

Grace United Methodist Preschool
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Look for the Stars –4 Star School
Nationally Accredited by UMAP
Gold Seal of Excellence, Department of Children and Families
License # 58-51-00117

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PARENT HANDBOOK

Dear Families,

WELCOME to the Grace United Methodist Preschool Family! We welcome back all returning families and are excited about getting to know the new children and parents for the upcoming school year.

PLEASE READ THIS BOOKLET CAREFULLY AND SAVE IT - the information provided within will give you a good idea of how we do things and will serve as a resource for you regarding our policies and procedures.

Grace Preschool was started in 1980 by several young mothers under the direction of Patsye Dulmer. Our staff is under the direction of the Grace United Methodist Preschool Board of Directors. We are licensed by the Department of Children and Families and are accredited by UMAP (United Methodist Association of Preschools). Grace UMC Preschool is proud to have earned the Gold Seal of Excellence from the Department of Children and Families.

We look forward to watching your children grow in many ways while they are with us! If you have any questions, at any time during the school year, please give me a call.

See You Soon!

Patsye Dulmer, Director
patsye@gracemethodistpreschool.org

Faye Sundin, Director's Assistant
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Debi Hammett, Office Manager
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Grace United Methodist Church

Our Vision: Compelled by Christ's love, we are friends helping friends become authentic, enthusiastic followers of Jesus.

Jim Mitchell, Pastor
Devon Ducheneau , Children and Family Ministry

Main Church 488-1374
Church Fax 488-0289

Website: www.graceontheisland.com

Sunday Morning Worship Services

9:00 am "LifeJourney"
(Contemporary Worship Service-held in TFEC)
11:00 am Traditional Worship Service-held in Church Sanctuary

Our services are a vital part of our church life throughout the year.

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism is available should your family desire. Please contact one of the church Pastors for this service.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated the first Sunday of each month.

GALAXY – Christian Education for life is the name of our Sunday school ministry here at Grace Church. If you and your family are not already in a GALAXY class, now is the perfect time to start! Sunday GALAXY classes meet in the Triplett Family Enrichment Center at varying times. There are classes for children and adults. Schedules are posted in the lobby of Triplett.

Children may participate in several programs:

Summer Day Camp
Mothers' Morning Out
Vacation Bible School
Leesburg Camp Program
Mid-Hi/Senior Hi Summer Camp Program
Mid-Hi/Senior Hi Youth Groups

OUR PHILOSOPHY ON EDUCATING PRESCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

We believe that a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families.

Our teaching philosophy & purpose is to provide an UNHURRIED atmosphere that encourages social, emotional, spiritual, physical and intellectual growth and development of the child as a whole.

Planned within the framework of this philosophy and purpose, the curriculum includes sharing and conversation time, stories, songs, finger plays; creative art activities, construction/building opportunities, manipulative/math experiences, games and large muscle activities, field trips throughout the community and "community helper" visitors, cooking, science and nature activities, and celebrations of birthdays and holidays incorporating a child's own cultural diversity. Our week also includes music and chapel.

Our classroom activities are designed to stimulate imaginations. We encourage a healthy balance of child-directed and teacher-directed activities, indoor and outdoor experiences and active and quiet times during the day.

OUR MISSION

In our atmosphere of Christian nurturing, Grace United Methodist Preschool and Grace United Methodist Church commit to provide a quality early childhood education to the children and families of the congregation and surrounding communities. Our program works in partnership with parents to meet the unique development of each child - socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually - through a developmentally appropriate curriculum, daily devotion, and prayer. Grace United Methodist Preschool commits itself to an inclusive ministry; serving children without regard to their race, language, ethnicity, gender, social, economic or religious background.

OUR GOALS

For the children in our program to be safe, healthy, relaxed, friendly and happy.

To view each child as a gift from God and celebrate individual interests, abilities and diversity.

For our Grace Preschool Staff to receive sufficient preparation, support and compensation to reflect on and improve their teaching practices.

To encourage children's social skills like cooperation, sharing, caring and communicating.

To build on a child's feelings of self-worth.

To offer curriculum and classroom atmospheres which spark each child's interests and curiosity about learning.

For children to interact with nature by using all of their senses.

To encourage a love of books and storytelling.

To establish close ties between families and Grace Preschool and provide many opportunities for active parent involvement.

Provide parenting information and community resources for our Grace Preschool Family.

Low child/staff ratios and small group sizes.

We have an open door policy at Grace Preschool. Feel free to drop in and join us ANYTIME. Parents and grandparents are always a fun addition to lunchtime, too!

OUR SCHOOL

Grace United Methodist Preschool is committed to providing a Christian learning environment with loving and certified teachers who help with motivation, self-discipline and positive self-esteem. We see each child as an individual with varying needs, interests and abilities. Our teachers offer kindness, guidance, and support in their care for children and see each child as a gift from God.

You have chosen us to partner with you in the rearing of your child, to assist you in this awesome process, and we count it a privilege to do so. We take this responsibility seriously and expect the same level of support from you through the year for classroom and school events. Your support is essential to the success of our school and vital for your child's self-esteem.

Grace UMC Preschool has a 501 © 3 status with the IRS. All donations to our preschool can be used for income tax purposes according to the current regulations for donations under this status. Donations of supplies from families are welcomed and greatly appreciated. Our tax identification number is 59-1000-629.

Admission

Enrollment is open to all children ages 12 months and walking to five years. Children are admitted to Grace Preschool regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or religion. Children who are physically handicapped or emotionally disturbed are able to attend provided Grace Preschool is able to meet the needs of the individual child. Children entering the 3 year class must be toilet trained and able to tend to their bathroom needs. We reserve the right to terminate any child's attendance if it is determined by the staff that the child is not benefiting from our curriculum.

Keyless Entry System

In order to insure the safety of all our children, Grace UMC Preschool utilizes a keyless entry system. Each authorized parent and individual listed on the application will receive their own unique door code. **THESE CODES ARE FOR ADULTS- PLEASE DO NOT SHARE THEM WITH YOUR CHILD OR OTHER SIBLINGS/CHILDREN!**

Should the need arise for a temporary code, please see the Office Administrator at the front desk or give the request to your child's teacher. A temporary code will be issued and then de-activated at the appropriate time.

Should an individual need to be removed from your authorized pick up list, it is extremely important to notify the office so that the associated code can be deactivated.

SCHEDULES & CENTERS

Each teacher is encouraged to set her own schedule. Although all age groups will have their own schedule, the following will give you an idea of how the day may "flow":

- 7:30-9:00 ARRIVAL WITH ACTIVITY CENTERS SET UP IN GATHERING ROOM
- 9:00-10:30 GREETING, CENTER TIME (PLAN, DO REVIEW) SNACK
- 10:30-11:10 OUTDOOR TIME, OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES
- 11:15-12:00 STORYTIME/MUSIC ACTIVITIES
- 12:00-12:45 LUNCH AND BATHROOM
- 1:00-2:30 REST TIME
- 2:30-3:00 BATHROOM, CLEAN UP AND SNACK
- 3:00-4:30 OUTDOOR TIME IN DISCOVERY CENTER OR PLAYGROUND W/ ACTIVITY CENTERS
- 4:30-5:30 CENTERS AND STORYTIME

Our "Rest Time Policy" - We will give all children 1 hour to fall asleep with encouragement, peaceful music and help from the teacher. If at that time, they are still awake and restless, we will give them a book or a quiet activity on their mat. After a month, if the child cannot look at books quietly on their mat, we will notify the parents that the child will not be able to stay for Rest/Nap Time.

Centers

Each classroom is set up into centers. Each room has its own feel and personality but every class offers:

- Quiet Corner - a cozy place for looking at books
- An Art Center, with easel, table and child-accessible materials
- A Construction/Block Center
- A Science & Nature Area
- Manipulative Area, with table toys, cognitive games and math-related materials
- A Tactile Center which will change often, using mostly sand and water, play dough, rice and beans, Gak or gelatin
- Dramatic Play/Housekeeping Center
- Prop Boxes - these are brought out often and may include a bank, doctor's office, restaurant, grocery store, office and shoe store, etc.
- Musical Instruments are available at least once a week for group singing and motion activities
- Computer training is available for the Pre-K classes

DISCOVERY CENTERS

Our afternoons are enjoyed each day in our Discovery Center. The center is an ideal play and learning environment for preschool children. Rather than offering a static setup the children cannot manipulate, this enrichment room is an ever-changing entity, with new, different, and exciting things; that have children engaged in hands-on materials from slimy goop to frozen ice blocks to constructing on the woodworking bench. Children may take apart VCR's, phones and computers in the disassemble center or check produce orders with real vegetables at the store. The environment provides props and manipulatives for play and learning. Simply put, it offers experiences that will prepare the preschool child for the formal learning in ways that are developmentally appropriate. If children are to develop competencies in reading, writing and mathematics, it is necessary to develop: visual memory, auditory memory, language acquisition, classification, hand-eye coordination and body image. The skills and concepts needed to develop these abilities can be acquired with open-ended material such as sand and water, and are learned while children play. Come and enjoy.

PARENTS PLEASE NOTE, DISCOVERY CENTER IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR PLAY UNLESS A TEACHER IS PRESENT. THIS IS FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD AS WELL AS OUR ENVIRONMENT. THANK YOU FOR NOT ALLOWING YOUR CHILD OR OTHER SIBLINGS ENTRY DURING UNAUTHORIZED TIMES.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

At Grace Preschool, we help teach children to make the proper choices so that their behavior is socially acceptable. We teach. We do not punish.

Here are some of the ways we teach:

1. We set developmentally appropriate goals for the children's behavior (we know two- year olds have a hard time sharing and can push, hit and bite).
2. We anticipate problems and redirect:
Two children go after the same toy and the teacher says "Here's a car for William and here's one for Troy - can you build a road for them?"
3. We phrase our requests in positive ways:
"Feet on the floor" rather than "Stop banging your feet".
4. We use a four part reminder:
 - What you can't do (No hitting).
 - Why you can't do it (hitting hurts).
 - What you can do instead (If you're mad, you can stomp your feet).
 - Catch them being "good" and remembering to do things the right way (I see you used your words and not your hands and I'm proud of you).
5. Whether we are praising or correcting, we focus on the deed and not the doer:
We say, "Great block building" instead of "Good boy"
"Walk when you are inside" instead of "You're so wild!"
6. We rely on natural consequences:
"Oh, look, the rice was spilled from the pan, now we don't have any to play with".
7. We use logical consequences:
That is, the consequence matches the "crime".
If a child is throwing sand on the playground, s/he has to leave the sand area.
8. We help children make amends:
"What can you use to clean up the writing on the wall?"
9. We encourage children to express themselves with words:
"Tell Chris you don't like it."
When needed, we give them the words:
"Say, NO! Don't push me!"
Teachers express their feelings, too:
"That yelling hurts my ears."
10. We encourage children to come up with their own solutions to problem situations:
"We have two girls and one fire truck. What can we do about that?"

11. We find it is effective for a child to find something else to play with (a logical consequence) than to put the child in a time-out. However, we will use "time-away" if a child needs to be removed from a situation in order to protect the child, teacher, or other children. If your child's behavior is out of control and normal techniques do not work, you will be expected to pick up your child.

Needless to say, we will not subject any child to humiliation, ridicule, frightening threats, spanking or other forms of physical punishment.

GRACE PRESCHOOL AND ITS GROUNDS ARE A NO-SPANKING ZONE!!

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES:

Accidents:

All accidents, cuts, scratches, bumps and bites are reported on a Dept. of Children & Families Accident Report form. Parents sign the report. A copy is placed in the child's file. Minor scrapes and bruises are treated with soap, water, ice, Band-Aids and hugs. Bug bites are treated with ice or a paste from meat tenderizer and water. In the case of minor injuries, the child will be cared for as above and parents will be told of the incident at the end of the school day. In cases of serious injury, staff will first notify the paramedics, then the parents of the child.

Fire/Tornado Drills:

During a drill, information will be posted that a drill is in progress. PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE BUILDING OR ATTEMPT TO DROP OFF OR RETRIEVE YOUR CHILD. Please await the "clear" signal signifying the end of the drill. This is a requirement for everyone's safety. Fire drill evacuation plans are posted in each room.

Child Abuse/Neglect

Staff members are LEGALLY OBLIGATED by Florida Statute to report any suspected child abuse or neglect cases. Our procedure for reporting is as follows:

1. The teacher will make a note of it in her personal journal and then will bring it to the attention of the Director.
2. If there is evidence of physical injury, she will fill out an accident report, noting that the child ARRIVED at school with the injuries.
3. As quickly as possible, the Director will call a meeting with all staff members who deal directly with the child to determine if they feel there is "reason to believe" abuse/neglect has occurred.
4. If there is reason to believe, the Director will notify the parents. The parents are informed that Grace UMC Preschool has a legal obligation to report suspected cases of abuse/neglect.
5. The Director will make the report to Dept. of Children & Families, followed by a written report. A copy will be placed in the child's file.

In all cases, the facts, discussions, and meetings will be kept confidential between the family in question and the involved staff members. Once a report has been called into the Dept. of Children & Families, the agency has 24 hours to begin an investigation. The Dept. of Children & Families will make a determination of abuse or neglect. If a parent suspects child abuse/neglect at school, s/he should IMMEDIATELY notify the Director. Further information for parents is included in the pamphlet "Know Your Child's Day Care Center" supplied to each parent. Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-422-4453.

Custody Disputes

Where shared parental responsibility has been ordered by the court we shall attempt to be sensitive to the wishes of both parents, however, in such instances we shall respect the wishes of the parent who has been designated as the primary residential parent. A certified copy of the most recent court order must be kept in the child's file.

Dismissal Security, Drop Off & Pick Up

Classrooms doors open promptly at 7:30am for families who have selected full time tuition rates. Before that time, teachers are busy preparing the classrooms for a successful day. In the morning, parents please bring your child to classroom on time; sign them in, assist in getting your child involved in an activity, say good-bye and leave. Please do not bring breakfast items with your child at arrival time. Children must arrive ready to interact with other children, free from breakfast duties.

Remember that signing your child in and out is a requirement. An authorized adult is required to sign in and then sign out your child with a FULL LEGIBLE ADULT SIGNATURE AND TIME OF PICKUP on a daily basis. Sign In/Sign Out sheets are located in designated areas in your child's classroom. Children will not be released to siblings or caregivers less than 18 years of age.

At any time, children are only released to parents with legal custody, legal guardians or persons listed on the registration form. **When in doubt, WE WILL REQUIRE PHOTO ID.** An "AUTHORIZATION FOR CHILD RELEASE" form is attached that you may keep for future use. Other forms are available from your child's teacher. In the unlikely event an unfamiliar person who is not on the authorized pick-up form tries to pick up a child, we will do the following:

1. Inform the unauthorized person of this policy.
2. Inform the parent with legal custody that an unauthorized person has appeared at school.
3. Attempt to remove the child to a safe place on school grounds and call the police if the unauthorized person is aggressive, seems threatening or refuses to leave.
4. It is our policy to refuse to release a child to anyone who is impaired. We will call another individual on the authorized pick up list.

Please do not leave any children unattended in a parked car on preschool and church grounds!

PLEASE SEE THAT YOU HAVE MADE VISUAL CONTACT WITH A STAFF MEMBER BEFORE LEAVING WITH YOUR CHILD.

ILLNESS/"SICK POLICY"

Your child's health is important to us and we want to maintain a healthy environment for all children and staff. We will not allow ill children to remain at school.

Please keep your child at home if:

s/he has had a fever within the last 24 hours

s/he has had diarrhea or vomited within the last 24 hours

s/he has been on prescribed medication for less than 24 hours

s/he is sneezing or coughing (wet frequent sneezing and/or loose, deep or croupy coughs,

s/he has any contagious rashes or pink eye

s/he has nasal discharge that is cloudy, thick, or yellow\green. If your child has a heavy nasal discharge caused by allergies, it must be confirmed in writing by a pediatrician

s/he has been treated for lice and all nits are not removed

If a child arrives ill, it is the teacher's responsibility to remind the parent of our "sick policy" and regretfully decide that the child must go home. This is awkward for the teacher, and confusing and disappointing for the child, so please adhere to our sick policy because **WE ARE STRICT ABOUT IT AND WILL FOLLOW IT FROM THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL TO THE LAST.**

If your child is unable to attend school, please call the school to report the absence. If your child is ill, please indicate the nature of the illness.

If a child becomes ill during the school day, the teacher will notify the parent to pick up their child immediately. If your child is sent home with any of the above symptoms, he/she may not return for 24 hours – unless you have a note from the doctor stating the child is not contagious.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES – When children have been exposed to communicable diseases such as hepatitis, measles, or strep infection, all staff members and all parents/guardians of children will be notified immediately. With any infectious disease, we ask that you seek your physician's advice and always notify us of the disease. A release from your child's physician is required for the child to re-enter the classroom.

Medication

Staff members are not permitted to administer medication of any kind at school. Please do not pack medicines of any kind in a child's tote bag or lunchbox. **Please let your child's teacher know if you have given your child medication prior to coming to school.**

Severe Weather

School is canceled in the event of severe weather, tropical storm or hurricane watch. If public school has been canceled, Grace Preschool is closed as well (**please monitor Channel 6 and 7 locally**). In the event that severe weather develops while the children are in school, the teachers will remove them from areas where there are windows and into the interior hallway until the threat subsides.

OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Birthdays

Birthdays are special days indeed and we will celebrate in the classroom. You are welcome to send in birthday treats. Please check with your child's teacher so they can plan a time to celebrate in the classroom. Popular birthday snacks include store bought cookies, ice cream and other frozen desserts. ***We regret home made goodies are not allowed to be served to the children.*** Party invitations may be sent through school only if everyone in the class is invited. If you are hoping for a smaller party, please send your invitations through the mail instead.

Chapel

All two, three and Pre-K classes will attend a chapel service each week led by one of our ministers. Parents are always invited to attend this and all other church activities. Prayer is part of our daily routine. A devotional time consisting of a bible story, scripture and a blessing before meals and prayer is part of each classroom's daily schedule.

Clothing

Grace UMC Preschool has implemented a uniform policy. Children should wear uniforms on all days except Friday which will be considered a "free" day. Uniforms may be purchased at the front desk. Uniforms consist of a school t-shirt and/or sweatshirt and khaki, navy or denim shorts, skorts or pants.

For safety reasons we suggest sneakers - no flip-flops or plastic type foot wear is permitted. Daily activities include active and messy play, and children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes. Clothing should be such that your child can manage to use the bathroom by themselves. **Please label all outer wear with child's name.** Hats or head coverings will not be allowed in class. For safety reasons we cannot allow jewelry, hair clips, or jackets/coats with strings that could choke a child. Please do not send you child to preschool with fake tattoos.

We provide smocks, but teachers do not insist on their use if it presents a barrier to participation in an activity. Please dress your child in simple play clothes without complicated snaps, laces and buckles.

Communications with Parents

At the beginning of each month, teachers will post a copy of that month's curriculum plans/activities. A parent information bulletin board is located near the front door. Notes will be sent home regularly concerning your child's progress. A monthly calendar and newsletter will also be published. Parent-teacher conferences are required two times per year.

Confidentiality of Student Records

Student records are open only to the particular child's teacher, the Director, an authorized employee of the licensing agency, or the child's parent or legal guardian.

Fees

Tuition is figured as a monthly fee and is due on the first of each month. Checks should be made payable to Grace United Methodist Preschool and may be deposited at the front desk. An additional fee of \$30 will be assessed if tuition is not paid by the fifth of the month. Tuition not paid by the 10th of the month will result in the child being removed from the program. **Should you foresee difficulty in meeting a scheduled payment, please contact the Director or Office Administrator. If a payment schedule is not prearranged, late fees will apply.** Notices will not be sent when tuition is due. Because tuition is a monthly fee, no refunds are given for illnesses or vacations. There will be an additional charge for Christmas Holidays and Spring Break for those families needing child care. A minimum of 25 students must register daily.

Families who have two or more children attending Grace at the same time will receive a monthly discount off the lowest tuition rate for one child. However, if one of the children is enrolled in a VPK classroom no discount will be given as the payment received from the state does not cover tuition costs.

A \$30 fee will be charged for returned checks and remaining tuition must be paid in cash. If you have any questions about tuition, contact the preschool office.

A limited number of scholarships are available from the church. These scholarships are on a need basis and financial information is required. Application forms can be requested at the front desk.

There is an annual registration fee that must be paid in conjunction with registration.

Our tax ID number is 59-1000-629.

Late Pick Up Fee

Because staffing is based on children's schedules, all children must be picked up on time. The following late fee will be billed to your account and is due immediately: \$15.00 plus \$1.00 per minute for each minute past pickup time.

Field Trips

Teachers plan a variety of field trips that go along with their class themes and programming. The church bus is used to transport the children. Parents are always welcome and needed to help chaperone field trips and will be notified at least one week in advance with a permission slip. Of course, seatbelts are required for all passengers. Children and staff wear school T-shirts on all field trips. **Children that arrive late for school will be placed in another class until their teacher and classmates return.**

At no time shall any volunteer be responsible for the care and supervision of a child. At no time shall any volunteer accompany a child other than their own to restrooms or any other facility, including field trips. While we always welcome parents to participate in activities and field trips, no parent shall be in charge of or responsible for any child other than their own.

Photo/Video Release

A parent-signed consent was included as part of the registration packet. Use of your child's photo will be for materials for promotion of Grace UMC Preschool, posting such as craft and art type projects and/or audio-visual productions for school use, including our website and newspaper articles.

Volunteer Hours

Each family is responsible for 10 (ten) volunteer hours per child per academic year. Any unfulfilled hours will be charged at \$10.00 per hour and is due with April's tuition.

Playground

Grace UMC Preschool has three play yards. Each yard is set up to meet specific developmental skills appropriate for the ages of the children. The preschool general rule is that children are not allowed on any of the play yards outside of organized school activities. The reason for this policy comes from concern for the safety of the children. Because Grace does not have staffing available to monitor the play yards outside of school activities, we must insist that parents help us monitor and enforce this policy.

Our preschool is sensitive to the fact that there are occasions when parents are picking up or dropping off an older child or sibling. If parents have another child with them on those occasions, the parents must assume responsibility of supervising their child at all times. Please be aware that children must adhere to the safety rules for the climbers and may not play on equipment that is inappropriate for their age. Children who are not enrolled in the three year class are not permitted on the large playground without a teacher's permission.

Nutrition, Snacks and Lunches

Your child's nutrition is crucial to his/her ability to perform in the classroom and on the playground. A poor breakfast, or one filled with sugar, will probably mean a fussy, unhappy or unpleasant day at school. Your child's preschool years are periods when children form eating and nutrition habits that will be with them for the remainder of their lives. We need your assistance in promoting healthy eating habits and practices with your child. A child's lunch must be nutritional containing milk and four food groups and not contain candy or sodas. Please cut food appropriately for your child's needs. Our staff has been instructed to spend meal times with the children talking and sharing experiences, not nagging them about eating. Because of refrigerator space limitations, please use "normal" sized lunch boxes – no ice packs are needed!

Your child will be served a mid-morning snack and afternoon snack (if applicable). This snack is usually juice and peanut butter crackers, fruit, cheese or veggies or a snack the children have prepared relating to something they may be learning. Please check the monthly calendar for special food days. On these days, lunch may be purchased from your child's teacher for \$3.50.

Teachers will post a sign-up sheet each month for special snack requirements. We appreciate your contributions.

FOOD SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SMALL CHILDREN

- **NO PEANUT BUTTER ALLOWED IN THE PRE-TWO & TWO CLASSROOMS.**
- Cut hot dogs lengthwise and in small pieces.
- Grapes (unless cut in half) and raisins are not allowed.
- Peel and cut apples.
- Cut raw vegetables into strips.
- Candy is NOT allowed in school.
- Peanut Butter can be difficult to swallow, so thick is not always better.
- Send fruit with pits removed and cut appropriately.
- **DO NOT SEND** spaghetti, lasagna, and rice, anything in **RED SAUCE**, Jell-O, pudding and yogurt for Pre-Two children.
- Children in the Pre-two class do better with finger type foods so they can feed themselves.

NUTRITION

Please be sure your child eats breakfast before coming to school. We serve a mid-morning and afternoon snack and parents are welcome to send in snacks to be shared. Some suggestions are raw vegetables, cheese, crackers, fruit and ice cream. We are not allowed to serve homemade treats. You may send in the ingredients for the children to make a special snack. For children under three years – do not send grapes, raisins, nuts or any fruit with skin on it. You may send fruit cut appropriately, without skin.

Parents must provide a well-balanced, nutritious lunch with milk. Please put the child's name on the lunch box or bag. The lunch box and everything in it must be washed daily. We do not allow candy, soda, or gum. Please cut food into small pieces so a child will not choke. We will be able to warm food occasionally or you may use a hot thermos and we will keep it out of the refrigerator. "Lunchables" are not recommended. A child should be able to open reusable containers (ex: Tupperware) easily.

Guidelines are provided by the Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County and should include milk and: 1) fruit 2) vegetables 3) bread, cereal, rice or pasta 4) yogurt, or cheese 5) meat, poultry, fish, beans or eggs.

SUGGESTIONS

	<u>MONDAY-milk</u>	<u>TUESDAY-milk</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY-milk</u>	<u>THURSDAY-milk</u>	<u>FRIDAY-</u>
<u>milk</u>					
Week 1	sliced chicken wheat bread tomato peach milk	cheese chunks bread sticks raw broccoli apple fruit juice	tuna fish pita bread carrot sticks pickle milk	peanut butter graham crackers cucumbers raisins milk	yogurt granola bean salad pear orange juice
Week 2	egg salad Italian bread green pepper watermelon milk	turkey slices croissant cranberry sauce melon milk	cottage cheese rye crackers spinach nectarine apple juice	ham & cheese wheat bread mixed greens applesauce grape juice	peanut butter rice cakes raw veggies banana milk
Week 3	pizza Jell-o with fruit mixed salad milk	turkey frank strips hot dog roll celery sticks strawberries milk	cheese chunks macaroni salad red pepper quartered grapes cranberry juice	chicken legs roll cauliflower kiwi fruit milk	refried beans tortilla chips tomato fruit cup milk
Week 4	hard-boiled eggs wheat crackers pasta salad fruit chunks milk	cream cheese bagel carrot/raisin salad apple milk	crab salad rainbow salad potato salad banana fruit juice	peanut butter English muffin peas fruit salad milk	yogurt trail mix mixed salad melon orange juice

Supplies

Each child needs:

- a complete change of clothes, labeled and in a large Ziploc bag
- for children in diapers, a package of diapers or pull-ups, and a refill package of baby wipes, a box of disposable latex gloves (find at your local pharmacy)
- teachers will have additional requests regarding supplies – Thank you in advance!
- a tote (available for purchase from your child’s teacher.)
- children staying for nap will need a nap mat. These may be purchased from the front office. Please it take home and wash every Friday. Parents should purchase XL Ziploc bag to store their child’s mat as well as labeling the mat with your child’s name.

Toys from home

Each teacher sets her/his own rules about which toys are or aren't allowed in the classroom. Only on "Show and Tell" days are children allowed to bring in toys. We suggest other items for this such as books, educational cassettes, souvenirs from vacations, etc.

School wide rules: No toy weapons (guns, swords, sticks, etc.)

Many times children need to bring their special "lovie" with them at the start of school. We know we will see blankets and teddy bears in the fall and we encourage them in order to help the children make the transition from home to school. No batteries, please.

We discourage pacifiers and bottles for our younger students as some children are still getting used to being without them, and seeing their little friends with them only makes them want their old ones back!

Due to state regulations, the following cannot be brought to school: birds, reptiles, turtles and iguanas.

USING STAFF AS BABYSITTERS

Utilization of staff for private babysitting is discouraged. Should a parent use a staff member for babysitting they shall do so at their own risk and the preschool will take no responsibility.

How to handle a disagreement with your child's teacher

The best approach is to address complaints directly to the teacher, either in person or by telephone. Be sure to choose an appropriate time to discuss the disagreement. Make an appointment if an extended discussion is needed. The end of the day, when both you and the teacher are tired, is usually not the best time to talk. The Director will be happy to join you if needed.

Any discussion of a disagreement with a teacher needs to be based on fact. It is important to check the facts directly with the teacher before drawing conclusions or allocating blame.

When you disagree with a teacher, you should be careful not to criticize the teacher in front of your child. Such criticism can be confusing to young children and may put them in a bind over divided loyalties, as many younger children consider their teachers to be heroes. In the case of older children, criticism can foster arrogance, defiance and rudeness towards teachers.

Often, you will be able to prevent or resolve differences with teachers with constructive communication, grace and good humor.

Only if you and the teacher cannot resolve a problem should you talk to other school staff, such as the Assistant Director and/or Director.

(This approach works well for teachers of school-age children also.)

Curriculum

Our main focus to learning at Grace United Methodist Preschool is active discovery play.

Our curriculum is based on an emergent basis. The children bring in a topic or interest area from their own experiences or questions and the teachers facilitate.

Because the children are new to the classroom and the teacher at the start of the school year, the teachers will introduce a topic area to the children to get them involved in active learning. For the current school year our introductory topics are the Family and/or Our Bodies until the children have chosen an interest area.

Crafts will be kept to a minimum with approximately one a month. Predesigned holiday decorations will be kept to a maximum of two per holiday. Crafts and decorations are to be *child completed* without teacher additions or corrections, and open ended art will be available every day.

Interest areas of the children can be wide and varied, but it is our goal to include the following fields of study while the children make discoveries in their chosen interest area:

1. Our Bodies, i.e.: body awareness, gender, race, growth, grooming, health habits
2. Families, i.e.: structure, culture, heritage, relationships
3. Home life
4. Homes
5. Health, i.e.: doctor, dentist
6. Safety, i.e.: fire, stranger danger, water, playground, animal, food handling
7. Nutrition
8. Nursery Rhymes
9. Birthdays
10. Community Awareness
11. Holidays (does not include government holidays unless chosen by a child as an interest area), i.e.: Christian, secular, cross cultural as determined by student enrollment

Children's interest areas might include but are not limited to:

wheels	the sun	boxes	what smells
the farm	the moon	trees	underground
the weather	the circus	big rigs	
bugs	pets	construction	the list is limitless,
growing things	the zoo	shadows	like children's
camping	birds	the pond	imagination.....
the ocean	snakes	stars	
dinosaurs	cowboys	freezing things	

Grace Preschool Goals for Children's Development In Early Reading and Writing

Children explore their environment and build the foundations for learning to read and write.

Children can

- Enjoy listening to and discussing storybooks
- Understand that print carries a message
- Engage in reading and writing attempts
- Identify labels and signs in their environment
- Participate in rhyming games
- Identify some letters and make some letter sound matches
- Use known letter or approximations of letters to represent written language (especially meaningful words like their name and phrases such as "I love you")

What teachers will do:

- Share books with children, including Big Books, and model reading behaviors
- Talk about letters by name and sounds
- Establish a literacy rich environment
- Reread favorite stories
- Engage children in language games
- Promote literacy related play activities
- Encourage children to experiment with writing

What parents and family members can do:

- Talk with children, engage them in conversations, give names of things, show interest in what a child says
- Read and reread stories with predictable texts to children
- Encourage children to recount experiences and describe ideas and events that are important to them
- Visit the library regularly
- Provide opportunities for children to draw and paint, using markers, crayons, and pencils

GOALS BY AGE GROUP

As children grow, teachers work with a variety of “hands-on” activities that reflect age appropriateness. Play is essential for social and cognitive growth in early childhood. The following are focal points for each stage:

INFANCY

This stage is marked most radically with the infants’ need to develop as unique individuals with behaviors and growth changes ever present. Each infant has different schedules reflective of their own personalities. It is the adult’s role to accept each infant’s uniqueness and provide a safe and stimulating environment from which to grow.

The infant program provides for the following goals:

1. To care for infants in a warm, affectionate way that lets each child know that he is a special person, including the physical affection and cuddling that is so important at this stage of development.
2. To meet each child’s physical needs completely.
3. To implement strict sanitation procedures that are adhered to faithfully.
4. To provide opportunities for exploring, learning and social interaction through a good variety of daily activities.
5. To prepare activities to stimulate the senses, recognizing that infants learn through the use of their eyes, ears, fingers, sense of taste and smell.
6. To care for children in small groups; to prevent over-stimulation and disorder; and to provide opportunities for one to one interactions between children and staff.
7. To provide opportunity for the use of large and small motor skills with both indoor and outdoor activities.
8. To establish a safe environment for exploration.
9. To provide a consistency between Preschool and Home Care practices that will be most beneficial to the infant and will offer the parents the opportunity to influence the kind of care that their child receives.
10. To establish an observations system in which a daily outline on children is kept.
11. To be supportive of parents, encouraging involvement, encouraging open and honest communication while using tact and discretion.

Infants learn by experiencing the environment through their senses (seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling), by physically moving around and through social interaction. Mobile infants and toddlers increasingly use toys, language and other learning materials in their play.

Adults play a vital socialization role with infants. Warm, positive relationships with adults help infants develop a sense of trust in the world and feeling of competence. These interactions are critical for the development of the children’s healthy self-esteem.

The trusted adult becomes the secure base from which the mobile infant explores the environment.

The most appropriate teaching technique for this age group is to give ample opportunities for the children to use repetition to practice newly acquired skills and to experience feelings of autonomy and success. Infants will bat at, grasp, bang, or drop their toys. Imitation, hiding, and naming games are also important for learning at this age.

Play opportunities are essential throughout early childhood. For infants this means sensory experiences and adults who cuddle and talk to them. It means careful selection of toys and materials that stimulate and challenge them, but are not over-stimulating. Language activities that begin as “Ma Ma” or “Da Da” will soon become extended through repeating words of an adult’s stories, songs, and finger play. Opportunities to develop large muscles can be found in walking, climbing up and down, pushing toys; and for small muscles, in sensory play with water, sand etc.: feeling different textures, stacking blocks, nesting toys, etc. Art activities are provided to give infants an exposure to a variety of materials and enjoyment for the process of the project.

An infant can feel secure and develop a sense of trust as the adults in his world responds to his individual needs of hunger, thirst, and sleep with a flexible and individualized daily routine.

TODDLERS

The toddler stage can be seen as one of the most challenging times (and rewarding ones). Two year olds are very mobile and active using all five senses to discover the world. Adults are challenged to provide a safe, but stimulating environment from which this child can grow. The toddler responds well to a regular daily routine with clear meal times, rest times and play times. Toilet teaching is best accomplished by taking the child to the toilet (potty chair) at the same times each day.

Important independence skills are being acquired during these years, including personal care such as toileting, feeding, and dressing. Patience is essential as a toddler struggles to put on a sweater (developing independence at this stage occurs after much repetition and encouragement). Realistic toys will enable children to engage in increasingly complex types of play.

- a. Two year olds are learning to produce language rapidly. They need simple books, pictures, puzzles, music, and time and space for active play such as jumping, running, and dancing. Toddlers are acquiring social skills, but in groups there should be several of the same toys because egocentric toddlers are not yet able to understand the concept of sharing.

Program goals for 24 months to 36 months children include:

1. To provide a nurturing, flexible, and calm atmosphere where physical affection is freely given, self-concept is enhanced, independence is encouraged and expectations are made clear.
2. To meet each child’s physical needs while setting the stage for future independence in self-care. I.e. toilet teaching, putting on coats, putting on shoes, etc.
3. To establish respect for the equipment and materials.
4. To promote emotional growth.
 - a. To build self-confidence and a sense of self-worth by allowing choices within limits and to build on successful experiences.
 - b. To provide a warm accepting environment for the children to work and play in
 - c. To encourage curiosity and a sense of wonder with an environment that is designed to limit the use of “no”.

5. To promote social growth.
 - a. To promote and instill a sense of caring for, and sensitivity towards others; foundations for respect are established.
 - b. Adult modeling acceptable behavior is critical to the toddlers learning cooperative and group play.
6. To promote intellectual growth.
 - a. To instill a sense of curiosity.
 - b. To provide an atmosphere where children discover and explore – to provide experiences with open-ended questions and where process and not product is emphasized.
 - c. To provide a wide variety of activities within an outline where cooperative play is encouraged. Curriculum areas of art, math, science, cooking, music and movement, large muscle, practical life, dramatic play, language arts and fine motor activities help children to learn to be able to trust their own feelings about what they learn, hear, see and do. They also begin to share these experiences.
7. To promote physical/motor development.
 - a. For children to use their bodies in a variety of ways by participating in fine and large motor activities both indoors and outdoors.
 - b. To engage in simple games and songs.
8. To provide for the language development that is so important at this stage of development.
9. To make available a good variety and quantity of materials on the shelves at the child's level (manipulative, dramatic play, pull toys, puzzles, books...)
10. To develop self-help skills in order to create a feeling of independence and confidence in the child (this can be accomplished by toilet training, encouraging them to try to help dress themselves and letting them help serve food at meals.)
11. To provide care in small groups in order to give each child more personal attention, to prevent under and over stimulation, to allow more freedom of choices and to maintain a more relaxed atmosphere.

The toddler group is a diverse one. Providing a variety of activities with many choices is essential to enhance each child's developmental progress. The following are such activities:

Introducing sensory experiences such as:

Pudding play	Tasting and smelling boxes
Jell-O play	Cornstarch play
Water table	Music/rhyme
Sand table	Bubbles
Rice, macaroni	Play dough
Flour	Texture books
Corn meal	Flashlight play
Karo syrup finger painting	Shaving Cream
Noise makers, bean shakers	Silly putty

Cognitive Development and Language Acquisition:

Reading and re-telling favorite stories.

Work on recognizing and naming the teachers and children in the classroom using Photographs of the children.

Reinforce aspects of the routines such as: snack time, lunch time, and nap time.

Work with the older toddlers on learning the words and actions to the songs we sing: example – by singing to the children and encouraging them to sing along.

Encourage the toddlers to talk more.

- using puppets
- asking lots of questions (open-ended)
- reading stories and ask lots of questions

Help the children learn and say the names of the others in the room. Use the tape recorder as a special medium to encourage the children to hear themselves.

Activities will have to be designed with the developmental level of each child in mind. Teachers will verbalize with the children while they are playing so as to provide a springboard for the children's own verbalizations. Language should be incorporated into every activity throughout the day.

Learning simple songs and finger plays

Tape recorder

Simple directions (up, on, over)

Nursery rhymes

Counting games

Alphabet games

Sorting activities (simple one to multiple class concepts)

Puppet plays

Object labeling

Story time

Memory games

Color matching

Dolls

Increase the child's ability to recognize common objects; examples – using picture books and picture cards of simple, common objects.

Object boxes

Shape sorter

Working on learning the three basic shapes – circle, square, triangle

Begin introducing simple cooking activities – mixing, pouring and sorting

Lotto games or matching

Art activities with these shapes (pasting)

Self Help

Children will be provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote the growing independence desired by toddlers. Potty training will be provided where appropriate.

Washing hands and face

Eating with spoon and fork

Throwing away cup and napkin

Putting toys away

Washing and drying dishes

Washing and drying dolls

Becoming aware of the rules of safety

Social and Emotional Development

Begin to work on setting limits in such a way that the child learns self regulation.

-by following the rules: you may not hurt yourself; you may not hurt others; and you may not hurt the materials or equipment.

-by using the methods of distraction, substitution, alternative activity or correct discipline when necessary by: encouraging the children to use

words rather than push or hit other children. Help child play well independently amongst a larger group of children.

Fine Motor Development

The aim is to provide the materials and activities important in advancing the child's small muscle coordination such as:

Pouring and sifting	Cutting play dough with scissors
Filling and dumping	Puzzle work
Peg boards	Shape sorting
Nesting	Sewing cards
Stacking	Lego blocks
Putting shapes through holes	Button and snap boards
Snap beads	Twisting jar lids, nuts and bolts
Stringing beads	Art activities

Basic art activities such as:

Tearing paper	Coloring with crayon and chalk
Painting with brushes	Water painting

Gross Motor Development

Dancing and marching	Swinging
Walks outside when weather permits	Pull toys and wagons
Slide	Circle games and songs
Climbing stairs	Crawling under and through
Climbing	Jumping
Hanging of bars/ropes	Stretching exercises
Ball play	

Creative Expression

On a daily basis children will be given the choice to participate in a scheduled activity that encourages them to express themselves creatively. These might include:

Easel painting	Collage and montages
Finger painting	Murals – chalk, crayon, paint
String painting	Potato prints
Sponge painting	Food coloring pictures
Marble painting	Mobiles
Crayon painting	Q-tip painting
Salt painting	

THREE, FOUR AND FIVE YEAR OLDS

Curriculum for three year-olds should emphasize language, activity, and movement, with major emphasis on large muscles activity. Appropriate activities include dramatic play, wheel toys and climbers, puzzles and blocks and opportunities to talk and listen to simple stories.

Four year-olds enjoy a greater variety of experiences and more small motor activities like scissors, art, manipulative, and cooking. They are more able to concentrate and remember as well as recognize objects by shape, color, or size. Four year-olds are developing basic math concepts and problem-solving skills.

Some four year-olds and most five year-olds combine ideas into more complex relations (for example, number concepts such as one to one correspondence) and have growing memory capacity and fine motor physical skills. Some four year-olds and most fives display a growing interest in the functional aspects of written language, such as recognizing meaningful words and trying to write their own names. Activities designed solely to teach the alphabet, phonics, and penmanship is much less appropriate for this age group than providing a print rich environment that stimulates the development of language and literacy skills in meaningful context.

Curriculum for fours and fives can expand beyond the child's immediate experience of self, home, and family to include special events and trips. Five year-olds are developing interest in community and the world outside their own. They also use motor skills well, even daringly, and show increasing ability to pay attention for longer times and in larger groups if the topic is meaningful.

Significance of 3-4-5 year old stage:

Most important area is for adult to promote preschooler's self-esteem. In every area of his development: physical, cognitive, psycho social, the child strives and looks for adult support. They need periodic adult reinforcement in the form of one on one time, a hug, smile or touch.

Preschoolers have a greater capacity than younger children for learning and abiding by simple rules and clear consequences.

They enjoy playing with peers and the beginning of cooperative play and sharing develops. Conflicts can begin to be addressed with simple problem solving techniques.

Preschoolers develop in many areas and independence is helped with providing choices of a range of activities.

Program Goals:

1. To build self-confidence and a sense of self worth by allowing choices within limits and to build on successful experiences.
2. To promote and instill a sense of caring for, and sensitivity towards others.
3. To provide a nurturing, relaxed, and non-sexist environment with caring adults where self concepts are enhanced; independence encouraged; free choice decisions offered; social skills acquired; individuality respected.

4. To provide large portions of time in which the child can spend with their friends in a range of different and satisfying activities. The activities will be drawn from the following curriculum areas: art, science, wood working, cooking, music and movement, drama, language arts, large muscle, fine motor, and math games.
5. To provide the child with opportunities to gain competence in a variety of skills and techniques that increase their interest and control over their environment.
6. To provide for each child's physical well being while in our care.
7. To provide opportunities to develop large motor skills and coordination through physically active play.
8. To develop in the child an active curiosity about the world in which they live and an enthusiasm for learning which stimulates exploratory behavior and creativity.
9. To help the child gain self-discipline in an environment where they know the limits and expectations.
10. To develop in each child an appreciation for beauty and nature.
11. To provide an atmosphere in the classroom which promotes respect for others and materials.

12. To provide a wide variety of activities within a routine where cooperative play is encouraged. Curriculum areas are math, science, cooking, music and movement, large muscle, practical life, dramatic play, language arts and fine motor activities. Through these activities, children are learning to be able to trust their own feelings about what they learn, hear, see and do and to begin sharing these experiences with others.

Language

To encourage verbal expression, and the sharing of ideas in a group situation:

Names, areas of room, simple shapes, colors, textures, introduce classifying politeness, dramatic play.

Puppets

Following verbal and non-verbal directions, opposites, names of animals.

Introduce spatial vocabulary (over, under), expressing emotions, labeling emotions.

Recognizing each others names, label our work with phrases, if children want phrases written on their work, documentation.

Repeat, introduce and practice new songs, finger plays, and role playing.

Stories will be read frequently.

Recognition of letters, numbers.

Sounds

Gross Motor

Coordination will be encouraged

Hopping, balancing, running, crawling, climbing, jumping, throwing

Outdoor play, climbing, swinging, obstacle courses with bikes

Indoor play, body action songs, stepping, hopping, dancing

Large Muscle Skills

Blocks and accessories

Mats and tumbling

Musical games
Understand how their bodies can move
Learn to control their body movements
Improve self confidence and self concept
Strengthen, tone and control their large muscles
Improve skills in locomotion
Learn to follow directions
Learn to interact and play

Math

Activities to recognize numbers, counting items
Understand the relationship between a numeral and a set of objects
Counting will become both meaningful and fun
Learn terms such as big/little, more/less, etc.
Recognize and name basic geometric shapes
Awareness and appreciation of the practical uses of numbers children see around them everyday, e.g. clock, calendar, money, etc.

Self Help

To encourage the child to do it on his own
To encourage eye hand coordination, patience, waiting turns, etc.
How to sit in a circle, proper meal manners, hand washing, proper use of materials.
Zipping, snapping, buckling, scooping and pouring rice, sorting, wiping tables
Pouring milk, juice, cereal, setting tables, food (taste and smell comparisons).

Social Emotional

Games involving sharing and communication, develop respect for teachers and others
Develop sense of pride in the environment by active participation in room set up
Develop the concept of sharing and giving, increase self concept by discussion of physical growth
Learn to share
Learn to take responsibility for cleaning up
Learn to take responsibility for all actions
Deal with emotions
Accept each other's differences: cultural, personalities, sizes, etc.

Art

Art will be incorporated to enhance and encourage creativity, fine motor skills, color usage, perception, and eye-hand coordination. Different media will be introduced and use encouraged.

Cutting, pasting, chalk, basic collages, easel painting, finger painting, play dough
Primary colors and secondary colors, gluing, water colors, colored chalk, play dough, tracing
Mobiles

New media will be introduced whenever possible. A variety of artistic ways should be done. For example, in order to get a picture on a piece of paper you can paint or print, or draw with crayons or draw with colored pencils or finger paint it.

- Eye-hand coordination practice
- Experiment, explore, and express feelings difficult to put into words
- Develop small muscle coordination
- Gain pleasure and satisfaction through different techniques
- Develop concepts of color, line, and texture
- Develop concepts of shape, form and design
- Experience freedom from inhibitions
- Understand that two colors make another color

Manipulatives

The manipulative shelf is an open area during free play and planned activities. This equipment changes as needed. These activities enhance fine motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and perception. The equipment used includes: puzzles, large/small beads, sorting, pegs and peg boards, table blocks, stacking cylinders, texture board, table, matching texture, color, fabric, eye droppers, baster, play dough, zipping, buttoning, lacing, and sewing.

Fine Motor Activities include:

Cutting, coloring, tracing, writing, zipping, buttoning, snapping, pegs, puzzles, clay, play dough, silly putty, lacing, pouring, washing, wiping, small block and Lego building, painting – will be continued on a weekly basis.

Dramatic Play

- Have experiences to develop ideas and thoughts
- Come to understand his world and people in it
- Develop creative expression
- Develop language skill as they speak, listen and communicate
- Role play family members

Block Play

- Have opportunities for isolated, parallel and cooperative play
- Gain sense of power and achievement in the physical world
- Experience emotional release through dramatic play
- Engage in physical experiences through lifting, carrying, and piling
- Use creative expression and sense of design
- Develop skills in problem solving, numbers concepts, and language
- Develop creative expression
- Develop language skills as they speak, listen, and communicate
- Role play family members

Reading Readiness

- Develop and improve listening skills

Follow directions
Learn the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, as children become interested.
Notice likenesses and differences
Develop the skill of sequencing
Develop the skill of matching
Books and quiet areas:
 Learn to relax
 Learn to appreciate good books
 Learn to enjoy being alone

Science

Develop an awareness of the natural environment
Discover the natural characteristics of water
Enjoy sensory experiences
Sort and classify on the basis of size, shape, and texture
Develop an awareness of their bodies

Music

Develop listening skills
Learn musical tunes which they can repeat
Learn to control motor impulses
Enjoy and appreciate music
Express freedom of movement
Become familiar with different musical instruments.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Many times when parents observe or visit my classroom, they think the children are “just playing”. But the way children learn best is through play. As the children are going around and exploring all of the different centers, here are some of the skills they may acquire:

Language Art (books and flannel boards)

- Increases vocabulary growth
- Develops listening skills
- Develops reading readiness skills
- Develops oral language skills
- Encourages an interest in and respect for books
- Develops an appreciation of good literature
- Develops imagination
- Increases attention span

Science

- Develops observation and discrimination skills
- Develops respect for the environment
- Encourages a child’s curiosity

Blocks and building materials

- Provides practice with social skills
- Develops gross and fine motor skills
- Teaches mathematical concepts (shape, size, balance, counting)
- Increases creativity and decision-making skills
- Develops visual discrimination skills
- Provides an opportunity for role play
- Increases communication skills and oral vocabulary

Housekeeping and dramatic play

- Provides an opportunity to role play home experiences
- Increases social development and communication skills
- Develops small and large muscle coordination
- Develops self awareness
- Develops visual discrimination skills

SCREENINGS AND ASSESSMENTS

As you know, your child's emotional, social, physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth and development are of utmost importance to us as well as you.

For us to know your child is developing and progressing, we will be conducting screenings and assessments during each school year including but not limited to ASQs (Ages & Stages), Creative Curriculum assessments, and VPK assessments. Results will be discussed with parents at conference time or before.

If results of these screenings and assessments indicate a need for further assessments by a professional the following steps will take place.

Assessment Procedures for Grace United Methodist Preschool

- ★ Teacher identify possible problem
- ★ Teacher discusses situation with parent(s)
- ★ Teacher completes the assessment and provides documentation
- ★ Parent approves/disapproves further assessment by a specialist in this field
- ★ With parental consent, we contact Early Learning Warm Line Resource & Referral or other specialist for observation of child
- ★ Florida Center contacts Grace UMC Preschool to observe child
- ★ Follow-up meeting with therapist, Grace UMC Preschool's Director, teacher and parent(s) to discuss recommendations and get help for the staff to better provide for the child's needs
- ★ Teacher implements recommendations