

Dear Parents,

The purpose of GraceWay Academy is to glorify God in everything we do. Exodus 33:13 says, “Show me your WAY, that I may know you and find GRACE in your sight.” Guided by our faith in Jesus, GraceWay Academy endeavors to develop in your child a Bible-based view of the world that will guide them throughout their lives. Here they will grow and mature through the strength that comes from knowing that Jesus loves them. Thank you for sharing your children with us.

We employ the Inquiry-Based Learning teaching method, which is designed to engage the students in a meaningful, teacher-guided journey of discovery that will create a love of learning in your child. Students are not lectured at; class investigations are generated through the students’ own questions and curiosity. At GraceWay Academy, your child will grow into a self-confident, critical thinker!

GraceWay Academy does not discriminate against students or staff on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in student admission and employment practices, nor in awarding scholarships and financial aid. GraceWay Academy is accredited by the Florida League of Christian Schools (FLOCS) and the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools. (SACS).

If you ever have questions or comments, please feel free to contact the school director or assistant director. The pastors of Grace Presbyterian Church are also available should you desire to speak with one of them. GraceWay Academy’s purpose is not only to teach your children, but to minister to your family. We are honored to partner with you as we set the foundation for your child to become a successful adult. Please keep GRACEWAY ACADEMY in your prayers, as you are in ours.

In Christ's love,
GRACEWAY ACADEMY Staff

"Show us your WAY, that we may know you and find GRACE in your sight."

Welcome to GraceWay Academy & Preschool! We're looking forward to an exciting year of fun, exploring, and learning about this wonderful world and about Jesus who loves each one of these precious little ones. Thank you for sharing your children with us! *Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." Matthew 19:14*

ADMISSION

We are delighted that you have applied to GraceWay Academy & Preschool! In order for your child to be admitted, we ask for the following items to be completed.

- Enrollment papers completed and returned to the GRACEWAY ACADEMY office, including signatures of policies read and signed emergency consent form.
- Child's original birth certificate presented to the office, with a copy placed in the child's record.
- HRS Form 680/Immunization form received prior to first day of attendance
- HRS Form 3040/Physical Examination received within 30 days of enrollment
- A written note of any allergies or special needs, with agreement from director for how GRACEWAY ACADEMY will appropriately address these special needs.
- Full payment of the registration fee or the original Certificate of Eligibility for VPK students.
- We recommend a tour of the building with a staff member, where you can ask questions. Your child is invited to attend the tour with you. If your child will be entering elementary grades, an academic assessment by a GRACEWAY ACADEMY staff member will be required prior to acceptance.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

All children entering GRACEWAY ACADEMY must have:

1. A written statement (**HRS Form 3040**) on file in the school office, from a licensed physician or authorized agent of a Florida County Health Department, assessing that the child is in good health or that any known irregular condition is under treatment.
2. Verification of immunizations (**HRS Form 680**), stating that immunizations appropriate to the child's age are up-to-date.
3. Parents must present an updated physical (HRS Form 3040) EVERY 2 YEARS after the date of examination to remain enrolled.

Forms 3040 and 680 must be obtained from your health care provider and turned in to the school.

FEES

The registration fee is due at the time of enrollment. This fee secures your child's enrollment and is non-refundable.

The Book & Activity fee is due June 1 to maintain enrollment.



Tuition is due the first school day of each month from August through May (10 months). The annual tuition for your child is divided into 10 payments. Tuition and fees not paid by the 10th of the month will result in a late payment fee. Additionally, your child may not be able to attend until tuition and fees are paid or other arrangements are made.

Additional fees may be collected for optional services, such as early drop-off, Grace Camp, or Tumble Fit. These fees are also due the first of the month to avoid late fees.

Scholarships – We accept McKay and Step Up for Students scholarships. These scholarships may be used to cover tuition, registration fees, and book & activity fees. They may not be used to cover other fees, including field trips, Grace Camp, dance, and late pick-up fees. Any costs not covered by scholarships, including remaining tuition balances, are the responsibility of the parents and will be listed on monthly invoices. Please remember that we are required to verify that students are adhering to our attendance policy and that financial accounts are up-to-date each quarter.

Please make checks payable to GraceWay Academy. Please do not send cash in with your child! You may place all payments in the tuition box by the entrance door. Label checks or envelopes with child's name, and use the memo line for any additional information. Payments may be mailed via online banking services to GraceWay Academy, 2255 SE 38th Street Ocala, FL 34480. Please reference your child's name.

A zero balance is required for re-enrollment the following year.

SCHOOL HOURS

Early Drop Off begins at 8:00 a.m.*

Preschool & VPK: 8:45 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.

Kindergarten (Half Day): 8:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Kindergarten (Full Day): 8:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Grades 1 - 5 8:15 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Grace Camp 11:45 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.*

**Additional fee required.*

DROP-OFF and PICK-UP

Preschoolers must be escorted to the classroom. Please do not just drop them off at the door. Please be prompt at both drop-off and pick-up time. Your child will miss out on classroom time by arriving late, and they will miss YOU if you are not prompt at pick up! Bringing your child into the school will also give you an opportunity to catch up on school news and information on the easel in the hallway. Calendars, newsletters and other parent handouts will be placed in your child's cubby.

Kindergarten-Fifth grade students can be dropped off in the side carline (alongside the playground) in the morning. A teacher will be on the curb to greet them at 8:00 a.m. Half-day kindergarten students will be ready to be picked up in the side carline at 12:30 p.m. All other elementary students will be ready to be picked up in the side carline at 2:00 p.m. Please be aware that our teachers will be focused on keeping your children safe, so they may not have time to chat as they load and unload children. Leaving a message in your child's folder or by calling the school office will allow them to give you their full attention.

Early Drop Off is available at a charge for all ages (drop off between 8:00-8:15=\$6/day; drop off between 8:15-8:45am = \$4/day). All students must be walked in to attend Early Drop Off. Please do not drop off students in the carline when teachers are not present.

Late Pick Ups will be assessed a \$4 fee for the first 15 minutes, followed by a \$5 fee for every 5-minute increment thereafter. Late pick up fees will begin at 12:00 p.m. for preschool, 12:45 p.m. for half-day kindergarten, and 2:15 p.m. for Full-Day Kindergarten-5th grade and Grace Camp. If you know you are running late, please call and let us know. Your child will appreciate knowing that you are on your way!

Ample parking is available in the grass lot north of the church. Please DO NOT park along the circle drive, as this must be reserved for emergency vehicles.

For the safety of our children the entry door will be locked during school hours. Please press the intercom button and we will let you in.

ATTENDANCE

The GraceWay Academy school calendar will follow the Marion County Public School calendar as closely as possible. We miss your child and want to pray for them if they are absent, so please call the school to notify of illness or extended absence due to travel. For **VPK and Elementary** families, good attendance is an important habit to teach your child.

It is important for all students to arrive on time. Late arrivals interfere with the morning routine for your child and the others in the class. If your child will be late, please call our office to let us know so that we can plan accordingly. Part-time preschool students should call by 9:00am to ensure that we will have an available

spot for your child. If you do not call to let us know by 9:00am that you will be arriving late, we will be unable to guarantee a spot for your child on that day.

Preschool families on flexible attendance days do NOT need to notify the school about the particular days you plan to attend, but please DO notify us when you are using a “make-up” day from a previous absence so that our records are accurate.

VPK students should submit an absence note with their fourth missed day in one calendar month. If they miss five or more days, a physician’s note is required. Attendance is an important requirement of the state’s program. Attendance is directly related to a child’s learning. Excessive absences will reduce the funding our school receives for your child. At the end of each month, parents will be asked to verify their child’s attendance for that month. Please sign and date these legibly (think back to your third grade cursive lessons ☺).

Elementary students should submit an absence note for ANY absences. Even when a phone call is made, we still require a written note for our records. Absences will be recorded as excused for illness, doctor appointments, and family emergencies. If accumulated absences or tardies total six or more during a semester, the teacher and/or director will conference with a parent to explore the impact on the student’s work. If it is determined that the student’s progress has been negatively impacted by the absences and/or tardies, it may be required that parents seek supplemental instruction (i.e., tutoring) or enrollment may be terminated. Our teachers will do their best to help children make-up for their missed days. Regular attendance is essential to our inquiry-based learning model. Please make every attempt to schedule expected appointments and vacations outside of school hours.

Please notify the school office if you know that your child will be arriving late. This helps us plan for the day!

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

It is very important to keep your child home if:

- They have vomited, had diarrhea, a fever greater than 100 degrees, or been on medication to reduce a fever during the PREVIOUS 24 HOUR PERIOD;
- They have a cold less than 2 days old;
- They have a heavy clear-colored nasal discharge, or any non-clear nasal discharge;
- They have a constant cough or difficulty breathing;
- They are lethargic, cranky, or generally not in good health;
- They have an unexplained rash;
- They have a highly contagious infection such as pink eye, scabies, head lice, impetigo, strep infection, whooping cough, and chicken pox;
- If your child is placed on antibiotics, they must be on antibiotics for a complete 24 hours before returning to school.

We ask that you be considerate to other families and NOT SHARE GERMS! Please partner with us in teaching good hygiene practices to include frequent hand washing when your child is ill. If a child becomes ill at school, they will be immediately isolated from the other children and the parent will be called to come pick up the child promptly. Please make sure we have at least two working phone numbers on file. Ill children who are not picked up promptly may be assessed a late pick-up fee.

Preschoolers on our flexible 2-or-3 days/week schedule may make-up missed days anytime during the 30 day period following their absence.

Elementary parents should use their most conservative discretion regarding mild colds and nasal discharge in determining their child's ability to participate at school without spreading the illness to classmates. Should your child attend school during a cold or with nasal discharge, the school may contact you regarding your child's health, and if needed, determine that your child may need to be picked up.

MEDICATIONS

NO medication will be given to your child while at GraceWay Academy (including Tylenol, cough drops, etc.), unless it is a life-threatening situation. Prescription medication must be administered before arrival. If your child has a life-threatening condition (i.e., allergies, diabetes), emergency medicine and documentation must be provided by the parent and physician. Please see the director or assistant director for more information.

ATTIRE

Preschoolers will best be able to enjoy their activities by wearing play clothes that are comfortable, weather appropriate, and easy to get on and off at bathroom time. Closed-toe shoes are best suited for the preschool environment, particularly "sneakers". Girls may wear dresses if they wear shorts underneath. Please **label** all outerwear garments with the child's name in ink. We ask that you provide our school with an extra complete change of clothes in a ziploc bag, **labeled with your child's name** (shirt, pants, underwear, socks).

Children in diapers and pull-ups must have extras at school at all times. Please provide a week's supply, planning on two per day. You will receive a note if the supply for your child is low. Please consider ease in changing when choosing your child's school clothing.

Elementary students should wear clothing that will not distract them from learning. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Shirts should have sleeves or straps at least 2 inches in width (no spaghetti straps or camisoles) and should cover the midriff when hands are raised.
- Clothing should portray positive messages which are consistent with our Christian mission
- Bottoms should be at least fingertip length.

- Shorts or leggings should be worn under skirts and dresses. Leggings may only be worn under skirts, dresses, or long tunic-style shirts.
- Shoes should be rubber-soled so that they are ready for the day's activities and to reduce slipping hazards.

Please have children move, bend, and stretch to ensure that they are appropriately covered with no undergarments showing.

SAFETY

We want a safe year at GRACEWAY ACADEMY for your child! You can help by remembering these things:



1. Until we get to know you, please do not be offended if we ask to see a driver's license when you come to pick up your child. This is especially true for those we see less frequently. We want to keep your child from harm. We only release children to those who are on your authorized pick-up list.
2. Notify the office in writing if anyone other than yourself or your spouse will be picking up your child on a particular day. Verbal messages from the child cannot be accepted. Please advise your friend or relative that PHOTO ID will be required, which may be photocopied before the child is released.
3. The children will be taught what to do in case of fire, and fire drills will be conducted monthly.
4. BUCKLE UP!! All children under age 5 must be in a federally approved child restraint device while on our property, and while on school field trips. We will not take risks with your child's life. IT'S THE LAW! Buckle up!

TOBACCO USE

Due to the hazards caused by exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, as well as the life-threatening diseases linked to the use of all forms of tobacco, it shall be the policy of GraceWay Academy to provide a tobacco-free environment for all employees, visitors, and students. This policy covers the smoking of any tobacco product and the use of oral tobacco products or "spit" tobacco, and it applies to both employees, students, and non-employee visitors of GraceWay Academy. Tobacco use is prohibited on all Grace Presbyterian Church property during school operating hours, in the presences of GraceWay employees or students, or in personal vehicles transporting children on Grace Presbyterian Church campus or to authorized off-campus trips.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Every week your child will be learning through a wide variety of activities.

Preschool children will receive a monthly CALENDAR and a NEWSLETTER to keep you informed. Our school cubbies are used to prepare materials to go home. Be sure to check your child's cubby at pick-up for art projects and other important information. Please do not place items in another child's cubby. If you have something you would like to leave for a parent, please bring that item to the office and we will place it in the cubby or deliver it to the parent.

Elementary families need to read over their WEEKLY UPDATES. Please watch for these and be sure to note the weekly themes, important events, dates, announcements, and how you can help GraceWay Academy. Always feel free to contact us if you need more details or have questions. We are always happy to talk with parents, and will schedule a time to meet with you if necessary.

These items should also be available on the website at www.GraceWayAcademy.org.

PROGRESS REPORTING

Our VPK curriculum meets and exceeds all of the state-mandated standards for VPK programs. Children are taught to write using the Block Manuscript (*Zaner-Bloser*) alphabet, which is used by most schools in Marion County. Please help to reinforce this printing at home. ALL of our activities are planned with skill-building and reinforcement in mind. Parent conferences will be held in the middle of the school year, with progress reports being sent home periodically.

Our elementary curriculum meets and exceeds all of the state standards. Families will receive a progress report at the end of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters. Parent conferences will be held after the 1st quarter in lieu of a progress report. Additional conferences may be scheduled during the year to review your child's progress, if needed.

Please feel free to ask questions in between if you have concerns.

SNACK RESPONSIBILITY

Each preschool and kindergarten family can help our school by signing up for four snack days per school year. A sign-up sheet will be available at parent meetings and then posted in the hallway or in the GraceWay Academy office. All our snacks are provided by parents, so we ask you to take a turn at providing snack, drink, cups, and napkins!



The children enjoy healthy fruits, vegetables, cheese, crackers and other non-sugary snacks. Ask us for ideas! Please consider a variety of real fruit juices, not just apple juice. However, because of spills, please **NO GRAPE JUICE** or any that stain. Please write down the dates of your

snack days and add them to your calendar. A reminder notice will go home in advance of your snack days, and will indicate types of items and quantities needed.

To celebrate your child's birthday, you may bring a special snack such as SMALL muffins or rice krispie treats to include in the classroom's celebration (approximately 12 items, NO candy please).

SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

Holidays will be highlighted with special celebrations at school. We invite parents who have been approved as volunteers to sign up as helpers for these events. Your help with special supplies or food prep will allow us to make these days extra special. Our office will call parents 1-2 weeks prior to the event to schedule the day and time for your help. You will also be able to join your child in the classroom during the celebration time. THANKS for your help.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please do not allow your child to bring jewelry, purses, toys, candy, or other valuable items to school. We want to avoid the hurt feelings that occur when toys or personal items have been accidentally broken or lost. If your child brings an unrequested item, it will stay in the child's cubby, backpack, or the office until dismissal time. This will prevent items from being broken or misplaced. Periodically, "Show and Tell" days may be designated by teachers; parents will be notified in advance. Cell phones and other electronic devices, with the exception of school approved tablets and laptops, should not be brought to school.

PERMISSION FOR SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

- **Library** starts in September. Every child who has a signed permission slip will have the opportunity to choose and check out a book from the Grace Presbyterian Church Media Center – in the building connected to GRACEWAY ACADEMY. (Two year old children with a signed permission slip will receive a book in their cubby from the library.) When the book is returned, the child will be able to check out a new book on the next Library Day. We encourage parents to use the GPC Media Center. *It is an outstanding resource for the whole family.*
- **Gymnastics/Fitness:** GraceFull Gymnastics will offer **TumbleFit sessions** for only \$100 per year, September through May (9 months). Mrs. Jill Byrd is a licensed instructor, and works with small groups of students during school hours on specific days. Please return the signed permission slip and payment if you are interested in this. *(Elementary & VPK participation in TumbleFit is included in the elementary Activity Fee or VPK payments.)* Grades 3-5 will participate in a Fitness Boot Camp with Mrs. Jill.



FIELD TRIPS and RESOURCE EXPERTS

By including field trips and special people who can come to school and share with the children, we can expand the students' learning sphere. If you have any suggestions for resource experts who could share their job or hobby with the children please let us know!

Our insurance does not allow us to transport children, so we must ask for parental transportation on field trips. Parents will be asked to transport their own children or make other personal arrangements. Parents must stay with their children during a field trip unless another adult is designated on the permission slip to supervise/transport your child.

FUNDRAISERS

Because of the expense involved in running a school, it is necessary to have fundraisers each year. Sometimes this money is used to buy extras for our school, but more often it is used to supply the funds needed for basic maintenance of our program. We would appreciate any help you can give GraceWay Academy in this area. All of our students benefit from these fundraisers!

SUPPLIES

Preschool families will be requested to donate specific items at the beginning of each year that will greatly reduce our operating costs. You will receive your supply list over the summer and should bring your supplies with you on the first day of school.

Elementary students will receive a mailing in the summer indicating items that they will need to bring on the first day of school for personal or classroom use.

Thank you to all families who cheerfully help with these items. You are a blessing to all of us!

LOST & FOUND

Found items are placed on top of the preschool cubbies. If your child is missing something, please check to see if it has been turned in. At the first of each month, these items will be cleaned out and donated.

COMMUNITY ADVERTISING

Many of our parents are involved in business and organizations in our community. We love to connect GraceWay families with one another! If you have a small flyer, brochure, or business card, please drop it off to us in the office and we will add it to our community board at the end of the cubby hall. (Please do not leave items on top of the cubbies.) As you pass by, take a look and see if any of our families are offering services that you may need!

PRAYER NEEDED!

Please put GraceWay Academy & Preschool on your daily prayer list. Pray for a successful year with all of our precious children and please pray for our safety and other needs. Also, let us know how we can pray for your family and your child. Our teachers and staff pray together throughout the week. We would love the opportunity to pray for your family. Thank you again for letting us share in your family by caring for your child!

See the next page for Additional Policies.

POLICIES OF GRACEWAY ACADEMY & PRESCHOOL

Please refer the school Policy Book for additional policies.

GRACEWAY ACADEMY HONOR CODE

“Show me your way that I may know You and find grace in your sight.” Exodus 33:13

GraceWay Academy feels that strong academics need a foundation of strong faith to fully prepare our student for the plan that God has for them. As followers of Christ, we endeavor to model our behavior and conduct after His example:

We will:

- Think before we speak or act
- Be prepared for each school day
- Respect others and treat them with kindness
- Work as until the Lord, striving for our personal best
- Work to grow academically and spiritually
- Be responsible for our iPads, computers, school supplies, and facilities

GRACEWAY ACADEMY DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Children depend on the wisdom of adults to set reasonable limits for them. Limits are necessary to maintain safety, protect health, and guard the rights of others. It is our job as professionals to provide a loving environment in which your child can thrive, learn, and develop. We expect the children to obey the rules set by their teacher and we will use praise to reinforce good behavior. We will use discipline as guidance, not punishment. These are the procedures that will be followed at those times when discipline becomes necessary:

1. A simple and loving verbal reprimand is usually sufficient.
2. If the misbehavior continues we will use “thinking time” in the classroom or on the playground. The child is not just given a “time out”, but is encouraged to think about a way to be a better friend, a way to be better controlled, etc. The teacher will allow the child to rejoin the group when a solution has been developed by the child, with the teacher’s help when necessary.
3. If the problem persists, or if a child’s behavior results in harm or injury to another child and “thinking time” does not resolve it, the teacher and parent will conference to work out an agreeable solution. When necessary, a behavior plan will be developed and implemented.
4. If the problem becomes chronic and all efforts to improve the situation fail, it will become necessary to remove the child from the school.
5. Corporal punishment will not be used by GRACEWAY ACADEMY staff.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

(Abbreviated from official school policy)

GraceWay Academy & Preschool believes that each child is uniquely and wonderfully created by God. We welcome all students and do not discriminate against students or staff on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in student admission and employment practices, nor in awarding scholarships and financial aid. We will do our best to assess and meet the needs of each individual learner. However, we must also recognize that not every child will flourish in the same environment or styles of learning.

Our guidelines for meeting the “special needs” of children at GraceWay include:

1. Child must make forward movement in their growth and development. We will make accommodations to help them get there.
2. We require the parents to work with us. It is a team effort – we can only do what is possible in our school setting. Extra time may be spent conferencing with teachers and administrators as we make and amend learning plans.
3. The child must be receiving appropriate services from qualified professionals outside of GraceWay Academy. We are not trained to provide specialized educational interventions.
4. Safety is important for the child, teachers, and other students.

If these guidelines are not met, a child may be dismissed from our school. Please refer to the Policy Book for more specific information.

HARMFUL BEHAVIOR

In the case of repeated incidents of behavior by one student (more than 2 per month) that deliberately harms or injures other students the following steps will be taken:

1. Director or representative will meet with parent to discuss behavior, gain understanding of the problem, and develop a plan for addressing the behavior.
2. Director will advise staff members how to implement this plan, with special prayer time to ask for God’s wisdom and direction in this child’s life and our ministry to them and their family.
3. Staff will report to director/representative any repeated behavior and an incident report will be completed. Director or representative will meet with the parent to discuss. If this behavior has exceeded two in one month, or if the director deems the behavior serious enough to jeopardize the safety of the other children and risk liability to the school, the parent will be asked to withdraw the child for a period of one month.

If the child is withdrawn, this will be put in writing to Chairman of the GraceWay Academy Board, with a copy to parents. The letter will state the problem, plan and results as well as clearly communicating the goal of GraceWay Academy to

minister to this family. The child may be allowed to re-enroll in one month, if the parent, Director & staff have deemed him/her ready.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

We at GraceWay Academy & Preschool pray that we will never be confronted with a situation where we know, or have suspicions, of a student being neglected or abused. However, we want our parents to know what we MUST do, according to Florida Law, if we encounter either of these problems.

Florida Statute defines child abuse as: “any willful act that results in physical, mental, or sexual injury that causes or is likely to cause the child’s physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired.”

Child neglect is failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, health care, or needed supervision.

Florida law also requires any school teacher or other school official or personnel – who know, or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected – to report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Families. We do not have to be able to “prove” abuse to make a report. All that is required is a “reasonable” suspicion. It is the department’s responsibility to fully investigate. Again, we pray that these problems will not arise within any family at our school, but we do have to abide by state law, and wanted you to be fully informed of our legal obligation.