

**Growing in Grace**

**Children's Academy**

**Parent Operational Policies**

5401 E Highway 287

Midlothian, TX 76065

972-937-1413

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Texas Department of Family and Protective services- Child Care Licensing <http://www.hhs.texas.gov/childcare>

**Mission**

Growing in Grace Children's Academy strives to educate the whole child. We provide a fun, loving and structured environment for your child. We take the responsibility of educating your child academically, physically, spiritually and emotionally very seriously. An environment that fosters all aspects of development allows each child to become who God created him or her to be.

**Enrollment**

All children enrolled in Growing in Grace must provide, as required by Texas Child Care licensing, a doctor’s statement, along with your child’s vaccination records. As well as all other required forms. All paperwork must be turned in, by the desired enrollment date for your child to attend Growing in Grace.

**Hours of Operation**

Growing in Grace is open from 7:00 am until 5:45 pm, Monday through Friday year round, excluding holidays listed on our school calendar. At 5:50 pm a late fee of $15.00 per child will be charged to your account and $2.00 per minute, per child will be charged beginning at 6:00 pm.

**Fees**

A nonrefundable enrollment fee of $125.00 per child, is due at the time of enrollment. Your child’s place will not be guaranteed until the enrollment fee is paid. A supply fee of $50 per child will be billed to your account in January and August of each year. Payments must be made by ACH Bank Draft (form in enrollment paperwork) or Zelle only.

* We require a two-week written notice for disenrollment. If re- enrollment is desired, a $125.00 fee per child will apply. Adjustments for benevolent needs, prolonged sickness, or severe injury may be considered and should be cleared in writing. If you have two or more children enrolled full time, you will receive a $10 discount for the second & subsequent children.
* Tuition is due every Monday morning and is considered late, Tuesday morning. A $25.00 late fee will be applied Tuesday. If you do not pay your balance the week it's due or in advance, your child will be disenrolled until payment is paid in full. There will be a $35.00 fee for all returned payments. Tuition must be paid whether your child is in attendance or not.
* Growing in Grace is closed during major holidays and a few additional days throughout the year. Due to fixed costs averaged over a calendar year, there is **NO** reduction in tuition for holidays or GIG closures. We want our staff to receive the benefit of paid time off. Please refer to our calendar for closures; dates are subject to change; advance notice will be given.
* Once a child has been in attendance for twelve consecutive months, you may take two weeks’ vacation per year at **half tuition rate**. Your child may not attend at all the weeks you choose for vacation. Vacation time cannot be rolled over from one year to the next. Please give a **two-week written notice** when taking vacation. Tuition fees must be paid prior to taking vacation.

**Attendance**

Children must be checked in and out daily. This is an important safety guideline that is also state mandated. Regular and prompt attendance is important. Consistently late arrivals are disruptive to the class and make it difficult for your child to establish a routine. In addition,

children often miss learning activities if they arrive after 8:45 am. For this reason, we strongly encourage a drop off time no later than 8:30 am. Our enrichment classes and academics begin at 8:45 am. We understand the occasional late arrival will occur due to doctor’s appointments etc. Please let the office know if your child will be arriving late. If your child will be arriving after their regularly scheduled lunch time due to an appointment, please make sure they have already had lunch. **NO** drop offs will be accepted during your child’s scheduled nap time. This policy is in place to avoid disruption of napping children.

**Inclement Weather**

In the case of inclement weather, Growing in Grace will follow MISD regarding school closings. If MISD announces a delay, we will follow and open at 9:00am. We will contact you in the case of early closings and expect someone to pick up your child within an hour. Please watch your local weather channel during times of inclement weather, or go online to check for Midlothian ISD

closings. If MISD is closed due to a holiday and there is inclement weather, Growing in Grace will make a decision about delays or closures by 6:00 am. Please check our FB page & Procare for info. We will also send a mass text about weather information**. \* Please ask to see our center’s Emergency Preparedness Plan for handling relocation and intruder evacuations.**

**Injury & Illness**

In the case of a true medical emergency, we will first call 911, then notify parents immediately following. Parents will be called and expected to pick up their child who becomes ill within a reasonable amount of time. Under no circumstances should a child who exhibits signs of illness or is running fever be in attendance. Children absent due to a contagious illness will not be permitted to return without a signed and dated statement from a licensed physician indicating they are no longer contagious. This is for the safety and well being of all the children who attend Growing in Grace Children's Academy. **A child sent home with a fever of 100 or higher under the arm, vomiting or diarrhea may NOT return the next day, and must be symptom free for 24 hours, without medication to return.**

Department of child protective Services; minimum standards handbook requires us not to admit an ill child for care if one or more of the following exists:

• The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in child-care center activities including outdoor play;

• The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children in care;

• The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health- care professional indicates that you can include the child in the childcare center’s activities;

1. Oral temperature of 101 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
2. rectal temperature of 102 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
3. Armpit temperature of 100 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
4. Signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrollable diarrhea (3 or more episodes),two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill or;
5. A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

When a child is involved in some form of an incident that requires further medical attention, a report will be completed describing how the incident happened and what treatment was administered. When a child is involved in a minor incident that leaves a small scratch or bruise, an Ouch report will be filled out and provided for you to sign. **When a true medical emergency occurs, 911 will be called and parents will be responsible for charges incurred by the ambulance and/or hospital.**

**Medication & Health Requirements**

All medication must be in the original container and labeled with your child’s name. Prescription medication must have the child’s name and physician clearly stated on the container. All medication must be turned into the office, not your child’s teacher and signed in with a parent signature.

If a child is on a prescribed breathing treatment, we will administer the treatments as directed by the parents with prescribed orders. Early morning and late afternoon treatments should be given at home when possible.

State guidelines for over-the-counter medications will be strictly followed. If we do not have a signed physician statement approving the use of medication that is not age appropriate, we cannot administer the medication and it should not be brought to the childcare center. Please update the dosage amount according to your child’s weight each time you visit your doctor. We will not administer expired medication, no exceptions!

In April of every year, children who are 4 years of age by September 1st of that year are required to have a vision/hearing screening. When screening is done at your child’s well check-up. Please provide a copy to Growing in Grace for your child’s file, per DFPS requirements.

In compliance with state law, current medical and immunization records are required prior to enrollment and are to be updated regularly. Please bring a current record when your child receives immunizations. If you choose not to immunize your child; please fill out a notarized affidavit from the state of Texas. We are required by law to keep one on file.

Recommended Immunization schedule for persons 0 through 18 years is available at: http://cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/0-18yrs- schedule.pdf

**Discipline and Guidance**

Growing in Grace Children's Academy will not use corporal punishment. Guidance is based on understanding the individual needs and development of each child. We strive to provide a consistent, positive approach that includes redirection and self-regulation. Discipline means to teach, we want to partner with you in teaching your child appropriate behavior and boundaries.

Communication between school and home is essential for the child’s sense of consistency and stability. Please notify the office of any major life changes that could affect the child’s behavior.

If a child is injured or bitten, a ouch report and/or behavior report will be filled out and signed documenting the incident. Both sets of parents will be notified at pickup about the incident.

**For children under 3 years old; the following guidelines will be used:**

If a child is physically aggressive toward their classmates, examples being: throwing chairs and/or heavy objects, causing any injuries resulting in breaking the skin or biting, parents will be notified. In addition, should a child be found destroying school property and/or classroom materials, we will be in contact with parents. Lastly, because safety is our #1 priority, if a child is running from their teacher/class we will communicate this to parents. If any of these behavior reports occur more than twice in a week then the child may be sent home after each incident for the remainder of that week. If we do not see progress being made, a conference with the Director & child’s teacher will be scheduled.

**For children OVER 3 years old; the following guidelines will be used:**

If a child is physically aggressive toward their classmates, examples being: throwing chairs and/or heavy objects, causing any injuries resulting in breaking the skin or biting, parents will be notified. In addition, should a child be found destroying school property and/or classroom materials, we will be in contact with parents. Lastly, because safety is our #1 priority, if a child is running from their teacher/class we will communicate this to parents. If any of these behavior reports occur 3 times during the course of the school year (August to August) then the child may be sent home after every occurrence. It is always our goal to partner with parents and see positive change take place. It is also our responsibility to keep a safe learning environment. After the 3rd time, your child will be placed under a 30 day probation period and a conference with the child’s teacher and the director will be scheduled. If by the end of the 30 days, we do not see improvement then your child is subject to disenrollment.

**School-Aged Children; the following guidelines will be used:**

Students who are physically aggressive with other students will receive a behavior report. After the third behavior report, students will be sent home and a conference will be held with the parents and Administration. If we do not see improvement, your child will be subject to disenrollment.

If a child is physically aggressive (hits, kicks, bites) **STAFF**, parents will be called & the child will be sent home. If this occurs 3 times, the child will be placed under a 30 day probation period and a conference with the child’s teacher and the director will be scheduled. If by the end of the 30 days, we do not see improvement then your child is subject to disenrollment. We want a healthy & safe learning environment for both children & staff.

**Curriculum**

At Growing in Grace, we believe children learn best through play. You will see a wide variety of materials for your child to explore. Centers for art, music, dramatic play, math/ science, literacy, sensory, STEM and fine motor play.

In our infant through 3- year old classrooms, we use theme-based learning that incorporates letter, number, color & shape recognition. Using a lot of hands on materials. Our curriculum also promotes cognitive, language, social, emotional and motor development. Our Pre-K classrooms use Learning without Tears. All classrooms teach Bible-based curriculum.

Our primary goal at Growing in Grace is to present the good news of Jesus. We want to be a safe,loving and secure environment. A place where each child can develop and thrive at their own pace.

We partner with On the Move Dance for an additional fee. GIG also incorporates enrichment into our weekly learning environment. Classes participate in spanish, P.E., art, fun with food & science on a monthly rotation as we strive to educate the whole child.

**Screen Time**

Growing in Grace does **not** allow any child under two years of age to watch TV. or have any screen time, per DFPS regulations.

If screen time is used:

* it must be related to the planned activities that meet educational goals;
* Be age-appropriate;
* Not exceed one hour per day;
* Not be used during mealtime, snack times, nap times, or rest times;
* Not include advertising or violence;
* Is turned off when not in use.
* A school-age child may use screen time without restriction for homework.

**Outdoor Play/Active Play**

Young children need regular opportunities for active/outdoor play.

A minimum of two daily opportunities for outdoor play, weather permitting, in which a child makes use of both small and large muscles.

An infant, Birth through 12 months of age may engage in outdoor play for an amount of time as tolerated by the infant;

An infant 13 months through 17 months of age, a toddler, or a pre-kindergarten age child must engage in outdoor play for a minimum of **60** total minutes daily;

A balance of active and quiet play that incorporates group and individual activities, both indoors and outdoors, and must include: A minimum of **60** minutes of moderate to vigorous active play for toddlers; and a minimum of **90** minutes of moderate to vigorous active play for pre kindergarten age children.

**Meals and Food Allergies**

As your child is transitioning to baby food & then to table food, we ask that you try all new foods at home for the first time, in case of possible allergic reaction. Please ask about food allergies in your child’s class before bringing food for classroom parties. Store-bought items are often best.

Birthdays are very special. Please feel free to send a treat or come and celebrate with your child. Most birthday treats are given after nap time, or as an afternoon snack. Make sure the treat is age appropriate. Check with your child’s teacher for any allergies in the classroom. **\***We will **NOT** pass out or provide addresses or phone numbers for birthday invitations. It’s a violation of privacy and creates issues with lost invitations. We will **ONLY** pass out invitations in class if they are provided for **EVERY** student in the class in order to avoid any hurt feelings.

Growing in Grace does not provide breakfast and lunch. Please send a packed lunch each day for your child. We are not responsible for your child's nutritional needs. We will continue to provide snacks twice per day, morning and afternoon.

**Infant Requirements**

Diapers, wipes and diaper cream for all children, not potty trained should be provided by parents. Parents must also provide plastic bottles filled with water, formula (in already portioned) containers. Or breast milk stored in individual bags. \***We provide a separate, quiet place for Moms to breastfeed at Growing in Grace.** A few changes of clothes, burp cloths must be provided as well. All items must be clearly **labeled** with your child’s name.

Please refrain from allowing older siblings to enter the infant room. Pick up your infant first or allow siblings to wait outside the door. This will help us prevent illness and keep a quiet environment for sleeping infants. Blankets are not allowed in cribs or swings for infants under 12 months. Please leave them in the car or your child’s car seat.

We will provide a form to each parent to fill out for feeding instructions etc. It must be updated and signed monthly, until your child reaches 12 months of age. A daily sheet will be filled out by your child’s teacher, about their sleeping, eating & napping schedule each day. It will also be their communication tool between school and home.

**Safe Sleep Policy**

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for

infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS):

• Always put infants to sleep on their backs (unless an Infant Sleep Exception Form 2710 signed by the infant's health care professional).

• Place infants on a firm mattress, with a tight- fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements for full-size cribs and for non-full size cribs.

• For infants who are younger than 12 months of age, cribs should be bare except for a tight fitting sheet and a mattress cover or protector. Items that should not be placed in a crib include: soft or loose bedding, such as blankets, quilts, or comforters; pillows; stuffed toys/animals; soft objects; bumper pads; liners; or sleep positioning devices. Also, infants must not have their heads, faces, or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing.

• Do not use sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe. Their use may increase the risk of suffocation.

• Ensure that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.

• If an infant needs extra warmth, parents should provide sleep clothing as an alternative to blankets. No swaddles. Only sleep sacks that are sleeveless or allow complete arm movement.

• Place only one infant in a crib to sleep.

• Infants may use a pacifier during sleep. But the pacifier must not be attached to a stuffed animal or the infant’s clothing by a string, cord, or other attaching mechanism that might be a suffocation or strangulation risk.

• If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (such as a bouncy chair, swing or arrives to care asleep in a car seat), move the infant to a crib immediately.

• Our childcare program is smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed in Texas child care operations (this includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers).

• Actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound [§746.2403 and §747.2303].

• If an infant is able to roll back and forth from front to back, place the infant on the infant's back for sleep and allow the infant to assume a preferred sleep position.

• Awake infants will have supervised “tummy time” several times daily. This will help them strengthen their muscles and develop normally. We do **NOT** swaddle an infant for any reason.

**Preschool Requirements:**

Each student will need to bring:

* 1 inch small plastic tri-fold mat
* nap blanket (not large)
* Thermos cup (daily)
* Lunch Box
* Full size backpack (large enough for folder)
* Plastic folder with pockets (return to school daily)
* Gallon Ziplock bag labeled with at least 2 seasonally appropriate change of clothes

For safety reasons, we ask that all children wear closed toe shoes each day. Please make sure to bring your child a jacket during cold weather. All items must be labeled. If potty training, bring multiple pairs of underwear and shorts/pants. If your child wears a diaper or sleeps in a pull up, please keep a supply in your child’s classroom & provide wipes as needed.

Growing in Grace does **NOT** allow toys brought from home, except for security items for use during naptime. It creates conflict among children and sometimes items can get lost or broken. Some classes may have a show and tell or allow all children to bring items, on occasion.

Nap blankets must be taken home weekly, to wash. We will have a scheduled, two-hour rest time, per age group. After one hour, any child who does not sleep will be given a quiet, alternate activity.

**School Age Program:**

We will provide Summer, Holiday and After School Care for Grades K-5th. After-school transportation from Midlothian ISD campuses to Growing in Grace will be provided. We will serve an after-school snack as well as help with homework (should that be the preference of the parents). There will be an opportunity for outside play, weather permitting. We will also have weekly Bible study.

**Transportation/Field Trips:**

Children under the age of 8 must sit in a booster seat. GIG will provide booster chairs unless the parent has a specific seat that they would like their kids to have. A field trip calendar will be sent home monthly. You will receive a 24 hour notice in the case of a field trip change. When we go on field trips, we ask that students bring their lunch in a Ziplock freezer bag labeled with their name. This makes it easier to fit all the lunches into the school cooler.

**Sign In/Out and Custody Procedures**

ALL families are to park and enter from the side of the building, near the covered porte-cochere. Please park in the lot and not under the covered area, unless it’s raining. It’s a safety concern for children walking out of the building and sometimes cars get trapped in the line of cars. Upon arrival at Growing in Grace, parents must sign their child in at the check-in computer. All children must be escorted to their classroom. Please make sure a teacher sees your child and you check them in on their classroom roll sheet as well.

Children will be released only to persons listed on their enrollment form, who have a valid ID. If you want to add someone to your card, please let Admin know. If you send someone who is not on your enrollment form to pick up your child. Please call us ahead of time. Make sure they have a valid ID. We will make a copy for your child’s folder, per state regulation. We will call you, if we do not hear from you. We will not release a child to someone not on their pick- up list. Please do not send young siblings in to pick up your child, or to the classroom without you. You must sign your child out each day. Once you check them out, you are responsible for ensuring their safety.

If a legal custody agreement is in place, please provide court documents to Growing in Grace. We are only allowed to follow court decisions. We have no legal right without documentation to withhold a child from a parent. Or withhold information of any kind. This information will be kept confidential. Please see Admin for any questions or concerns.

**Parent Rights**

Parents are entitled to see the following information. You may ask the Center Director to show you the most recent copy of:

* Minimum standards for this licensed facility;
* Department of Family Protective Services inspection report;
* Fire marshal’s inspection report; and
* Health department’s sanitation inspection report.
* Children’s records are kept confidential and only made available to the Director and assistant. Parents may request access to their child’s school records during school hours. Other important information is posted on the door of the office for you to see at any time

**Abuse and Neglect Abuse & Neglect**

All employees, including office staff, are required to receive training on the topic of abuse and neglect annually. Once a year in August, information concerning abuse and neglect will be distributed to all parents and employees. If you would like information on abuse and neglect at any other time, please contact the office. Texas state law requires the staff of the Center to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or a law enforcement agency. If parents or employees suspect any abuse or neglect, it can be reported by phone (1-800-252-5400) or online at http://www.txabusehotline.org. If you or your child is being abused, you may also call the Family Abuse Center in Midlothian at their 24-hour hotline (1-800-283-8401) for help.

**Gun and Gang Free Zone**

Under the Texas Penal Code, the area within 1000 feet of any Child Care Center is considered a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.

Open and Concealed Handgun Carry at the Center Law enforcement officials who are trained and certified to carry a firearm on duty may have firearms or ammunition on the premises of the Center. For all other persons, firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited on the premises of the Center

***Please sign the space provided on the Texas Admission Form to acknowledge that you have read & understand Growing in Grace's Operating Policies and Procedures. \*Please retain this copy of the policies for future reference.***

*I have read all pages of this Parent Operational Policy and agree to abide by the Policies of Growing in Grace Children's Academy*

*First Name:*   *Last Name:*

*Signature:*   *Date:*

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