



Grace Presbyterian School Programs

Student Handbook

2024-2025

Dear Parents,

We would like to welcome you to Grace Presbyterian School Programs. We are very happy that you have chosen our program for your child.

Grace Presbyterian Church began a preschool program in 1993 with six students and one teacher. We have grown from that time and now have approximately 150 students currently enrolled in preschool, 45 in After School Care and approximately 100 children attending summer camp each year. We are licensed by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). Our teachers are required to have a minimum of 40 hours of classroom training the 1st year and an additional 10 hours per year. Many of our teachers have completed certification in infant/child CPR and basic first aid.

Preschool is available to children from one (1) year of age (by Sept. 1st of the current year) through five (5) years of age. Academically our preschool offers a variety of developmentally appropriate learning center activities which include art, books, blocks, puzzles, and other hands-on manipulatives, music, and dramatic play. Social skills are developed through sharing, turn taking, thinking, reasoning and problem solving. We use the Learning Beyond Paper Curriculum with all age groups. We have a weekly Bible story and our 2-, 3- and 4-year-old classes attend chapel weekly. The children are provided with structured activities and time for free choice. Our preschool day maintains a balance between active and quiet activities.

Our **after-school care** program provides care for children in both our preschool program and grades K -5th. We offer a quality program with low student/teacher ratios, homework help, healthy snacks, and an age-appropriate playground.

Summer Day Camp is all about fun! There is a new theme each week of the program. Each week is filled with hands-on activities, water play, crafts, games, special visitors, and field trips! This program is available to children who turned one (1) year of age by Sept. 1st the previous school year through children just completing 5th grade.

I hope that we will get to know each other better as we work together to provide experiences which will nurture and enrich your child to be the special person God has created them to be. Please feel free to call or stop by my office with any questions or concerns you may have. My door is always open.

Sincerely,
Susan Ackermann
Preschool & After School Care Director

Philosophy

The foundation of the philosophy of Grace School Programs is that each child is a unique child of God who grows, develops, and learns at his/her own rate. Learning is enhanced when an appropriate and positive environment is provided.

The trained professional staff of Grace School Programs strives to maintain a caring and loving environment. Young children learn from activity, active manipulation, and exploration of real objects, talking with other people and solving real problems. The staff realizes that play is learning for children. As a child patters with paints, sand, water, and blocks in an activity center, without fear of failure, they are encouraged to develop self-confidence, social skills, and knowledge of how to learn which will be the best possible motivation for formal learning.

Our school aged children will be provided with age-appropriate activities, homework assistance, Bible lessons, art, indoor and outdoor play. All of which contribute to each child's need for spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical growth.

The staff acknowledges the fact that parents are a child's primary teachers and the greatest influence upon a child. The staff realizes the need to create and maintain open communication and cooperation with parents and guardians as our programs strive to be an outward extension of the home.

Mission Statement

Grace School Programs is an outreach ministry of Grace Presbyterian Church for the Panama City area. Our mission is to provide a safe, stimulating and loving Christian witness to both the families and more specifically, the children attending our school programs. Our age-appropriate programs which include inside and outside play, art, music, language, and Bible stories are designed to encourage growth in the children socially, emotionally, intellectually, physically, and spiritually.

Licensing

Grace School Programs are licensed by The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

Preschool Objectives

We will provide an atmosphere for a positive preschool experience which prepares the child for entry into the primary school system by promoting:

- Social and emotional development.
- Fine and gross motor development.
- Self-help skills.
- Speech and language development.
- Cognitive development.
- Religious development.
- Foster self-expression through music, art, and free play.
- To ensure that the children in our care feel safe, secure, and loved.
- Promote positive self-esteem.
- Encourage autonomy (independence).
- Help each child develop and practice good manners, kindness, and cooperation.

Operation Information

School Address:

1415 Airport Road
Panama City, FL 32405

School Email address:

gracepreschoolpanamacity@gmail.com

Phone:

(850) 769-0446 (office)

Preschool Days and Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday 8:30am - 12:00pm

You can choose: 2 day program - Tuesday/Thursday
 3 day program - Monday/Wednesday/Friday
 5 day program - Monday - Friday

Early Drop-Off

Students may be dropped off at 7:30am. You do not have to sign up in advance for this option.

There is a \$5.00 charge/day for this program if you are not registered for after care or lunch bunch on the day you use this service.

After School Care (closed federal holidays, Thanksgiving week, Spring Break week, and part of Christmas Break)

Monday - Friday 12:00pm - 5:30pm for preschool students
 School Dismissal - 5:30pm for K - 5th Grade

Summer Day Camp

Monday - Friday 8:30am - 12:00pm **Early drop-off available.**

You can choose: 2 day program – Tuesday/Thursday
 3 day program – Monday/Wednesday/Friday
 5 day program – Monday - Friday

After Care Offered Monday - Friday from 12:00pm - 5:30pm

Enrollment Information

Registration Procedure

(Preschool, After School Care, and Summer Day Camp)

- Registration dates will be determined by the Preschool Administration and will allow enrollment by church members and returning families first. We then will open registration to new families on a determined future date. *We do not hold the waitlist from the current year into the new school year.
- Class placement is determined by the child's age on September 1st of the current school year.
- A waiting list will be established for each age group as needed.
- Registration and supply fees are **non-refundable and are due upon registering.**

Tuition – All payments are made at www.myprocare.com

Preschool Tuition is due by the 1st of each month and is considered late after the 10th. Payments made after the 10th of the month will be charged a \$25.00 late fee. ****September- May are full payments. ****

After School Care (K - 5th grade) Tuition is due by the 1st of each month and is considered late after the 10th. Payments made after the 10th of the month will be charged a \$25.00 late fee. You will not be charged for the days or weeks we are closed.

Summer Day Camp Tuition is due by the 1st of each month and is considered late after the 10th. Payments made after the 10th of the month will be charged a \$25.00 late fee. ****June & July are full payments****

****There is a \$1.00/minute late fee/child from all programs in which you are late for pick-up. ****

****If your account is behind by one (1) month, your student will be unable to attend until your account is paid in full. ****

Tuition Rates and Fees

2024-2025 School Year

All Preschool Rates are based on a 10-month calendar. Tuition includes all federal holidays, holiday breaks, and Bay District School off days, including weather and unexpected closures. Preschool Tuition Due by the 10th of each month. A \$25 late fee will be applied to all accounts not paid in full by the 10th of each month.

Preschool Morning & Extended Care

Registration Fee - \$65 Due at the time of registration

Supply Fee - **Due by May 20, 2024** (listed next to each option)

*******All fees are non-refundable*******

1 Year Old Class (Morning - 8:30am - 12:00pm)

- 5 Days Morning (Available 8:30-12:00, **\$410** per month, \$200 Yearly Supply Fee)
- 3 Days Morning (Available 8:30-12:00, **\$245** per month, \$140 Yearly Supply Fee)
- 2 Days Morning (Available 8:30-12:00, **\$200** per month, \$120 Yearly Supply Fee)

1 Year Old Class (Morning & Extended Care - 7:30am - 5:30pm)

- 5 Days Morning & Extended Care (Available 7:30-5:30, **\$795** per month, \$240 Yearly Supply Fee)
- 3 Days Morning & Extended Care (Available 7:30-5:30, **\$500** per month, \$180 Yearly Supply Fee)
- 2 Days Morning & Extended Care (Available 7:30-5:30, **\$375** per month, \$160 Yearly Supply Fee)

2 yrs., 3K, 4K Classes (Morning - 8:30am - 12:00pm)

- 5 Days Morning (**\$400** per month, \$200 Yearly Supply Fee)
- 3 Days Morning (**\$245** per month, \$140 Yearly Supply Fee)
- 2 Days Morning (**\$200** per month, \$120 Yearly Supply Fee)

2 yrs., 3K, 4K Classes (Morning & Extended Care - 7:30am - 5:30pm)

- 5 Days Morning & Extended Care (Available 7:30-5:30, **\$770** per month, \$240 Yearly Supply Fee)
- 3 Days Morning & Extended Care (Available 7:30-5:30, **\$500** per month, \$180 Yearly Supply Fee)
- 2 Days Morning & Extended Care (Available 7:30-5:30, **\$375** per month, \$160 Yearly Supply Fee)

Elementary After School Care (Northside Elementary, Lynn Haven Elementary, & Bay Haven)

One-time Supply Fee/ Registration Fee- \$65/school year

*******All fees are non-refundable*******

4/5 Days Per Week - \$60

3 Days Per Week - \$50

2 Days Per Week - \$40

1 Day Per Week - \$30

Drop - In Rates \$30/day

*All Children must be registered with Afterschool Care to utilize this program (including Drop-ins).

******Students being transported from Lynn Haven Elementary & Bay Haven will also be charged a \$25/month transportation fee. ******

**Grace Preschool
2024-2025 School Calendar**

Event	Day	Date
Summer Camp 2024 Closed	Thursday - Friday	July 4-5
Last Day of Grace Summer Camp 2024	Wednesday	July 24
Preschool Open House 9:30am - 11am	Thursday & Friday	August 8 & 9
First Day of Preschool/Afterschool Care	Monday	August 12
Labor Day School Closed	Monday	September 2
Columbus Day School Closed	Monday	October 14
Grace Open/BDS Closed/ Grace Afterschool Care Closed	Wednesday	October 23
Veterans Day School Closed	Monday	November 11
Thanksgiving Break School Closed	Monday-Friday	November 25 - 29
Return from Thanksgiving Break	Monday	December 2
Christmas Program 10:30am	Tuesday & Wednesday	December 10 & 11
Christmas Break Begins School Closed	Monday	December 23
Return from Christmas Break	Tuesday	January 7
Martin Luther King School Closed	Monday	January 20
Registration Begins (Current Students & Siblings)	Monday	February 3
Grace Open/ BDS Closed/ Grace Afterschool Care Closed	Wednesday	February 5
President's Day School Closed	Monday	February 17
Open Registration (New Families)	Tuesday	February 18
Spring Break School Closed	Monday - Friday	March 17 - 21
Return from Spring Break	Monday	March 24
Summer Camp Registration Begins	Monday	March 24
Good Friday School Closed	Friday	April 18
Art Show 11:00am	Tuesday & Wednesday	April 8 & 9
St. Jude Trike-A-Thon	Friday	April 28
Preschool K4 Graduation 6:30pm	Tuesday	May 27
Last Day of Preschool/ Early Release BDS Schools/ Grace Afterschool Care Closed	Wednesday	May 28
Summer Camp Begins	Monday	June 9

We will be following the Bay District School Calendar. If district schools are closed, **school age after care will also be closed. On days that Bay Haven is open and district schools are closed, we will also be closed.

This calendar is subject to change.**

Grace Preschool, Afterschool Care, & Summer Camp General Policies

1. School programs will follow the direction of Bay District Schools when pertaining to emergency or inclement weather conditions.
2. **Prior to the start of school**, parents must complete all enrollment forms for their child and a current immunization record (HRS form 680) signed by a health care provider must be on file at the preschool. Each child must receive immunizations upon admission to the preschool or summer day camp unless we are provided with a medical or religious exemption form.
3. School physical form (HRS 3040) is required of all new preschool and summer day camp preschool age students. Physical forms are good for two years.
4. A birth certificate is required for all preschool and summer day camp preschool age students.
5. Grace Schools will make every effort possible to protect the health and safety of the children. Cooperation from parents in helping prevent the spread of communicable diseases is of great importance. See attached Health Policies and Guidelines.
6. Children may be picked up **ONLY** by those listed on emergency information cards. If a child is to go home with another adult, the parent must notify the preschool staff and identification must be provided.
7. Teachers cannot accept verbal messages from children. Please write a note or telephone the message to the preschool office at 850-769-0446.
8. When/if we plan a field trip for our preschool students, they will be carefully planned for the 2-, 3-, and 4-year-olds. Parent chaperones are required on all preschool field trips.
9. Elementary age students attending summer camp will be transported to field trips on the church van. Camp staff will chaperone students, but parents are always welcome. **Students will not be permitted on field trips without signed consent.**

****Students will not be permitted to school at the start of the school year/summer program if enrollment forms are not completed and on file at the preschool.****

Withdrawal Procedures

A written notice must be submitted to the director two weeks prior to your child's early withdrawal from the program for any reason. You will be responsible for paying tuition for the two-week period and your child is permitted to attend during that two-week period. If written notice is not given, your account will be charged one full month's tuition.

If the child is withdrawn from the program following the above guideline and later wishes to re-enroll (if enrollment allows), within a three-month period, the registration fee is waived. After a three-month period, the full registration amount will be required. If a child is absent from the program for more than two weeks without notice or payment, we will assume the child is withdrawn. We will proceed to register another child to fill the class vacancy.

Discipline Policies and Procedures

Proverbs 10:17 tells us “He who heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction lends others astray.”

Discipline is often thought to mean punishment, but when we look at the origin of the word, we discover that it is closely related to the word disciple.

A disciple is a follower, or one who learns from a leader. A disciplinarian can be thought of as a teacher or leader and discipline as the set of attitudes and behaviors that a leader hopes a follower will want to acquire.

At Grace Preschool, discipline, not punishment, will be used to guide and direct children toward appropriate behavior. There is no one way to discipline all children. Each child is an individual and must be treated as such. Child development includes learning self-discipline, which is better learned through guidance than through punishment.

Our discipline procedures will consist of the following strategies:

1. Encouraging children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child. Facilitating children in their attempt to settle disputes.
2. Redirecting to a more acceptable behavior.
3. Counseling children individually about their behavior.
4. Setting clear limits.
5. Reinforcing/Praising positive behavior.
6. Modeling.
7. Separating a child from the group (Time-Out) one minute away for each year of age.
8. Making parents aware of disciplinary concerns.

Disruptive behavior distracts from the full benefit of the preschool program and will result in consequences. The following behaviors are considered disruptive:

- *Requires constant attention from the staff.
- *Inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, adults, or self.
- *Disrespects people and materials provided in the program.
- *Consistently disobeys the rules of the classroom.
- *Uses verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from the teacher.

Discipline Procedures for Disruptive Behavior:

- Disruptive behavior will be addressed in an incident report. The report will document inappropriate behaviors that directly impact other children or staff. The report will be shared with the parent and will explain the behavior, how the behavior affected others, and how the situation was resolved. The parents, teacher, and Preschool Director will sign the report which will be kept on file.
- If a child has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a reoccurring basis, parents will be asked to meet with the child’s teacher and the Preschool Director.
- If a child has 3 incidents of repetitive, disruptive behavior within a 2-week period, the child will be asked to stay home for 2 days.
- If the child’s behavior continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive, and/or dangerous, it may be necessary for the child to be sent home for a time to be determined or removed from the preschool or after care program altogether.

Grace Presbyterian School Health Policies and Guidelines

Grace School Programs is concerned with the physical well-being of every child of God. To that end, we must prevent the spread of infectious diseases within the preschool to protect the health of each child and adult in attendance. Therefore:

1. A child must stay out of school for **24 hours** if he or she has had:
 - Temperature over 100°F.
 - Diarrhea.
 - Vomiting.

2. A child must stay home until a Dr. determines they are noninfectious if he or she has:
 - Rash.
 - Mouth sores.
 - Conjunctivitis.

3. Head lice, scabies, or other infestations:
 - Students may not return until infestation is no longer present.
 - Students may not return until lice and nits are no longer present.

4. **Children who are irritable and cannot participate in the day's activities may not remain at school.**

*Parents will be notified and **must pick up the child within one hour** if any conditions requiring exclusion are present, such as: diarrhea, vomiting, fever over 100* or, chicken pox, etc.*

5. If a child must be given medication while in attendance, the medication must be taken to the director's office. Each bottle must be clearly labeled with the child's name. A note, signed by the parent, with specific instructions for administering the medication must be attached.

Arrival/Departure Procedures and Policies

Preschool and Summer Day Camp

- Access doors to the preschool and Summer Day Camp are on Lisenby Ave.
- Access for school age Summer Day Camp is through the door opposite the big playground when dropping off and picking up children.
- Doors open at 7:30am for students using our early drop-off program. Please bring your child to their classroom and sign them in on the sign in sheet provided outside the classroom door. Be sure to leave telephone numbers where you can be reached.
- The main entrance into the preschool will be locked at 8:45am. Please buzz and someone will let you in. **You are always welcome at any time.** These security measures are in place for the safety of children and staff.
- Unless notified by the parent in advance, **no child will be released to anyone not designated in writing. We will insist on proper identification before releasing the child.**
- Children must be picked up by 12:00pm from preschool and 5:30pm from after school care. You will be charged \$1.00/minute for each minute you are late.

After School Care

- Preschool students will be walked to after care by after school care staff.
- Elementary school children will be picked up at their scheduled dismissal time in the Grace Presbyterian Church van by designated after school care staff.
- Students will be expected to follow the following Van Rules:
 - Always follow the directions of the van driver.
 - Always remain seated.
 - Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
 - Speak in a quiet voice.
 - Swearing, teasing, or fighting on the van may result in removal from the program.
 - Keep aisles clear at all times.
 - **Students are required to wear seat belts.**
- Students must be picked up by 5:30pm or you will be charged a \$1.00/minute late fee.
- Parents can enter through the door opposite the big playground when picking up children.
- Unless notified by the parent in advance, **no child will be released to anyone not designated in writing. We will insist on proper identification before releasing the child.**