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Academy of Leaders After-School Program

21st Century Community Learning Centers

Parent Handbook

Grace Place for Children and Families

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[www.graceplacenaples.org](http://www.graceplacenaples.org)

**MISSION**

Grace Place puts faith into action, providing pathways out of poverty by educating children and families.

**GRACE PLACE CORE PROGRAMS**

**BRIGHT BEGINNINGS** incorporates the four components of family literacy:

Parent Time

Parent time provides skill-building knowledge of the stages of child development and learning behaviors, increasing the parent’s capacity and confidence to be their child’s first teacher. Parents learn how to positively guide their children’s learning.

Adult Education

Adult education programming includes learning English as a second language, learning how to read and write, and building financial and computer literacies. When parents, or any adults in the home, increase their education—the entire family benefits.

Early Childhood Education

Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Education uses *Creative Curriculum®*, balancing teacher-directed and child-initiated learning, with an emphasis on responding to children’s learning styles and building on their strengths and interests.

Parent and Child Together (P.A.C.T.) Time

P.A.C.T. time builds the parent’s confidence in implementing newly learned best practices to engage their child in learning. The reciprocal learning allows the parent and child a chance to bond as true partners in education.

The adult portions of the program work to cultivate confident, capable, and literate parents who are prepared to guide their child though the crucial years of early development. The child portions of the program work to ensure that children are prepared to enter kindergarten. Working together, parent and child become partners in their educations. Integrating the four components of family literacy creates a comprehensive program for building a positive educational culture in the home.

**SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS**

As result of 21st Century Community Learning Center funding, Grace Place is able to provide educational services during the after school and summer hours to Golden Gate and Golden Terrace elementary students, Golden Gate Middle School students and Golden Gate High School students at no cost to these children or their families. The grant allows Grace Place to expand its academic programming during the school year and in the summer months in reading and S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects with heightened evidence-based curriculum including robotics, biology, computer science and chemistry. Additional enrichment activities include music, arts, wellness and Stephen Covey’s “The Leader in Me” program.

Family literacy components for parents provide opportunities to enroll in our existing literacy and educational programs, including Family Literacy Days and the Adult Education program. Solidifying the impact of family involvement, the funds also support the launch of special sessions of Parent Academy to foster positive parenting and ensure a high level of adult family member participation and integration into their child’s education.

The 21st CCLC Academy of Leaders program and family services are offered at Grace Place, Golden Gate Middle School (GGMS) and Golden Gate High School (GGHS). Grace Place is located less than three miles from these schools, which makes the facility easily accessible to students and families. Our organization offers safe and reliable transportation to the campus for our children and families as well. The Grace Place campus provides classrooms, computer lab, cafeteria, a music room, recreational fields, and two KaBOOM playgrounds; has been licensed by Florida Department for Children and Families (DCF) for child care; and meets all DCF and Collier County Public School (CCPS) safety policies. The GGMS campus provides classrooms, computer lab, cafeteria, media center, gym, and recreational fields and meets all DCF and CCPS safety policies. The GGHS campus also provides classrooms, computer lab, cafeteria, media center, gym, and recreational fields and meets all DCF and CCPS safety policies.

#### Academy of Leaders:

Academy of Leaders at Grace Place includes the Academy of Leaders after-school and summer program. The mission of the Academy of Leaders program (K-12) is to improve student achievement in core academic subjects, develop leadership habits and provide opportunities for students to learn the 21st century skills needed to be college and career ready.

The Program works to bridge the gap between the scholastic achievement of children from middle- and upper-class families and those children in families that fall beneath these economic profiles.  The Program supports higher academic achievement by extending the school day with tutoring and rigorous learning activities.  Academy of Leaders also provides social and intellectual enrichment activities such as music, art, physical activities, and gardening to instill a broader set of values and interests. Students gain knowledge, skills, and academic preparation needed to enroll and succeed in college without the need for remediation.

#### Academy of Leaders Summer Program:

Academy of Leaders Summer Program affords students the opportunity to “beat the summer slump,” offering a six to eight week program for elementary and middle school student and a four week program for high school students of academic classes and enrichment activities. Previous Summer Camps have been centered on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). Programming included in-depth, hands-on projects such as robotics, NASA space exploration, film making, digital journalism and career field trips to local businesses.

AP Leadership aims to eliminate the obstacles to higher education that children from households with low-income face, ensuring that students graduate from high school and continue onto post-secondary education with the tools to be successful in their education and in life.

Personal and Leadership Development

Students participate in the [Wyman Teen Outreach Program (TOP®)](http://teenoutreachprogram.com/), team building exercises and community leadership opportunities. Students also participate in [7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens](https://www.franklincovey.com/Solutions/education/7habits-teen.html) training sessions and form personal and academic goals.

Mentoring

Students are paired with a mentor, ideally in the career field of their interest. Mentors help students develop life skills, set career and life goals, improve interpersonal skills and increase self-esteem. Students concurrently mentor the students in the Academy of Leaders after-school program.

Financial Literacy

Students are assisted with completing their FAFSA, instructed in the basics of personal banking and in identifying and applying for appropriate scholarship opportunities. AP Leaders are applicable for a $500 to $1000 scholarship per year, based on participation in the program.

College Knowledge Workshops

Students participate in ACT Test Preparation courses, and attend “college knowledge” sessions on college selection guidance, the admissions process and the college application process. Students attend sessions on essay writing and develop individual goals and action plans. Students also tour a variety of college campuses and attend local college fairs and recruitment presentations.

Service Learning

Service Learning takes place through volunteering in Grace Place programs as well as in supervised community service projects on and off the Grace Place campus.

Parent and Family Engagement Activities

Parent and Family Involvement create a support system that promotes a successful student. Parents attend various educational sessions on FAFSA and tax preparation, college transition and completion of college.

**Adult English Language and Literacy**

## The mission of the Adult English Language and Literacy program is to furnish the knowledge and skills necessary for adult learners to succeed in the acquisition of the English language and to nurture the assimilation process to the culture of the United States.

Adult English language learners have the additional advantage of supplementing their English classes with our Rosetta Stone language software in the computer lab.

* Adult English as a Second Language (ESL)
* Citizenship
* Financial Literacy

## Friday Food Pantry

Residents of Golden Gate City live in a food desert. Major grocery chains remain outside this community, so many families rely on smaller local and ethnic food stores, which typically mark up costs and carry fewer fresh produce items. In the past year, Grace Place provided more than 350,000 pounds of food including dairy, meat, and produce, demonstrating the area’s desperate need for nourishment and health, which are essential for effective learning.

Since its opening in 2008, the Friday Food Pantry has been providing a crucial service to the community and has become the largest distribution channel for the Harry Chapin Food Bank in Collier County. Food donations are needed every week and many individuals and groups contribute with food drives.

**STUDENT PROGRAMS: OVERVIEW**

Grace Place believes that after-school programs should provide opportunities and experiences that stimulate a child’s physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. The program must meet the developmental needs of particular age groups and, more importantly, the individual needs of each child. Grace Place will operate quality after-school programs that demonstrate and teach values. Each child will be able to understand and demonstrate the four values of honesty, caring, responsibility and respect. Program components may include but are not limited to recreation, health enhancement, arts, nutritional snacks, service learning, character development, homework assistance and learning centers.

**GOALS**

Academy of Leaders will help students in Golden Gate break the cycle of poverty in their families by improving academic performance, providing them with 21st Century skills needed to succeed, and increasing parental involvement and family literacy skills. We aim to provide a positive, fun, and engaging program while fostering the academic, physical, emotional, and social growth and well-being of our participants. We promote character development, celebrate diversity, encourage service learning, and teach life and leadership skills.

1. Community and Behavior Goals:
   1. Students will have a positive experience. Staff will plan activities and procedures to foster an environment that encourages respect and success, and enhances opportunities for positive interactions and appropriate behavior. Students will understand that they are part of a diverse, supportive and caring community which includes all students and staff and volunteers.
   2. Students will know the rules and exhibit a willingness and intention to follow them. To help students achieve this goal, staff will provide adequate supervision and appropriate consequences for misbehavior.
   3. Students will feel secure and safe. Students will both experience and foster a setting that does not permit bullying, intimidation, harassment, or conduct or statements that demean others.
   4. Students will make new friends. Students will accept and include others as they learn that differences are strengths to be celebrated. To help students achieve this goal, staff will create and maintain an environment where everyone is respected and included.
2. Academic Goals:
   1. Students will engage fully in learning, practicing higher level thinking skills and curiosity.
   2. Students will show significant improved academic performance in math and reading.
   3. Students will show improved commitments to academic success.
   4. Students will exhibit improved initiative and independent learning skills.
3. Service to Others and Leadership Goals:
   1. Students will engage in age-appropriate service activities that benefit the community.
   2. Students will learn leadership skills. Students will have opportunities to set expectations for, inspire, and motivate others in a positive way. To help students achieve this goal, staff will give opportunities for students to take on purposeful roles and support and encourage them in these.
4. Character Goals:
   1. Students will make daily choices based upon positive values that guide good behavior: kindness, honesty, respect and responsibility. These values will not be “hidden” or “assumed” but will be actively discussed and taught. To help students achieve this goal, staff and volunteers will provide encouraging, consistent role models who make appropriate choices themselves.
   2. Students will learn to express gratitude.
   3. Students will experience community through positive and supportive relationships with staff, volunteers and other students.
5. Enrichment and Life Skills Goals:
   1. Students will learn and practice good health, nutrition, and exercise habits.
   2. Students will have the opportunity through field trips and enrichment activities to learn about the world and be exposed to learning activities that will enrich their lives.

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| Measurable Objectives | **Reading/Literacy**  65% of students\* will improve their academic performance in reading. | **Math**  65% of students\* will improve their academic performance in math. | **STEM**  65% of students\* will demonstrate increased knowledge of and interest in science, technology, and engineering. | **Health and** Physical Activity  75% of students\* will increase their understanding and application of fitness and wellness activities that promote a healthy lifestyle. | **Behavior**  75% of students\* will increase their self-confidence, teamwork, initiative, and leadership. |

**HOURS, DAYS AND MONTHS OF OPERATION**

The program will follow the school’s calendar and will be closed for holidays and early release days based on that calendar, unless otherwise noted on the Grace Place calendar.

* **Elementary:** At Grace Place. Operates from 3:15 until 6:15pm, Monday through Thursday from August 21, 2017 and will end May 24, 2018.
* **Middle School:** At Golden Gate Middle School. Operates from school dismissal at 3:50 until 6:20pm, Monday through Thursday from August 21, 2017 and will end May 24, 2018.
* **High School:** At Golden Gate High School. Operates from school dismissal at 2:05 until 5:05pm, Tuesday through Thursday from August 22, 2017 and will end May 24, 2018.

**ARRIVAL PROCEDURES**

Grace Place’s responsibility for your child begins when:

**Elementary:** Your child enters the Grace Place bus after being checked in by staff at a participating school. Once dismissed from school, all Grace Place students should go directly to the Grace Place staff to check-in.

**Middle School:** Once dismissed from school all Grace Place students should report to the cafeteria. In the cafeteria they will be checked-in and dinner is served.

**High School:** Once dismissed from school all Grace Place students should report to the cafeteria. In the cafeteria they will be checked-in and dinner is served.

**DEPARTURE AND RELEASE PROCEDURES**

* **Elementary:** Parents must enter the building and sign their children out of our program. This ensures child safety and compliance with state licensing. Photo ID may be required for the release of your child. The child will only be released to his/her parent and/or those adults that the parent(s) designate on the registration form.
* **Middle School:** Students who have permission to ride their bike home or walk home will be dismissed immediately after they sign-out at 6:20 p.m. Children who are getting picked up will wait by the bus loop at 6:20 p.m.All students have to sign-out before they leave.
* **High School:** Students who have permission to ride their bike home or walk home will be dismissed immediately after they sign-out at 5:05p.m. Teens who are getting picked up will wait by the bus loop at 5:05p.m. Teens who are taking the bus will immediately get in the bus after they sign-out at 5:05p.m.

Amendments to the release section of the enrollment form must be submitted in writing by the parent or guardian who completed the form. If a parent is not allowed to pick up a child, the center must have a copy of the court order signed by a judge. Without this documentation, we are obligated to release a child to either parent.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

In order to protect the health of all children in our care, please keep your child at home if you notice that he/she begins to show signs of an illness or contagious disease or if he/she feels too ill to participate in a group care setting. Please let us know as soon as possible if your child has a communicable illness or infection.

This will allow us to notify the parents of children attending our program. Children with communicable conditions may not return to care without a note from their physician.

Weather permitting, children go outside every day. We cannot keep one child inside due to illness. Children with head lice will not be allowed to attend the after-school program. Grace Place will follow the same guidelines as your child’s school in relation to head lice. If your child becomes ill during the program day, we will contact you to pick him/her up. In case of injury, parents will be notiﬁed immediately.

**CHILD’S BELONGINGS**

Children should be dressed for active indoor and outdoor play. A change of clothes is recommended for the elementary students. Items brought to the program by your child must be labeled and we expect children to be responsible for their personal belongings. Please leave at home personal toys, money, video games, iPods, cell phones or anything not allowed by your child’s school. If an item is left on the bus or at Grace Place, it will be held for two weeks. After two weeks items will be donated to the Grace Place Share Closet for morning families.

**MEDICATION POLICY**

Regular and ongoing medication will not be administered on-site.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

In the case of a medical emergency, we will call 911 and contact the child’s parents/guardians. Responding emergency medical personnel will make any determinations as to if the child should be transported to a hospital. We will provide them with the information from your child’s records as to your choice of hospital and physician. In the event that this information is not speciﬁed, the child will be transported to the nearest available hospital.

**STUDENT LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS AND VALUES**

All Students need to practice the Grace Place leadership expectations daily for the overall success of both the program and the students attending:

* 1. Be kind
  2. Be respectful
  3. Be responsible
  4. Be safe

These are the four core values we want to promote and use daily:

* + 1. Caring
    2. Respect
    3. Honesty
    4. Responsibility

**DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE PROCEDURES** We expect children to behave as follows:

* Be responsible for personal belongings
* Participate in all activities
* Possess positive and caring attitudes
* Follow proper safety procedures at all times
* Respect fellow students and staff
* Stay with your group and listen to your group leader at all times

Self-management skills and positive social interactions among children and adults are encouraged and maximize everyone’s enjoyment of the program. Grace Place programs use positive guidance methods including reminders, distraction, logical consequences and redirection. Self-management skills are taught according to the following guidelines:

* Consistent rules are clearly stated. Children are expected to work and play within known limits.
* Behavior expected of children is age appropriate and according to development level.

Children whose behavior is dangerous or repeatedly disruptive must be immediately picked up from the program by someone designated through the departure and release procedures. Repeatedly disruptive or dangerous behavior will be discussed with the child’s parent and will result in loss of privileges or activities, suspension or termination from the program.

At Grace Place, we want to foster kind, respectful, and positive relationships. Our goal is to build self-esteem, personal responsibility, positive relationships, and a safe, supportive community of learners.

Discipline Referral Action Steps:

* First warning: Site Coordinator will call home and/or send a warning letter home about the incident.
* A second warning: Site Coordinator will have a meeting with parent/guardian and the child to discuss his/her continued behavior.
* A third warning: Site Coordinator gives the child a 3-day suspension from the program and requires a meeting before he/she returns.
* A fourth warning: Will result in a child being expelled from the program.

**FOOD**

An afternoon meal is provided each day. Please do not send an additional snack with your child.

**TRANSPORTATION**

If your child is attending a program that requires transportation, we ask that you speak with your child regarding proper safety guidelines. All children must stay seated while the vehicle is moving and until the vehicle is completely parked. Our primary goal when transporting children is to ensure their safety. Grace Place reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a student if safety procedures and policies are not followed. If your child misses the bus to their program, staff will NOT be able to go back to the school to get your child.

**BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS**

While children are on a bus, they are under the direct supervision of the driver and must obey the driver at all times. Failure to follow the driver’s rules will be considered an act of disobedience and will result in disciplinary action.

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

In cases of inclement weather, Grace Place will follow speciﬁc school district recommendations. If the school is closed or all after school extracurricular activities are cancelled due to weather, Grace Place after school program is also closed. If the weather begins to worsen during the day, we will ask you to pick up your child as soon as possible so our staff members may get home safely.

* If there is a lightning storm Grace Place will place all students in a safe covered area.
* All children will be dismissed from the bus pick-up area.
* During red alert (severe weather), parents should pick-up their child from the bus pick-up area.

**LATE PICK-UP for Elementary and Middle school only**

Please call the site director if an unexpected emergency will cause you to be late picking up your child. Staff must be notified if children will not picked up by 6:30 pm. In the event that a child has not been picked up within one hour of the stated closing time, staff members have been instructed to call the Department for Children and Families (DCF). In the event that a child is repeatedly left past the closing hour, Grace Place reserves the right to terminate the child’s enrollment in the program.

**STAFF**

Certain staff members maintain current First Aid and CPR certiﬁcations. All potential employees are required to pass a criminal background screening. Staff members are not permitted to have outside contact with children enrolled in our child care programs. Please do not ask staff to babysit, drop off or pick up your child.

**STAFF/CHILDREN RATIOS**

Grace Place strives for one staff member per 15 children ratio for Elementary and Middle school. For high school, one staff member per 20 children.

**HOMEWORK**

Grace Place provides assistance and reminds and encourages, but does not force children to do homework. We will provide approximately 30 minutes daily for homework to be completed. If homework is not completed within the timeframe students are allowed to stay in the homework room until completion of homework.

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Grace Place for Children and Families is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in the programs and activities, as such:

1. All staff and volunteers must read and agree to abide by the following policies before beginning to volunteer with children or youth at Grace Place.
2. Before placing any staff or volunteer with children or youth, a designated staff member will
3. Meet with the applicant, reviewing with them the Child Protection Policy.
4. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) may work with children or youth in any Grace Place sponsored activity. All adult and youth volunteers must have a completed volunteer application on file and completed the screening process before beginning a volunteer assignment.
5. No adult or youth staff or volunteer may ever be alone with a child.
6. All adult and youth staff and volunteers shall attend regular training and educational events provided by Grace Place to keep volunteers informed of policies and procedures.
7. All adult and youth staff and volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior by staff, volunteers, visitors, parents, youth, or children that seems abusive or inappropriate.
8. All adult and youth staff and volunteers shall observe this Child Protection Policy at all times.

**SPECIAL NEEDS**

Grace Place remains committed to providing a nurturing, safe, caring environment where all children will feel valued and loved. Grace Place will consider the application of children with special needs on a case by case basis.  Children must meet the chronological age requirement and possess physical qualifications necessary for participation. Children exhibiting behaviors that are a danger to self or others will follow the Behavior Management Policy.  
  
**GRACE PLACE PARENTS**

What Can You Do as Parents to Help Your Child?

Spend time listening to your child read!

* Ask questions about the story – “What was it about?”
* Ask them to define some words – “What does this mean?”

Have your child show you their homework!

* “What are you learning these days?”
* “What was easy about this assignment?”
* “What was difficult? Can I help you?”
* “Did you do your personal best?”

Focus on what your child learned today – at school or at Grace Place!

* “What was the most exciting thing about today?”
* “What was hard about today? Tell me more.”
* “What book are you reading now?”

**Support your child’s learning.** We would ask that your child bring their homework to the Grace Place program every day and let us help them to get it done to their very best!

**Make certain your child attends Grace Place every day.** Please schedule any appointments for your child on a Friday (when we don’t have program) to avoid any absences. Please call us whenever your child is unable to attend. Please talk with your child/ren and insist they bring their homework to Grace Place and get it done.

Please volunteer to help - in the classroom, help chaperone field trips or volunteer to speak to the children about a hobby you have, your job or an interest that would be meaningful for our students to hear.

**Attendance Policy**

Grace Place Academy of Leaders, a 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, is a FREE program for students that could benefit from a variety of stimulating personal enrichment activities that promote school success and well-being in a safe environment. Active attendance and engagement are essential to the student and program’s success.

Grace Place will be monitoring attendance regularly and if a child missed more than the permitted days they will be at risk for dismissal of the program. We will notify parent(s) or guardian if a child is at risk.

I understand that the requirements of the program include the following:

* Students must attend after school programming until the end of the program day (6:15pm Elementary, 6:20pm Middle School, 5:05pm High School)
* Students and parents / guardians must attend Family Literacy events at a minimum of three (3) events per school year
* Students must maintain a consistent daily attendance and may not miss more than three (3) for elementary, six (6) for middle school in any one month and five (5) for high school in any one month
* Absence of days beyond three (3) for elementary, six (6) for middle school and five (5) high school in any one month we will require a doctor’s note to maintain an active status
* Parent / Guardians are required to notify the program if a student will be absent and prior to withdrawal from the program
* Students will participate in programming activities with an emphasis on reading and STEM skills
* Students will complete pre and post assessments as required by the grant funded contract
* Parents / Guardians will participate in a satisfaction survey process at least two times a year

**Communicate with us!** Please share with us anything that you think would be beneficial for us to hear. What is going well and/or any concerns you have about Grace Place. Do you have a suggestion to improve what happens at Grace Place? Please share thoughts or ideas with us.

 Grace Place Academy of Leaders Program

21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC)

Participant and Parent / Guardian

Statement of Commitment

**I have read, understand and agree to comply with the requirements listed herein. I realize that failure to comply with these requirements may result in loss of my funded space and termination from this program**.

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(Parent / Guardian Signature) (Date)

**Required**

This section is to be completed by parent / guardian and site director or supervisor in charge of the Grace Place 21st Century Community Learning Center program.

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_parent / guardian of ) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ give my permission for the staff of this 21st CCLC program, located at the Grace Place for Families and Children, to review my child’s academic and behavior progress reports or their report card in order to document growth and progress in my child during his / her time in this after school program. This includes information about whether my child has an identified exceptionality, an Individual Education Plan or Academic Improvement Plan, and suggestions from my child’s teacher on how my child can best be helped in this program.

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Parent / Guardian Signature Date Site Director Signature Date