

**GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHILD
DEVELOPMENT
CENTER
FAMILY
HANDBOOK**



March 22, 2024

Child Development Center Family Handbook And Statement of Services

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Child Development Center

We are delighted that you have chosen to enroll your child(ren) at Grace Lutheran Child Development Center (CDC). We are an extension of the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. We believe that the education and care of children is a cooperative effort that will include parents, teachers, and children as partners for families.

The personnel of CDC are involved in the Christian ministry; caring for children, showing concern for families, and providing support and Christ-centered nurture for our community. We encourage your comments, questions, concerns, and suggestions as we work together for your family. Welcome to our center for children and families.

We expect your family to read this handbook, follow the guidelines outlined here, and provide us with all information necessary to give the best possible care to your child (ren). The family is always the first and foremost caregiver, but we will strive to be “home away from home” for your child (ren). Together let’s provide your children with love, fun, and care in a Christ-centered environment. Please keep in mind as of this date, there are a number of DCFS Covid-19 policies in place. Please see Steve or Andrea with any questions. We have kept pre-Covid-19 descriptions in place as we hope and pray we will return to normal operations in the near future.

Mission Statement for Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

The mission of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church is to worship joyfully the Triune God, to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ and God’s truths taught in the Holy Scriptures, and as Christian people, to minister to the needs of humanity.

Mission Statement for Grace Evangelical Lutheran Child Development Center

The mission of Grace Lutheran Child Development Center is to assist the Grace Congregation in sharing the Gospel of Christ as we nurture and care for children and families in the Paris area and surrounding communities.

Elected Grace Lutheran Church CDC Board

President— Judy Latzke
Member— Jeannie Taylor
Member—Paula McClain

CDC Information

Name: **Grace Lutheran Child Development Center**

Hours of Operation: **6:45 AM to 5:30 PM**

Address: **712 South Central**

Paris, Illinois 61944

Telephone: **217-466-1234**

Fax: **217-466-5085**

Email: slboyars@aol.com

Ownership: Grace Lutheran Child Development Center is a nonprofit, Christian Center operated by Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Paris, Illinois. The Grace Board of Education approves our policies and governs our Center.

Affiliation: Our Church and Center are affiliated with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. We reside in the Central Illinois District.

License: We are licensed by the State of Illinois, Department of Children and Family Services as a preschool and child care facility. This license is renewed every three years. The Center will also receive regular visits from the State Fire Marshal and the Edgar County Health Department.

Hours and Days of Operation: Our CDC is open Monday through Friday from 6:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Holidays for which our CDC closes are:

New Year’s Day	MLK Day	Good Friday
Memorial Day	Independence Day	Labor Day
Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)		President’s Day
Columbus Day	Christmas Eve	Christmas Day

Holidays do not change tuition rates or charges. The holiday schedule is approved by the CDC Board in December of each year. A holiday list will be posted on the Parent Bulletin Board near the front entrance. There will also be a notice placed at the front desk to help remind everyone. In the event that a holiday falls on a weekend, it will be scheduled on a business day as deemed appropriate by the CDC Board Members. Please see the Director for any questions or clarifications.

Types of Care and Education:

CARE: Grace Lutheran CDC is licensed to provide childcare for children from infancy (6 weeks old) through age 12. Please note, due to current room size, Our age groups and capacity for each room are as follows:

Infants (6weeks-6months)	8
Infants 2 (6months-15months)	6
Toddlers 1 (15months-18 months)	8
Toddlers 2 (18months-2 years old)	10
Tots (2&3 year olds)	14
Beginnergarden (3,4&5 year olds)	20
School Age	20

Center’s Capacity: Our childcare facility is licensed for 88 children at one time.

Insurance Coverage: We carry public liability insurance with State Farm Insurance and meet the standards required by DCFS.

Staff Information

All staff members at Grace Lutheran CDC are dedicated to Christian nurturing, teaching, and caring for the children entrusted to our Center. They are also eager to provide the best possible communication and service to our families at Grace CDC. Staff participate in professional development workshops and continuing education classes on a regular basis. Staff members are required to complete a minimum of 15 hours approved training annually.

Operations Manager: Responsible for the daily management and operations of the total program, public relations, and communication with parents, the Church, and the community. The Operations Manager must be DCFS Program Director qualified and reports to and is responsible to the Grace Lutheran Church Congregation and its governing Board.

Assistant Director(s): Assists the Operations Manager with day to day tasks and may serve as the overall authority for daily program operations, in the absence of the Operations Manager. Person(s) filling this position must be DCFS Program Director qualified.

Receptionist: Under the supervision of the Operations Manager, the receptionist provides office support and assistance for the staff in the Christian caring of the children at the Center. The receptionist also shares responsibility for operating and maintaining the building's physical orderliness.

Business Manager: Under the supervision of the Operations Manager, the business manager provides office support and assistance with all accounting functions for the CDC. The business manager also participates in the annual budget planning process in conjunction with the operations manager and board members. As technology has evolved this position once located on site, now completely functions off site, as our ability to complete these functions with Procure Software Solutions a top childcare facility software program began in June of 2017. Monthly meetings or as needed, occur between the business manager and operations manager.

Kitchen Services Supervisor: Under the supervision of the Operations Manager, the Kitchen Services Supervisor completes all food orders, menus, prepares the food, and organizes the food service program for children and staff consistent with USDA and DCFS guidelines. MyFood Program, a web based program, is utilized to ensure all menu guidelines are met.

Kitchen Services Assistant: Under the supervision of the Kitchen Services Supervisor, the assistant performs all duties associated with food preparation for children and staff at the Center.

Childcare Teacher: DCFS qualified primary caregivers are responsible for specific children within their rooms. Teachers also serve as primary contact for these children's parents. Children will have contact and establish relationships with all the staff and other children in the Center. Childcare Teachers are also responsible for the day to day planning of the classroom curriculum of developmentally appropriate activities for the children.

Assistant Teacher Childcare Aide: Supervised by the childcare teaching staff, the aides provide childcare support and assistance for the staff in the Christian caring of children at the Center.

School Age Teacher: Responsible for the day to day planning of the classroom curriculum of developmentally appropriate activities for the school aged children.

Custodian: Responsible for establishing and maintaining a safe, hygienic, and presentable environment with regards to the needs of each child, the families, and our Center's staff.

Grace Lutheran Child Development Center Goals

For the Child:

1. To provide opportunities for socializing with other children in a developmentally appropriate setting.
2. To provide learning experiences and activities that help each child develop a healthy self-concept.
3. To provide each child with a comfortable setting and programs which encourage growth in the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual domains.

For the Family:

1. To provide families with the security of knowing their child is in a happy, nurturing environment.
2. To provide families with opportunities for their children to experience activities which prepare them as loving Christians in God's World.

Admission Policy

Grace Lutheran Child Development Center welcomes all children ages 6 weeks through 12 years old. In the childcare setting, we will gladly assist in the potty training experience. We do understand that some younger children may be at various stages in the process and will do our best to accommodate them as they learn to become completely independent in this part of their life.

Parents will receive a registration packet and checklist that **must** be completed and returned before the first day of attendance. Each family will receive a tour and meet with the facility supervisory staff for a family conference during the registration process.

Statement of Acceptance:

Grace CDC accepts children of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to the children at the Center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and preschool administered programs.

Children with Special Needs:

Children with special needs may be accepted after an evaluation is made to determine whether or not the Center programming can be beneficial to the child's development. The child's family will provide the Center with a written program plan based on the determination of a qualified consultant. This plan must be in our files before the child's first day of attendance. Together the family and the Center will regularly evaluate whether the needs of the child are being satisfied.

Responsibilities for the Children's Benefit

Grace CDC

Our Center strives to establish and maintain a safe, healthy, nurturing environment. We want to provide a "calm homelike" atmosphere that gives the children a warm, secure, comfortable place to spend their time away from home. Our Christian faith will be shared with the children in our day to day living experiences and in special times such as daily devotions, twice weekly sing-alongs, and one time weekly chapel services with Pastor Smith, and holiday celebrations.

Grace CDC staff will encourage children's stretch for learning, self-control, and independence. We will provide positive guidance and discipline and encourage children to take responsibility. The Center's staff will share the children's experiences with parents and family.

Parents and Family

Parents, you need to research our program so you may trust your child (ren) to our care. Please share with us any information that you feel will help us better understand your child (ren)'s day-to-day feelings or actions.

Bring your child (ren) to the Center prepared for the day. Be sure they have the proper attire and necessities for the day's activities. Say good-bye and hello with a hug and words of love.

You should feel free to call or visit the Center during the day. You have the right and responsibility to ask questions of our staff when you need our help or information. You are the child (ren)'s primary caregiver and educator. Our Center respects your right and privilege to request any assistance we may have available.

Discipline Policy

*See document included in Registration/New Enrollment Packet

Tuition Policy

We utilize "Tuition Express" billing procedures which require ACH transactions for payment of tuition. All account information is stored on Procure Cloud which keeps your personal information secured. Participation in Tuition Express is mandatory for all families enrolled.

Tuition Rates & Registration Fee

The following rates are effective April 1st, 2024.

- Annual Registration Fee: \$100 per family
- Infants (6 weeks-14 months) \$220/weekly
- Toddler 1 (15-18 months) \$220/ weekly
- Toddler 2 (18-24 months) \$220/ weekly
- Tots (2-3 year olds/potty training) \$200/ weekly
- Beginnergarden (3-5 year olds) \$200/ weekly
- School Age (Before/After School) \$110/ weekly
- School Age (Summer and Holiday Breaks 4 or more days) \$165/ weekly

The following rates are effective July 1st, 2024.

- Annual Registration Fee: \$100 per family
- Infants (6 weeks-14 months) \$235/weekly
- Toddler 1 (15-18 months) \$225/ weekly
- Toddler 2 (18-24 months) \$225/ weekly
- Tots (2-3 year olds/potty training) \$200/ weekly
- Beginnergarden (3-5 year olds) \$200/ weekly
- School Age (Before/After School) \$110/ weekly
- School Age (Summer and Holiday Breaks 4 or more days) \$165/ weekly

The following rates are effective October 1st, 2024.

- Annual Registration Fee: \$100 per family
- Infants (6 weeks-14 months) \$250/weekly
- Toddler 1 (15-18 months) \$230/ weekly
- Toddler 2 (18-24 months) \$230/ weekly
- Tots (2-3 year olds/potty training) \$200/ weekly
- Begingergarden (3-5 year olds) \$200/ weekly
- School Age (Before/After School) \$110/ weekly
- School Age (Summer and Holiday Breaks 4 or more days) \$165/ weekly

Effective January 1, 2018, the Center will no longer be able to offer discounts on tuition to new families or employees. This was a difficult decision, but our operating costs have increased to a point that it was a necessary decision. Current families will continue to receive discounts as they have in the past until their children leave the program.

1. The *annual* Registration Fee is due *before* your child (ren) will be admitted or re-admitted for childcare. For all current families, the registration fee will be one time annually in January.
2. Tuition Express will be run each Friday, excluding holidays or days the Center may be closed due to inclement weather. If a return occurs for insufficient funds, a \$41.00 charge will be added to your account.
3. The overtime fee for childcare begins at 5:30 p.m. Please call the Center if you know you will be late. The fee is \$1.00 for each **minute** past closing time. If we do not hear from you we will contact each person on your pick up list. If arrangements are not made and your child(ren) are not picked up by 5:40 p.m., the authorities (Police/DCFS) will be notified.
4. No discounted tuition fees or space holding credits for sickness are offered.
5. Please notify the director 2 weeks in advance of a child's withdrawal from the Center; otherwise, you may be charged for the space you have reserved for your child.
6. Fees may change without prior notices; however, we will announce any changes as soon as possible.

Arrival/Departure Procedures

1. It is required that parents must sign children in and out every day they attend.
2. Parents *must* accompany their child into/out of the classroom at arrival and departure time. Be sure the teacher is aware of your child's arrival or departure. (This procedure is for your child's protection.)
3. **If you will be later than usual picking up your child, please let us know as soon as possible.** We can reassure your child (because your child knows when you are late). We also feel better knowing when you are coming.
4. **ONLY YOU MAY USE THE ENTRY CODE.** If someone other than you will be picking up your child(ren), you must let us know, in writing or by phone, ahead of time. For admission, the new escort must ring the entrance bell and provide a picture ID for proof of identity and entry into the CDC. **For security of the children, please do not share your entry code with anyone.** The registration card provides a statement for telephone authorization with a required parent signature. The staff shall refuse to release a child to any person, who has not been authorized by the parent(s).
5. No one under 18 years of age may pick up a child without written permission from the child's parent.
6. At least two pick-up and three emergency contact persons are to be listed on your child's file. In addition DCFS requires a contingency pick-up list be on file.
7. **If you are going to be away from home or your place of work for the day, be sure to leave a phone number where you can be reached in case you are needed for an emergency.**
8. **Please call the Center if your child will not be attending during normal attendance times.** Our staff will be concerned if they are expecting your child to be here.

Infants, Toddlers, and Tots Care Information

The first two years in a child's life are filled with growth, awareness, relationships, and exploration. Each child will develop at his/her own pace. As parents and caregivers, we need to respect and encourage each child's individual development. Children need to feel trust for the adults around them and live in a nurturing environment that promotes confidence in their abilities to explore the world around them. This is a wonderful time to introduce our Christian faith to them in day-to-day living. Parents need to communicate frequently with caregivers for information regarding the daily new developments as they occur.

There are some special rules that do apply to the childcare of infants, toddlers, and transition.

1. The family shall furnish all diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and clothing changes. Be sure all items are labeled. Check the clothing periodically for correct size and appropriateness for the season.
2. Parents shall receive a daily log of eating, sleeping, and diaper changes.
3. The parents of infants shall furnish bottles and formula (unless using CDC formula) for these ages until the child is able to eat food from the Center's daily menu.
4. Any infant needing to sleep on its belly and/or uses a wedge must have a doctor's note.
5. If your child is on a special schedule (sleeping, eating, etc.) please give a copy of that schedule to the caregivers. We will strive to maintain your home schedule as closely as possible within the Center's limits.
6. The Center will provide the crib and linens (sheets and quilt) for your child. However, if your child has a favorite naptime buddy or blanket, you may bring it to the Center. Please be sure it is labeled. You will be responsible for the cleaning of your items weekly.
7. Collect and take home any leftover bottles or food at the end of each day.
8. The Toddler 2 or Tots staff will provide potty training, as the child is ready.
9. Parents, feel free to call or stop in at your convenience. Take time to rock your baby, play with your toddler, or give a bottle.
10. Visitors to the infant room are asked to remove their shoes. Babies spend a great deal of time on the floor. We need to keep their environment as clean as possible.
11. Car seat storage space is available during the day.

Beginnergarden Care Information

These children are alive with the excitement of learning, exploring, and growing wonderfully independent. However, they need to feel the nearness of the family at the same time. They accept God's love as natural and are fascinated with the Bible stories and the wonders of God's care. Our Center is designed to nurture the whole child's individual development in a comfortable, secure environment. Parents need to communicate frequently with caregivers for information regarding the daily developments as they occur.

There are some special rules that do apply to the childcare for children ages three, four, and five.

1. **Each child needs to keep a complete extra set of clothing at the Center.** Please be sure each item is clearly labeled with the child's name. The items must include underwear, shirt, pants, and socks. Check the clothes periodically for correct size and appropriateness for the season.
2. **Children are *not* to bring toys from home.** The Center cannot be responsible for personal toys lost or broken here. A special exception may apply to show and tell arranged in each care room.
3. Sheets, blankets, and pillows will be furnished by the Center for nap/rest time; however, your child may bring a doll or **stuffed animal** to cuddle. Be sure the buddy is labeled with your child's name. It will remain in your child's cubby each day until nap/rest time and returned to the cubby following the nap. You will be responsible for the weekly cleaning of your items.
4. Commercially prepared foods may be brought in occasionally by parents as part of *holiday or birthday* celebrations. Food brought in for this purpose must arrive unopened as packaged by the bakery or manufacturer, or it shall not be accepted. Advanced notification is appreciated.
5. A child must be potty trained to enter these rooms. There are no diaper-changing facilities in these rooms.
6. Parents, feel free to stop in at your convenience. Take time to play with your child or join us for lunch. Advance reservations for lunch please.

School Age Care Information

“School agers” are children who are registered in and attend local schools. They are the “big kids” who come to our Center before or after school and during their school vacation days. The Center’s goal is to find new, positive ways for these children to spend their extended days away from home. As a Christian Center, we will nurture their faith development in prayer, devotions, and Bible lessons.

There are some special rules that apply to the childcare of school-age children.

1. **Each child needs to keep a complete extra set of clothing at the Center during vacation days.** Please be sure each item is clearly labeled with the child’s name. The items must include underwear, shirt, pants, and socks. Check the clothes periodically for correct size and appropriateness for the season.
2. **Children are not encouraged to bring toys from home.** The Center cannot be responsible for personal toys lost or broken here.
3. When a child is here after noon lunch, there will be quiet time for about one hour. No one will be required to nap, but all will rest during that time. A child may read, listen to restful music, or just relax.
4. Commercially prepared foods may be brought in occasionally by parents as part of *holiday* or *birthday* celebrations. Food brought in for this purpose must arrive unopened as packaged by the bakery or manufacturer, or it shall not be accepted. Advanced notification is appreciated.
5. During the school year, there will be a “homework corner” for children who need to complete assignments for the following day. Our staff will make every effort to assist the students when possible, but it is the family’s responsibility to check the work with the student.
6. **If your child is ill or cannot attend for any reason, please call the office to let us know. Or if your child becomes ill at school and will not be coming after school please notify us.**
7. Transportation to school in the morning and to the Center in the afternoon is the responsibility of the family. If busses come to the Center, a staff member will take the children to or from the bus.

8. During summer and vacation care days, each school age child will be expected to participate in planned activities (field trips, etc.). If your child chooses not to participate, you will need to make other childcare arrangements for that day. Your normal childcare tuition will remain the same.
9. Parents, feel free to stop in at your convenience. Take time to play with your child or join us for lunch. Advance notice is required please for an adult lunch to be provided.

Visitors/Observers at the Center

Anyone entering our building **must first register** at the Reception Desk.

Parents must to stop at the desk sign out computer to sign their children out. You are welcome to stop in and visit your child any time during the day.

After being admitted, **visitors are required to register at the Reception Desk by verbally identifying themselves and stating the reason for their visit.** The appropriate individual is then notified that they have a visitor. The Director in Charge or an appointed staff member will lead individuals wishing to tour the building.

Occasionally our Center may be used for observation by **high school or college students** to meet their class requirements or complete a research project. This may include observations of the usual routine, observations of play with specific manipulatives or equipment, and/or parent or teacher interviews. When research or observation is conducted at the Center, parents receive a description of the project. If specific children will either be identified or have specific participation, parents will be asked for permission *first*. No child will participate without parent authorization.

Parents will also be notified if their child(ren) will be used for any form of **publicity** (i.e. newspaper, radio, television, and promotion brochures). A publicity waiver is included in the family registration packet to be completed upon enrollment in the Center.

Health Care Policy

An official copy of your child's birth certificate and a medical report on forms provided by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services shall be on file for each child. The initial medical report shall be dated less than six months prior to enrollment of any child.

The medical report shall indicate that the child has received the immunizations required by the Illinois Department of Public Health. **It is the parents' responsibility to inform the Center of any special medical conditions, needs, or allergies for their child.** Also, please report *in writing* any new immunizations and any changes in your child's medical or physical condition.

Unless the examining physician has made a determination that it is unnecessary, a tuberculin skin test by the Mantoux method and the results of that test shall be included in the initial examination for all children who have attained one year of age, or at the age of one year for children who are enrolled before their first birthday. The tuberculin skin test by the Mantoux method shall be repeated when children begin elementary school.

The Department of Children and Family Services also requires that children from ages of one to six years have been screened for lead poisoning (for children residing in an area defined as high risk by the Illinois Public Health). Edgar County has been assessed as a high-risk area.

First Aid will be provided to an injured child. In case of emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parents or designated adult responsible for the child. If neither can be contacted, transportation may need to be provided by the local emergency resource with a staff person accompanying the child to the hospital. Transportation costs will be charged to the parents.

Administering Children's Medication

Many prescription and over-the-counter medications now come in two-dose (morning and evening) form. Please consult your physician or pharmacist about this possibility. If it does become necessary for our staff to administer medication, **the parent must fill out the proper Medication Administration Form.** Your child's caregiver or the Center's Director will dispense the dose.

Both prescription and non-prescription medication shall be accepted only in its *original container*. Medication shall be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. The container shall be in such condition that the names of the medication and the directions for use are clearly readable.

Any topical products, such as diaper ointment, sunscreen or insect repellent, must be provided by the parent and approved by the parent in writing prior to use on the child.

Illness

We know that it is common for children to have frequent colds and illnesses. Our greatest concern is for the child's well-being. Parents, you are strongly encouraged to arrange back-up childcare for the days your child (ren) will be too ill to be at the Center. **Please keep your child home if he/she has exhibited any of these symptoms within the last 24 hours. Please notify the Center at once if your child (ren) will not be in attendance that day. Please indicate the reason your child (ren) will not attend.**

If the child develops one or more of these symptoms during childcare hours, parents will be called so the child may be picked up within the hour.

If your child is sent home for any of the following reasons, they may not return until they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

1. Fever of 100 degrees F or higher
2. Vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, or severe sore throat.
3. Discharge from the body
4. Any undiagnosed or contagious rash
5. Severe headache
6. Infected skin patches (i.e. impetigo, etc.)
7. Unusual behavior
 - a. Child is cranky or less active than usual
 - b. Child feels general discomfort or just seems ill
 - c. Child cries more than usual
8. Loss of appetite
9. Red, watery eyes with recurring yellow/green discharge
10. Lice or nits
11. Onset of contagious disease (mumps, chicken pox, etc.)

These rules are not meant to be an inconvenience to the parents. Grace Lutheran Child Development Center is here to care for your child (ren) in a safe and healthy environment.

We do understand that infants and toddlers who are teething will sometimes run a fever or have a loose stool. This does not exempt them from being sent home.

Covid-19 protocol issued by the Center for Disease Control will be followed as required by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Procedure for Reporting Abuse and/or Neglect

Grace Lutheran Board and the Center's staff shall report all suspected child abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline as required by the Mandated Reporter Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. Suspicions of abuse or neglect shall be documented and maintained in a confidential record.

Outdoor Play

Children play outside every day (except in extreme weather). Our playground is an extension of our Center's daily routine for the children. **Be sure your child will have appropriate clothing for time outside.** Due to staffing demands, children are not allowed to stay indoors while their group is outside. Children who come to the Center will be expected to join the others in outdoor play.

Nap/Rest Time

Licensing guidelines require that our Center provide a nap/rest time for all children. Infants are allowed to rest or sleep according to each child's individual pattern, as determined in consultation with parents. Other children will rest/sleep on their cots every day. The center furnishes and launders cot sheets and quilts. No one *must sleep*, but all children must rest or relax at least 1 hour. After 1 hour they may be given quiet activities to do until naptime ends.

Children's Clothing

Children should be dressed in **washable**, easy-to-manage clothing suitable for tumbling, climbing, and crawling on the floor, as well as for messy play with art supplies. **We ask that only closed-toe shoes be worn.** We want to protect toes from bumps on the playground equipment. We are available to assist your child with bathroom procedures, but clothing that will help your child be independent in this activity is best.

Please be sure your child has outdoor clothing at the Center that is appropriate for the season and temperature. We will try to go outside every day (except in extreme temperatures) and we want your child to be prepared for the day.

ALL CLOTHING SHOULD BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME. Other children may have similar or identical clothing. The label will help us identify the proper owner.

The Center's staff will encourage self-dressing whenever possible. You may want to keep that in mind as you purchase clothing for your child. Ask yourself the question, "Can my child learn to put that on alone?" Remember, we will be there to help when needed!

Birthday and Holiday Treats

We know that families like to help the Center celebrate their children's birthdays and special holidays. Please let the staff know *in advance* if you are planning to share treats with the children in your child's room. However, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Licensing Regulations state the following; "*Food brought in for this purpose must arrive unopened as packaged by the bakery or manufacturer, or it shall not be accepted.*" Parents, you may also want to consider non-food treats (pencils, stickers, etc.) for the children. Our staff will assist you in making the special day an enjoyable one.

Field Trips

When off-campus field trips are scheduled, the entire room and teacher will go. You will be notified in advance and asked to sign a release form for all field trips. If you prefer your child not attend a scheduled field trip, please notify the Center in a timely manner. You will be welcome to accompany our group at any time. If you come as a chaperone, please make arrangements for the care of your other children. This will be a special time for you and your child from this age group.

Food Service

Infant Food: Infant feeding is individualized. Staff and parents will discuss each day the foods and quantities to be served. Parents will provide the formula (unless using CDC formula) until the child is able to eat from the Center's daily menu. We do provide infant meals which parents may use. Our infant room teachers will discuss this with each family.

Food Allergies: Information on special diets shall be obtained in writing from the parents and medical providers and maintained on file at the Center. It may be necessary for parents to provide meals or portions of meals to meet the needs of their child. The parent shall be responsible for the safety and clear labeling of food brought into the Center. Our staff will accommodate this child to help maintain his/her health.

Morning Breakfast: This meal is included as part of our daily routine. Breakfast for ages 3/4/5 is offered by 8:00 am, and Infants to 2 years old by 8:30 am. Morning Snack is offered to School Agers by 7:25 am.

Noon Meal: Rooms will be served their meal at a time that fits into their daily routine (between 11:00 a.m. and noon). Occasionally, the group may eat in the multi-purpose room or on the patio area of the playground. Our meal times are designed to be an enjoyable experience for the children and staff. We will teach and encourage good manners. Children are encouraged to serve and feed themselves as much as possible. We will encourage but not force children to try all foods. Our menus and any daily changes will be posted in the kitchen and our reception area. You are welcome to join us for lunch. Please make a reservation in advance so we may have enough food prepared.

Afternoon Snack: This snack will be furnished each day. The snack will follow nap/quiet time in the afternoon. Two items will be offered from the four main categories: milk products; vegetable, fruits, juices; protein; or grains and bread.

5 P.M. Snack: DCFS licensing regulations requires a light snack be given.

Daily Closing Time Policy

Our Center has a specific closing time. We expect the children to be picked up by that time. **If an emergency delays you and you are going to be late, please call the Center before closing time. There is a late charge fee of \$1.00 per minute.**

In the event that your child is still at the Center after closing and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps:

1. Attempt to reach you at home, work, or school.
2. Call the people listed on the child's emergency form.
3. Call the authorities (Police/DCFS) after 5:40 p.m.

Inclement Weather Policy

Should local school districts be closed due to inclement weather, the CDC will also be closed. We understand the challenges this may present for families. We are also concerned for our staff safety in these instances and we must meet the staff to children ratios if we choose to remain open. Any closure will be reported to WTHI Television and WCIA Television. Also a REMIND message will be sent to all parents who have chosen to sign up for this service.

Exceptions to the Handbook Policies

We realize that sometimes there are emergencies or extreme and unusual circumstances that affect our families unexpectedly. A letter may be written to the Grace Lutheran CDC Board to apply for an exception to our handbook policies. The Board and the Director reserve the right to make the final decision for all requests.

Discharge Policy

Grace Lutheran Child Development Center retains the right to dismiss any family at any time for any reason. Behaviors that could lead to discharge include, but are not limited to the following; any disruption or attempt to disrupt facility/program operations at the Center or on field trips, using inappropriate and/ or foul language when interacting with Board Members, employees, family members, or other children while at the Center or on field trips, and failure to participate in Tuition Express billing procedures.

In all instances, when Grace Lutheran Child Development Center decides that it is in the best interest of the child or the Center to terminate enrollment, the child's and parents' needs shall be considered, by planning with the parents how best to meet the child's needs when he or she leaves the facility, including referrals to other agencies or facilities.

Dedication

Our Grace Lutheran Child Development Center's staff is dedicated to the mission of serving our Lord through the caring of children and their families. We thank our families for giving us the opportunity to help you in the task of providing quality education and care to the children. Please pray for us and we will remember our families in our prayers. May the Lord bless our time together.