left at the beginning of each week in your child's bag.** ALL clothing is to be clearly marked with the child's name to help prevent loss or mix ups. In the event that a child has an accident, spilled milk, wetting, etc., and an appropriate change is not available, you will be called to provide the needed change.

Coat Bag

GPCDM provides coat bags for use by all our children. Coat bags are included in the registration fee. The State Board of health requires they be used to help prevent the spread of disease and head lice. ALL your child's belongings (pillow, blanket, coat, and extra clothing) are to be placed in this bag. There is a \$15 replacement fee for lost or misplaced bags

Toys and Money

Should your child enter GPCDM with a toy, money, or other item they wish to show the

teacher, it is expected that the parent shall take said item with them when they leave the premises. (Teachers may from time-to-time request children bring special items for Show and Tell or Star Student Activities.)

14. Nap Time

Children at GPCDM have a rest period each afternoon. Naps are taken from approximately 1-3:00 PM.

Since lunch time and afternoon snack times vary, the rest period is staggered as well. Younger children will rest the earliest. Parents **MUST** provide a **SMALL** blanket and **SMALL** pillow. If the child has a stuffed animal they wish to bring along as a nap buddy, this is permitted. **ALL** items will be sent home each Friday, in the coat bag to be laundered and returned the first day childcare resumes. **PLEASE NO** full-size blanket and pillows! We must be able to store these items in a way that satisfies the Health and Safety Inspectors requirements.

Your child must take a nap or rest quietly on the cot. Please do not request that they not participate in the rest period. We do not require they sleep, only that they rest quietly on their cots.

Pre-K classes will begin a nap tapering procedure each Spring in preparation for the transition to kindergarten. Nap time will be gradually tapered over a three-month period.

Parent Notes:

Acknowledgement of Parent Handbook 2023-24

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____

Child's Classroom: _____

I have received a copy of and read and acknowledge the terms and conditions listed in the GPCDM parent handbook.

Parent Signature/Date

Teacher Signature

Director Signature / Date