

Grace Fellowship Academy Preschool



2026-2027 Preschool Program

6500 S. Miller Rd.
Buckeye, AZ 85326
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Administration

Principal- Mrs. Bailey Dickinson
Vice Principal- Mrs. Jeana Holmes
Preschool Director- Mrs. Ashley Ryan

School Hours

Monday-Thursday
7:30-3:30

Grace Fellowship Academy Advisory Board

David Lewis-President
Cheryl Sawyer -Vice President
Cash Veo- Treasurer
Krysti Coursey-Secretary
Jay Kline- Member
Jenna Burden- Member

School Verse

"Watch, stand fast in the faith,
be brave, be strong."
1 Cor. 16:13

Purpose

Grace Fellowship Academy Preschool exists as an extension of the Christian home. Our desire is to partner with parents in nurturing children to know, love, and serve God while developing spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically in a safe, loving, and Christ-centered environment.

To accomplish this mission, we strive each day to:

- Teach every child that they are uniquely created and deeply loved by God.
- Help each child understand that they are a precious gift from God with purpose and value.
- Encourage children to discover and develop the unique gifts God has given them.
- Foster kindness, respect, and appreciation for the individuality of others.
- Create joyful, engaging learning experiences that inspire curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning while pointing children to Christ.

Mission Statement

Equip minds, nurture hearts, and promote service all for the glory of God.

GFA begins each day with the following pledges:

Pledge to the Christian Flag

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag and to the Savior for whose Kingdom it stands, one brotherhood uniting all Christians in service and love.

Pledge to the Bible

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path, and will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God.

Pledge to the American Flag

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands: One nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

ACSI

GFA holds membership in the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), a strong international organization of Christian schools with over 23,000 members. Its purpose is to provide guidance, research, curriculum, administrative policies and other resources to support member schools to provide outstanding Christian education with high academic standards.

Admission Requirements

Grace Fellowship Academy Preschool serves children who are three, four, and five years of age.

Children enrolling in Preschool must be **three years old by September 1**, and children enrolling in Prekindergarten must be **four years old by September 1**.

Children must be fully toilet trained prior to enrollment.

- Online Application
- Non-refundable Application Fee
- Birth Certificate
- Current Immunization Record or legally accepted exemption documentation
- Emergency, Information, and Immunization Record Card
- Signed Parent Handbook Acknowledgment
- Signed Financial Commitment Form
- Non-refundable Enrollment/Tuition Fee

Enrollment is not considered complete until all required documentation has been received and approved.

Arizona Department of Health Services requires each enrolled child to have current immunization records or a valid exemption as permitted by Arizona law. If a child's immunizations become overdue, the Preschool Director will provide written notification. Families are given the timeframe established by Arizona DHS to become compliant. Children who are not in compliance with Arizona immunization requirements may not attend until the requirements have been met.

Equal Opportunity / Inclusion

Grace Fellowship Academy welcomes children and families without regard to race, color, or national origin. We strive to provide a loving, Christ-centered learning environment for every child. Whenever reasonably able to meet a child's needs while maintaining the health and safety of all children, the school will work collaboratively with families to support children with varying developmental and learning needs.

Curriculum & Student Progress

Grace Fellowship Academy Preschool uses the Abeka curriculum to provide a strong academic and biblical foundation for every child. Our program emphasizes phonics, early literacy, mathematics, science, social development, and biblical truth through engaging, hands-on learning experiences.

Children learn best through exploration, play, music, art, movement, and meaningful interaction with caring teachers. Our goal is to foster a lifelong love of learning while helping each child grow academically, socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

Student progress is observed continuously throughout the school year. Formal developmental and academic evaluations are completed quarterly. Parent conferences are available upon request and may also be scheduled by the teacher whenever additional discussion would benefit the child's success.

PreSchool & Prekindergarten

Our Preschool and Prekindergarten programs are designed to prepare children for kindergarten by developing age-appropriate academic, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual skills.

- Students participate in activities that promote:
- Bible knowledge and Christian character
- Letter recognition and phonics
- Early reading readiness
- Number recognition and beginning math concepts
- Science discovery
- Fine and gross motor development
- Social-emotional learning
- Language and vocabulary development
- Creative art and music
- Problem-solving and critical thinking

Instruction is provided through developmentally appropriate activities including centers, dramatic play, crafts, literature, music, movement, manipulatives, outdoor play, and teacher-guided instruction.

We believe children learn best in an environment that is engaging, encouraging, and centered on God's love.

Grace Fellowship Academy maintains staff-to-child ratios that meet or exceed Arizona Department of Health Services licensing requirements. Our typical classroom ratio is approximately **1 teacher for every 13 children**, depending on enrollment and staffing needs.

Holidays

We follow the GFA K-8 school calendar, which starts in August and dismisses at the end of May. Grace Fellowship Academy reserves the right to modify the school calendar as necessary. Families will be notified as far in advance as reasonably possible of any calendar changes.

The school is always closed on the following days:

- Labor Day
- Veterans' Day
- Fall Break- 1 Week
- Thanksgiving Break- 1 Week

- Christmas Break-2 Weeks
- MLK Day
- Presidents' Day
- Spring Break- 1 Week

Tuition Payment Policy

Tuition payments need to be made out to Grace Fellowship Academy (GFA) and are due by the first of the month. Our school is a non-profit Christian ministry that depends on timely tuition payments to maintain affordable tuition rates. It is, therefore, imperative that we receive payment of all fees and that it is understood that the payment of all fees is the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

The tuition payment policy for GFA is as follows:

- Tuition may be paid in full.
- Tuition may be paid in 10 equal monthly payments, due by the 1st of each month. The first payment is due August 1 and the final payment is due May 1. There will be a returned check fee of \$25.00 for insufficient funds. Monthly statements showing the total outstanding balance are emailed to parents for their records and do not affect when payments are due. To help parents keep up regular payments, to prevent occurrence of insurmountable past due balances, and to enable GFA to meet its financial obligations in a responsible fashion, the following delinquent account process has been established:

15 days past due	The account is considered delinquent and a late fee of \$35.00 will be assessed each month the account remains past due (\$75.00 for ESA invoices).
30 days past due	You will receive a personal phone call or email from the administration to discuss the overdue balance and create a resolution plan.
60 days past due	Administration may contact you to discuss the account and determine an appropriate resolution plan, and the School Board will be notified of the delinquency. The student may be suspended from attending class, and all student records, report cards, and transcripts will be held until the account is brought current.

90 days past due

The account may be **turned over to a collections agency**, and all collection fees will be added to the family's balance. At this stage, the student's **continued enrollment will be under review by the School Board**, and the family may be subject to withdrawal from GFA.

Tuition reserves your child's placement in the program and is not based upon attendance. Tuition remains due regardless of absences, illness, holidays, vacations, emergency closures, or other scheduled school closures unless otherwise stated by the school. If your child is left at the facility after closing time, there will be a charge of \$1.00 per minute per child. Fees are due immediately upon pick up. If we have not been able to reach a legal guardian or emergency contact after 30 minutes, we will be forced to contact legal authorities.

***Grace Fellowship Academy reserves the right to pursue all legal remedies available for the collection of unpaid tuition and fees.**

Withdrawal and Refund Policy

Any family that desires to withdraw their student must notify the school in writing two weeks prior to the student's final day. Failure to provide written notice does not waive any financial obligations owed under the school's tuition policies. Any student that attends at least one day of class for that month is charged for that month's tuition. All accounts must be paid in full at the time of withdrawal. Additionally, if a student, after leaving the school, returns for re-enrollment, a \$150.00 tuition fee will apply.

- Families that have paid the entire year in advance that withdraw **prior to** the first school day are refunded the amount of tuition paid for the current school year. *It is important to note that repayment of these funds must wait until funds become available.
- Families that have paid the entire year in advance that withdraw **after** the first day of school are refunded the amount of tuition minus the monthly tuition for any month the child attended, even if he/she only attends one day for that month. *It is important to note that repayment of these funds must wait until funds become available.

Illness Policy

To avoid the spreading of contagious illnesses, sick children will not be admitted into the facility. If your child should become ill while in our care, we will attend to his/her needs until a parent can pick up the child. We ask that the child be picked up within 30 minutes of the parent being notified. Parents are responsible for notifying the school if their child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease so that appropriate notification and sanitation procedures can be followed while maintaining confidentiality.

If your child shows signs of **any** of the following symptoms, we ask that you keep your child home to protect other students, families, and staff from illness:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| • Lice | <u>Covid symptoms</u> |
| • Rash | Fever or chills |
| • Fever (100.4 or higher) | Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing |
| • Diarrhea | Muscle aches |
| • Vomiting | Sore throat, headache, and/or fatigue |
| • Unusual inflammation | Congestion or runny nose |
| • Contagious or infectious disease | Cough, Vomiting, or Diarrhea |
| | New loss of taste or smell |

A child should remain home if he or she:

- Is unable to comfortably participate in classroom activities.
- Requires more care than staff can reasonably provide.
- Has symptoms that may place other children at risk of illness.

First aid, such as an ice pack or a band-aid, will be applied to minor injuries such as small cuts, bruises and scrapes. The action taken will be written in the incident report log. Any head injury, even a slight bump, will be written on an accident report form. A copy will be given to the parent, and the original will be kept on file. In the case of serious injury or illness, the parent and proper medical authorities will be contacted. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, we will phone the next emergency contact in the child's file.

Children may return when they have been free of fever (without the use of fever reducing medication) and/or symptoms for 24 hours, as long as the student has not been in close contact with a person who has tested positive for Covid or who is suspected of having Covid. Please notify the school if this situation occurs. The

AZDHS Release from Isolation Guidelines will be followed in regard to determining the student's date of return to school.

Medication Policy

Grace Fellowship Academy generally does not administer medication during the school day.

Emergency medications, including but not limited to EpiPens, inhalers, seizure medications, or other physician-prescribed emergency medications, may be administered when required by Arizona law and accompanied by the required physician authorization, parent consent, and medication in its original labeled container.

Medication documentation will be maintained in accordance with Arizona Department of Health Services regulations.

Parent Responsibilities/General Policies

A completed registration packet is needed before enrollment, followed by a tour of the school. The family and child will be on a 90-day probation. The school reserves the right to dismiss any child/family who does not conform to our requirements, rules and regulations.

Nutrition

Grace Fellowship Academy encourages healthy eating habits that support children's growth and learning.

The school provides age-appropriate snacks each day. Snack selections may vary and may include crackers, cheese, yogurt, fruit, or other approved items.

Children attending full-day classes must bring a nutritious sack lunch and water bottle.

To promote student safety:

- Candy, soda, and energy drinks are not permitted.
- Food may not be shared between students.
- Refrigeration and microwave heating are not available.

- Parents are responsible for notifying the school of all food allergies or dietary restrictions before attendance.

When appropriate, reasonable accommodations will be made for documented food allergies.

Items From Home

Each child is assigned a hook for a backpack to store his/her belongings. An extra set of clothing should be in the student's backpack, in the case of accidents. Students should bring a labeled, refillable water bottle each day.

Your child's teacher will notify you when their Show and Tell days are. Please mark **ALL** items from home with his/her name.

***We are not responsible for lost/misplaced items.**

DRESS CODE

At Grace Fellowship Academy, we believe that a neat, modest, and appropriate appearance contributes to a positive learning and spiritual environment. Our dress code is designed to reflect Biblical principles while promoting a respectful, distraction-free atmosphere.

This standard is not meant to judge personal spirituality or suggest that certain clothing is wrong outside of school. Rather, it exists to support our mission of honoring God in all areas—including appearance. We appreciate the cooperation of parents, students, and staff in upholding this policy.

Biblical Principles Behind Our Dress Code

- We do all things to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31).
- We avoid causing others to stumble (Romans 14:13).
- We dress modestly, with decency and humility (1 Tim. 2:9-10).
- We point attention to God, not ourselves (John 3:30).
- We do all things in love (1 Cor. 16:14).

We recognize that families may apply these principles differently in their personal lives; however, while at GFA, students are expected to follow the guidelines below.

General Guidelines

- Students must be in dress code at all times while on campus unless otherwise specified (e.g., Spirit Days, field trips).
- The administration may make exceptions for special events.
- Clothing must be neat, modest, and free from excessive or distracting styles.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that students arrive at school in dress code each day. Questions regarding dress code interpretation should be directed to the school office before wearing questionable attire.

Definitions

- **Solid Color:** One consistent color—no variations, patterns, tie-dye, or ombre.
- **Finger-Tip Rule:** Skirts, shorts, and dresses must be at or below the length of the fingertips when arms are resting at the sides.

Acceptable Attire

Pants, Shorts, Capris

- Colors: Solid khaki, black, or blue denim shorts/jeans.
- Shorts must meet the Finger-Tip Rule.
- No athletic/gym shorts or pants (dri-fit material is okay if not athletic in style).
- Must be worn at the waist or hips.
- No holes, rips, or embellishments of any kind.
- Ponte uniform-style jeggings in khaki or black are acceptable for girls (must have pockets).
- Leggings, yoga pants, or similar styles are NOT allowed as primary pants.
- Solid khaki, black, gray, or navy leggings/tights may be worn *under* shorts, skirts, or dresses (length requirements still apply).

Skirts, Skorts, Jumpers, Dresses (Girls)

- Solid khaki or black uniform-style are permitted; no glitter, sequins, or decorations.

- Solid red, black, or gray polo dresses are permitted.
- Hemlines/slits must meet the Finger-Tip Rule.
- Shorts under skirts/jumpers are encouraged for modesty.
- Solid khaki, black, gray or navy leggings/tights allowed under skirts/dresses (must meet length rule).

Shirts

- Solid red, black, or gray polos (plain—no logos, embellishments, decorative stitching, or rhinestones).
- Standard uniform-style dress shirts are also permitted.

Outerwear

- Solid red, black, or gray jackets, sweatshirts, vests, or GFA-issued outerwear only.
- Logos or graphics allowed *only* if GFA-issued.
- Outerwear may be worn in class but not as a replacement for the required uniform polo.

Outdoor jackets for weather may have patterns but cannot be worn in class.

Footwear

- Tennis shoes, dress shoes, and sandals with a back strap.
- No Heels
- Laces must be securely tied.
- Not Allowed: Crocs, flip-flops, slippers, shoes with wheels.
- Graphic or tall socks may only be worn on Free Dress Days or under pants.

Accessories & Appearance

- **Hats, caps, beanies, bandanas:** May be worn outside only. Must be removed inside buildings, during prayer, and for the pledge.
- **Girls:**
 - Minimal jewelry (stud/post earrings only—no dangles for safety).
 - No excessive makeup, glitter, or body piercings.

- No tattoos (temporary or permanent).
- **Boys:**
 - No excessive jewelry, chains, or studded bracelets.
 - No tattoos (temporary or permanent).
- **Hair (Boys & Girls):**
 - Clean, neat, no extreme cuts or unnatural colors.

Other Items Not Permitted

- Any clothing, book bags, notebooks, or accessories with inappropriate messages or images.

Thursday Dress Code

- Regular uniform OR
- GFA-issued T-shirt with solid black or khaki pants, or blue shorts/jeans (no holes, rips, or embellishments).

Free Dress Day

On the **last Thursday of each month**, all students may participate in **Free Dress Day**, allowing them to wear casual clothes instead of the regular school uniform.

While Free Dress Day offers more flexibility, all clothing must still adhere to **Grace Fellowship Academy's modesty and dress standards** to maintain a respectful and appropriate learning environment.

Free Dress Day Clothing Guidelines

- **Modesty:** Clothing must be modest, clean, appropriately fitted, and suitable for active participation in classroom and playground activities. Clothing with **inappropriate words, images, or graphics** is not allowed.
- **Tops:**
 - Tank tops, spaghetti straps, halter tops, and backless tops are **not permitted**.
 - Sleeveless shirts must have straps at least **3 inches wide**.
- **Pants and Shorts:**
 - Jeans, pants, or shorts **may not have rips, or holes**.

- Leggings, yoga pants, or similar stretchy pants are **not acceptable as primary pants**. However, **solid-colored leggings or tights may be worn under shorts, skirts, dresses, or jumpers**.
- Jogger-style sweatpants and athletic wear are acceptable, **provided they are modest and do not resemble pajamas**.
- **Skirts, Dresses, Shorts, and Jumpers:**
 - Must comply with the “**finger-tip rule**,” meaning the hem must be long enough to reach at least the tips of the student’s fingers when their arms are relaxed at their sides.
- **No Pajamas:** Pajamas, sleepwear, or anything resembling pajamas are **not allowed**, even on Free Dress Day.

Enforcement

Students who arrive out of dress code may be asked to change clothing, wear school-provided clothing if available, or have a parent bring appropriate attire before returning to class. Repeated dress code violations may result in additional disciplinary action.

Dress Code Violations

- Teachers and administration will monitor student dress.
- Violations will result in consequences consistent with Category I offenses.
- Parents are expected to help ensure their child’s daily compliance—especially when purchasing clothing.

Administrative Discretion

Because every possible clothing style or fashion trend cannot be anticipated, Grace Fellowship Academy reserves the right to determine whether clothing or appearance is appropriate for the school environment. The administration has the final authority in interpreting and enforcing the dress code.

Outdoor Play & Sun Safety

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily program and is scheduled whenever weather conditions safely permit.

Grace Fellowship Academy follows the **Arizona Department of Health Services Child Care Heat Guidelines** when determining outdoor activities. Staff monitor the **Arizona Heat Index** and other environmental conditions throughout the day. Outdoor play may be modified, shortened, rescheduled, or moved indoors based on the Heat Index, temperature, air quality, weather conditions, and the health and safety needs of the children.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Apply sunscreen before arriving at school.
- Provide a labeled hat for outdoor activities if desired.
- Dress children appropriately for the weather.
- Send a refillable water bottle each day.

When outdoor play is limited due to weather conditions, children will participate in indoor gross motor activities whenever possible to ensure continued physical activity.

Staff will not apply sunscreen unless written parent authorization has been provided and all Arizona Department of Health Services requirements have been met.

Parties

Birthday celebrations and classroom parties are welcome with prior teacher approval.

To ensure adequate planning and student safety, parents must coordinate all treats and activities with the classroom teacher in advance.

Because some students have food allergies or dietary restrictions, teachers will communicate any classroom restrictions before treats are brought to school.

Please do not distribute party invitations at school unless every student in the class is invited.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

For the safety of every child and to comply with Arizona Department of Health Services regulations:

- Parents or authorized adults must escort children into the classroom.
- Each child must be signed in and signed out daily.

- Individuals signing children in or out must be at least 18 years old.
- Children will only be released to individuals authorized by the parent on the Emergency Information Card unless written authorization has been provided.
- Photo identification may be required at any time.

Grace Fellowship Academy reserves the right to refuse release of a child if staff reasonably believe doing so would place the child at risk.

If an unauthorized individual attempts to remove a child, staff will immediately contact the parent and, when appropriate, law enforcement.

If an authorized adult appears impaired by drugs, alcohol, or another condition affecting safe transportation, staff will take reasonable steps to protect the child, which may include contacting another emergency contact or law enforcement.

Parents are responsible for providing the school with copies of any court orders regarding custody, parenting time, or restrictions on child release. Unless the school has received a current court order, both legal parents will generally be considered authorized to access and pick up their child.

Visitor & Volunteer Policy

Parents have access to school facilities to sign their child in and out each day. Parents are also welcome on campus at **any time** to check in on their student; we simply ask that all parents follow the standard sign-in procedure at the school office. Parents and legal guardians have reasonable access to the facility during operating hours unless prohibited by court order or when emergency situations require temporary restrictions for the safety of children and staff. All visitors and volunteers are expected to follow school policies while on campus and may be asked to leave if their presence disrupts the educational environment or compromises student safety.

Anyone interested in serving as a preschool volunteer must obtain a valid Fingerprint Clearance Card, which can be secured through the Arizona Department of Public Safety. Volunteers include anyone who will be working in the classroom or providing hands-on assistance with students.

School visitors do **not** need a fingerprint card. Visitors may include guest speakers or individuals attending large group events such as programs, school picnics, or chapel.

Whether visiting or volunteering, all individuals must bring a Driver License or State-Issued ID to sign in and out at the school office.

Parent Grievance

GFA is committed to positive communication and to the resolution of potential conflicts before they arise. When there is a misunderstanding or potential conflict, the principles and procedures of Matthew 18 are to be employed by everyone involved to guide the sequence and attitude in resolving the concern. The grievance process is intended to promote respectful communication and timely resolution. While every effort will be made to resolve concerns, Grace Fellowship Academy reserves the right to make final decisions regarding school operations, policies, student placement, and enrollment.

Application of Matthew 18 Principles:

Privacy (Matthew 18:15)

Difficulties are always compounded when we include those who were not directly involved in a problem. Care must be taken to keep the circle of involvement as small as possible.

Direct Information (Matthew 18:16)

Communication is never 100% accurate. Therefore, we must not draw conclusions based on second-hand information, regardless of the reliability of the source. Draw conclusions only upon what you have seen and heard.

Resolution (Galatians 6:11)

Restoration of relationships and resolution of the problem must motivate all we do.

A Spirit of Gentleness

The attitude with which we approach people is of utmost importance.

Looking to Yourself

Self-examination must always precede any attempt to correct a problem. Check your motive and your attitude before any action is taken.

Application of Matthew 18 Procedures

The first step involves self-examination and prayer. The second step is to meet privately with the person involved to seek resolution. If the grievance is not resolved, meet with the director to seek resolution. If resolution is not achieved, a request to meet with the leadership team can be submitted. The request must be in writing and include a clear statement of the grievance, the present status of

the grievance, and the settlement desired. The grievance must be received by the director or leadership team within two weeks of the occurrence. Every effort will be made to handle all conflicts according to Biblical guidelines, with the expected result being the edification of all involved.

PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEOS, and STUDENT PRIVACY

Throughout the school year, **Grace Fellowship Academy may take photographs or videos of students** during school activities, events, or in the classroom. These images may be used for:

- The school website
- GFA's official social media accounts (e.g., Facebook, Instagram)
- Printed or digital promotional materials (brochures, flyers, etc.)

Student names will not be posted alongside photos or videos used in public materials or online.

Photo and Video Permission

By enrolling your student at GFA, you give the school permission to use your child's image as described above.

If you do not wish for your child's photo to be used, you must notify the school office in writing at the start of the school year. GFA will honor all written opt-out requests for school marketing and social media content.

Christmas Program Livestream

The GFA Christmas Program is typically livestreamed through Grace Fellowship Church's website. Due to the nature of a live broadcast:

- There is no way to blur, edit, or exclude individual students from the livestream.
- The livestream is broadcast live and remains available for 24 hours after the event. After that time, the video is removed and is not saved or stored publicly.

If you do not want your child to appear in the Christmas Program livestream, the only way to opt out is to have your child not participate in the program.

Parent and Staff Social Media Guidelines

To protect the privacy of all GFA families:

- Parents may photograph or record their own child during public events. However, families are asked to respect the privacy of other students whenever possible.
- Parents, guardians, and staff may not post photos or videos of other students on social media (including class photos, group shots, or event pictures) unless they have received prior permission from the parents or guardians of each child featured in the image.
- This policy helps respect the privacy of families, especially those who do not want their children's images shared publicly.

Suspension & Expulsion Policies and Procedures

At Grace Fellowship Academy, our goal is to partner with families to guide children toward Christlike character, emotional regulation, healthy social skills, and peaceful conflict resolution. While disciplinary actions are sometimes necessary to maintain safety and a nurturing learning environment, GFA prioritizes **prevention, early intervention, and family partnership** before considering suspension or expulsion.

The following policies outline consistent, developmentally appropriate procedures designed to support every child's success.

Prevention Strategies for Suspension and Expulsion

Grace Fellowship Academy actively employs the following strategies to prevent behaviors from escalating toward suspension or expulsion:

1. Proactive Classroom Management

- Clear expectations, routines, and visual reminders
- Age-appropriate behavior modeling and social-emotional instruction
- Opportunities for structured choice-making
- Regular praise and reinforcement of positive behaviors

2. Early Teacher Intervention

- Gentle redirection
 - Offering alternative choices
 - Calming breaks
- Social stories or role-play to teach desired behaviors

3. Family Partnership

- Early communication with families when patterns begin to emerge
- Sharing strategies that work at home and school
- Family meetings to create consistency and alignment

4. Individualized Behavior Support

- Behavior reflection sheets
- Tailored behavior plans
- One-on-one support or modified routines when needed
- Prayer and biblical guidance integrated into interventions

5. Emotional & Spiritual Support

- Teachers pray with students and model Christlike responses
- Teaching forgiveness, empathy, and reconciliation
- Matthew 18 principles used for conflict resolution

These prevention strategies are used consistently before suspension or expulsion is considered.

Disciplinary Action Plan

Category 1 Offense

(Examples: not following directions, not sharing, unkind words/actions)

1. Redirection with verbal warning

2. "Time to Think" (done individually with the teacher to explain, pray, and reflect)

Category 2 Offense

(Examples: physical contact—pushing, hitting; running away; destruction of property)

1. Verbal Parent Communication
2. Principal Chat

Category 3 Offense

(Examples: biting, continuous physical contact after Category 2 interventions, multiple incidents of running away)

1. Parent Call / Immediate removal from the classroom. The child may be required to go home for the remainder of the day at the administration's discretion.

Suspension Procedures

Suspension is considered only after prevention strategies have been applied and when behaviors threaten the safety or well-being of the child, peers, or staff.

Reasons a Suspension May Occur

- Three Category 3 offenses
- A severe safety incident requiring immediate removal
- Behavior that significantly disrupts the classroom environment after interventions

Suspension Steps

1. **Immediate Parent Notification**
The principal will call the parent/guardian to explain the behavior and reason for suspension.

2. Same-Day Pick-Up

The child must go home for the remainder of the school day.

3. Incident Documentation

Teachers and administrators will complete written documentation of events leading to the suspension.

4. Family Meeting Required

Before returning to class, parents will meet with the principal and teacher to review expectations and discuss an individualized action plan.

Administration may require additional supports, outside evaluations, behavioral recommendations, or other reasonable accommodations before a student returns if deemed necessary for the safety and success of the child and classroom.

Suspensions are typically **1 school day** but may be extended depending on severity and safety considerations.

Expulsion Procedures

Expulsion is considered **only after all prevention strategies, family meetings, and individualized intervention plans have been implemented** without improvement in consistent safety or behavioral concerns.

Reasons an Expulsion May Be Considered

- Continued Category 3 offenses **after** a behavior plan and family partnership have been put in place
- Behavior that presents ongoing safety risks to the child or others
- Extreme incidents that cannot be safely managed in the school environment
- Family unwillingness to partner with GFA in implementing the behavior plan

Expulsion Steps

1. Comprehensive Review of Behavior Documentation

Administration will review patterns, interventions, and outcomes.

2. Final Family Meeting

A formal meeting is held with teachers, principal, and family to discuss concerns and options.

3. Written Expulsion Notice

If expulsion is determined necessary, GFA will provide a written notice

including:

- Reason(s) for expulsion
- Dates of incidents
- Interventions attempted
- Date of final enrollment termination

4. Support for Transition

Families will receive recommendations for alternative care settings to help ensure a successful transition.

Nothing in this policy limits Grace Fellowship Academy's authority to immediately remove a student when the administration determines that continued attendance presents a significant safety concern for students or staff or when continued enrollment is no longer in the best interest of the school community.

GFA's Heart Behind Discipline

Our goal at Grace Fellowship Academy is to implement godly lessons that help your children grow into the image of Christ. We ask that all families follow the **Matthew 18 principle** outlined in the GFA Handbook and continue partnering with us in prayer, communication, and mutual respect.

Thank you for your support and dedication to making GFA the best Christian preschool it can be.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your child's teacher, Preschool Director, or Principal.

Teachers: Melissa Kuzel 623-393-8883

Preschool Director: Ashley Ryan- aryan@buckeyechristian.com

Transportation/Field Trips

We do not provide transportation to or from the facility. Due to state regulations, we do not offer field trips for our preschool program.

Child Abuse/Neglect

In accordance with state law and school policy, school staff is obligated under penalty of fine and jail term to report the reasonable suspicion of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or child neglect.

In this very serious and legally narrow area, the school will not contact parents in advance of making a report to authorities, which would be the procedure followed in most other legal matters. The clear intent of the law, based on the seriousness of the crimes listed above, is to mandate that a report of reasonable suspicion of abuse be made.

School staff will make such reports in the best interest of the affected child and do not, once reasonable suspicion is established, have any legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation and review.

Staff Information

Each staff member provides a personal testimony and signs our statement of faith. The goal of each staff member is to enrich the lives of those given into his/her care. If for any reason we are unable to meet the needs of any child, it would be unfair for that child to continue here. The well-being of each individual child is our greatest concern. We understand kids will be kids and do not anticipate perfection. For situations where guidance is needed, we will correct the children in love and pray with them for God's help to keep us mindful of one another.

We are licensed by the Bureau of Child Care Licensing through the Arizona Department of Health Services. This requires all of our staff to have a background check through the FBI and a copy of their fingerprint clearance card on file. Our staff is experienced in Early Childhood Education and maintains continuing education programs quarterly. Our staff is also CPR and First Aid certified.

Facility

Insurance Information

Families may request to review the most recent licensing inspection report during normal business hours.

Grace Fellowship is a Licensed Three, Four, & Five Year-old Preschool

A copy of our facility report is available for public viewing. Grace Fellowship Preschool is regulated by:

The Arizona Department of Health Services
150 N. 18th Avenue, Suite 400
Phoenix, AZ 85007
(602) 364-2539

Emergency Procedures

Grace Fellowship Academy maintains written emergency preparedness plans in accordance with Arizona Department of Health Services requirements.

These plans include procedures for:

- Fire
- Lockdown
- Shelter-in-place
- Evacuation
- Medical emergencies
- Utility failures
- Hazardous materials incidents
- Severe weather

Emergency drills are conducted regularly throughout the school year in accordance with Arizona licensing requirements.

During emergencies, every effort will be made to notify families as quickly as possible using the school's primary communication system.

Children will only be released to authorized adults following emergency events.

Smoking

Grace Fellowship Academy is a tobacco-free, vape-free, marijuana-free, and smoke-free campus. The use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, vaping devices, marijuana, or similar products is prohibited anywhere on school property or during school-sponsored activities.

Use of Pesticides

A notice will be hung on the school doors at least 48 hours before pesticides are applied on our premises. Families may request additional information regarding pesticide applications by contacting the school office.

Handbook Revisions

Grace Fellowship Academy reserves the right to interpret, modify, suspend, or amend the policies and procedures contained in this handbook at any time as necessary.

Whenever practical, families will be notified of significant policy changes. Continued enrollment constitutes acknowledgment of and agreement to comply with current school policies.

Limitation of Liability

While Grace Fellowship Academy exercises reasonable care and supervision of every child, participation in normal school activities includes inherent risks associated with childhood play and learning. By enrolling their child, parents acknowledge these normal risks and agree to partner with the school in promoting a safe educational environment.



Parent Handbook Acknowledgment

I/We acknowledge that we have received, read, and understand the Grace Fellowship Academy Preschool Parent Handbook.

I/We understand that it is our responsibility to become familiar with the policies and procedures contained in this handbook and agree to support and comply with them while enrolled at Grace Fellowship Academy.

I/We understand that this handbook may be revised by the school as necessary and that current policies remain in effect throughout enrollment.

Students Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

