Grace Place is excited to have your child join our program. Our goal is to provide a welcoming, instructional and appropriate environment for every child and family. Academy of Leaders will provide activities, instructional support, tutoring, and life experiences to aide your child in his/her development and strengthen the developmental, social-emotional, and motor skills needed for grades k-5th.

We acknowledge that nothing is more important than your child and truly believe that open communication with our parents is key to achieve our goals. We welcome and appreciate all your suggestions, comments, questions, and concerns to improve the quality of our program.

The following parent handbook was written and designed to provide clear guidelines and expectations for the Academy of Leaders program. The handbook is alphabetized for easier access and is provided to parents in a multitude of locations. Parents can find the parent handbook in the office of the Elementary Site Manager, digitally on [www.graceplacenaples.org](http://www.graceplacenaples.org), or sent out digitally via the Remind app. Parents may also request a printed copy of the parent handbook at any time and for any reason.



**Our Mission**

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

**Our Vision**

That all families in Golden Gate have access to education to break the cycle of poverty.

**Absences:** Students are required to attend program daily during program hours. Students are allowed excused absences for the following: doctor/dentist appointments, therapy appointments, sick days (please see sick policy,) and school functions such as conferences. Any vacations or trips out of town must be communicated with the Elementary Site Manager or Assistant Site Manager prior to the scheduled absence. Any other absences will not be excused. If a student misses more than 2 days in one month without an excuse, the student may be subject to removal from program.

**Bathroom Accidents Policy:** Students have access to bathrooms during all hours of program. Every classroom is equipped with a bathroom. If a student has an accident on campus we will provide them with a change of clothes that must be washed and returned the same week. A parent or guardian will be immediately contacted to pick up their child after a bathroom accident.

**Behavior Management:** Students are expected to comply with all rules while on campus. Rules and limits are put into place to ensure that all students and staff are safe, and students are able to learn effectively. In the event that a student does not comply with program rules, they will be given two verbal warnings by a staff member or classroom teacher before being removed from the classroom. The student will meet with the Elementary Site Manager and discuss the event. The student will fill out a reflection sheet, then be returned to class. The second occurrence will result in a parent being immediately notified and asked to come in for a conference. On the third occurrence a parent will be immediately notified, will need to pick up their child upon receiving the phone call, and will be notified that their child is on a suspension. The suspension will last for a full four days of program. When the child returns to program, they will meet with the Elementary Site Manager to discuss how they will be proactive in changing their behavior and making better choices. If a child who has already been suspended is sent to the office one more time, they will be subject to removal from the program and will need to be picked up immediately. They will not be considered for any subsequent years at Grace Place.

**Checking Identification:** Students will only be released to a parent or guardian who is on the approved pickup list. If another adult who is not on the approved pickup list will be picking up a student from campus, the parent or guardian will need to verbally communicate with either the Elementary Site Manager or the Assistant Site Manager at least one hour prior to the start of program. The person picking up the students will be required to bring a form of identification in order for Grace Place to release the student to them.

**Child Abuse and Neglect:** All staff members who are directly in contact with children are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. All staff are trained on recognizing the signs of child abuse and neglect. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the staff member will immediately notify the Elementary Site Manager who will follow the correct steps in reporting.

**Children with Special Needs:** Grace Place is committed to meeting the needs of all children. This includes children with special health care needs such as asthma and allergies, as well as children with emotional or behavior issues or chronic illness and disability. Inclusion of children with special needs enriches the childcare experience and all staff, families, and children benefit.

1. Confidentiality is assured with all families and staff in our program.
2. All families will be treated with dignity and with respect for their individual needs and/or differences.
3. Children with special needs will be accepted into our program under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
4. Children with special needs will be given the opportunity to participate in the program to the fullest extent possible. To accomplish this, we may consult with our public health nurse consultant and other agencies/organizations as needed.
5. An individual plan of care is developed for each child with a special health care need. The plan of care includes information and instructions for:

* Daily care
* Potential emergency situations
* Care during and after a disaster
* Completed plans are requested from health care provider annually or more often as needed for changes. Plans are reviewed, initialed, and dated annually by parent/guardian.

The Director is responsible for ensuring care plans are kept updated.

**Conferences:** Parents may feel free to set up a conference with the Elementary Site Manager and Assistant Elementary Site Manager at any time with a few days of prior notice. Other conferences will be required as per the Behavior Management policy.

**Confidentiality:** Protecting the privacy of the very young is especially important. For that reason, records are kept and access to authorized personnel. We will not share your information with any third party outside of our organization, other than as necessary to fulfill your request.

**Emergency Drills:** Fire drill, severe weather drills, and lockdown drills are carried out in rotation once a month. One fire drill will be conducted using an alternate evacuation route, and one fire drill will be in the presence and at the request of the licensing authority. This drill will be coordinated with the operator or designee.

**Emergency Preparedness Plan:** Please see attached plan at the bottom of the handbook.

**Field Trips:** During the school year students do not leave campus for field trips. During the summer program students leave campus for field trips on a weekly basis. The field trip schedule will be sent out digitally or in writing to each parent before the program start date. Students will depart on a Grace Place bus to the field trip destination, arrive at the destination, and return on a Grace Place bus. One extra adult is required to attend off-campus field trips in addition to regular staff ratios.

**Holidays:** Grace Place follows the CCPS calendar. There will be no program on the following days: Labor Day (Monday the 2nd of September,) Thanksgiving Break (Wednesday the 2th and Thursday the 28th of November,) Winter Break (Monday the 23rd of December-Tuesday the 7th of January,) Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Monday the 20th of January,) President’s Day (Monday the 16th of March,) and Memorial Day (Monday the 25th of March.)

**Homework:** Students are given 30 minutes to complete homework every day. If they do not complete their homework during the given time frame, they will be pulled from the rest of the daily activities to work with a volunteer or staff member to complete it. However, homework is meant to be completed at home. It is not the responsibility of Grace Place staff to ensure that every student completes their homework on a daily basis- that is the responsibility of the parent.

**Hours of Operation:** The elementary program at Grace Place begins on August 19th and ends on May 21st. Program hours begin at 2:50 p.m. when the students are released from their schools and are signed in by program staff. Program ends at 5:45 p.m. when parents arrive to sign out their children. Any holidays, teacher planning days, or early release days are observed by Grace Place.

**Illness:** If a student begins to feel ill during program hours they will be isolated from the class and brought to a predetermined isolation area. Parents will be immediately notified and will be expected to pick up their sick child. The student may return with either a doctor’s note or after the symptoms are no longer present. Students who have diarrhea more than once in 24 hours, or a fever may not return to program for 48 hours, unless with permission from a doctor. If lice are discovered on a student, they will be isolated while parents are notified. The student may not return to program until treatment has been given.

**Medical Emergencies:** In the event of a medical emergency parents will be notified and emergency services called. Students who are in need of medical services off campus will be transported to the hospital that was given during registration by the parents.

**Medication:** Parents are required to notify Grace Place of any medications or allergies that their children have during registration. An allergy sheet is kept on file as well as posted in the homeroom for each child, and in the cafeteria. Staff are not allowed to administer any medications to students. Any medications that need to be administered by a parent must be done before or after program hours, or by the parent themselves during program. Asthma inhalers do count as medication and should be kept on campus at all times.

**Newsletter:** A parent newsletter will be sent out once a month. A link to this newsletter will be digitally sent to all parents as well as posted on the parent bulletin board located at the bottom of the staircase facing the water fountains.

**Parent Participation:** Participation in program activities is heavily encouraged. Parents must be involved in a minimum of 3 family events per year. There are multiple opportunities for parents to participate in program activities with their children. Open Houses occur twice a year, STEAM nights three times a year, and school events are counted as well. Oftentimes various parent workshops are also held throughout the year and will be sent out to all parents when the time comes.

**Pool:** During the school year students do not leave campus for swim lessons. During the summer students leave campus to have swimming lessons at the Santa Barbara Community Pool. The pool schedule will be sent out digitally or in writing to each parent before the program start date. Students will depart on a Grace Place bus to the pool, arrive at the pool, and return on a Grace Place bus. One extra adult is required to attend off-campus field trips in addition to regular staff ratios. Parents must send bathing suits and towels with their children. Sunscreen must be applied at home and cannot be brought onto campus.

**Ratios:** Each class has 22 students and a minimum of one DCF certified (or currently in training) staff member. Other adults in the room may be adult volunteers, school teachers, or high school volunteers. Staff and volunteers are to never be left alone with a child and have been trained on ratios.

**Registration:** Registration happens twice a year. Once for summer program, and once for school year program. Parents will be called and notified as to when they are able to come in and register. Appointments are required and walk-ins are discouraged. Any parents who do not register by the deadline will be relegated to the waitlist. Parents must bring all of their children’s student ID’s, even if they are only signing up one child, as well as all of their children’s birth certificates. Waitlist procedures are as follows: 1. Priority via Patty, Diane, Tom, Dr. Tim, School Principals 2. Students that were previously in our program and have a sibling in program 3. Students that were previously in our program. 4. Students that have a sibling in our Elementary Program. 5. Students that have a sibling/parent currently involved in a GP Program. 6. Students that WERE involved in Bright Beginnings/Parents in Adult Education/BB. 7. Length of time on waitlist.

**Sign In/ Out Procedures:** Students will be signed in on a daily attendance sheet by the staff member in charge of their group each day. Parents will sign their children out at the end of program on the same attendance sheet, signing their name and providing the time of departure. They will have a separate attendance sheet for the bus. Students must be signed out by either an approved parent or guardian, or by an approved sibling older than 18. If students are walkers they may sign themselves out with prior written consent given by a parent or guardian. In the event that a student needs to be picked up early from program the parent or guardian should go directly to the reception area and notify the receptionist or volunteer at the desk. Parents must provide a valid excuse in order to take their children early, and if one is not provided the day will be counted as an unexcused absence.

**Snacks/Dinner:** Students will be given a snack daily when they arrive on campus. They will be given 10-15 minutes to eat the snack in the classrooms. The snack is provided by Child Care of Southwest Florida and changes every day. The snack schedule is posted in each classroom as well as the cafeteria, and on the parent bulletin board. Students will also receive a hot meal daily. This meal is provided by Child Care of Southwest Florida and will be eaten at the end of the program.

**Staff:** The staff working for the elementary program and that are on site include the following: Elementary Site Manager, Assistant Elementary Site Manager, Lead Program Assistants, AP Leaders, and a food service worker.

**Transporting Children:** Grace Place employees its own bussing staff. Students are picked up from Golden Gate Elementary, Golden Gate Intermediate, Golden Terrace North (primary), and Golden Terrace South (intermediate.) Students are checked in at the schools, then again when they arrive on campus. There are first aid kits located on each of the buses. All bus drivers are CPR and First Aid certified.

**Weather/Emergency Closings:** In the event of severe weather parents will be notified by phone to pick up their children early. Parents or guardians are able to sign their children ahead before the normal program time. However, students who walk or ride bicycles home from Grace Place will not be allowed to leave campus without a parent sign-out. Those students will be kept on campus until the severe weather is over, or until a parent is able to pick them up.

**Withdrawal:** Parents may withdraw their children from the program at any time and for any reason. The Elementary Site Manager must be notified by a parent or guardian one week prior to the student’s last day. Failure to do so will put the student on the bottom of the waitlist if they decide to re-enroll in the future. Students who have previously been in the program and correctly withdraw will have a higher priority on returning than students who have not attended program previously.

**Grace Place for Children and Families**

**Campus Safety Plan**

**Purpose**

To provide a safe and orderly campus for students, staff and volunteers. The campus safety plan is designed to provide clear and consistent procedures to be followed by all staff and volunteers while on the Grace Place campus.

**Procedures**

1. The Facilities Management Team will take the lead in communicating all safety plan direction on campus. Any concerns regarding safety and security are to be reported to a member of the administrative team immediately.
2. Communication regarding campus safety and security will be done through the following methods: classroom walkie talkie, phone intercom system, text, email, face-face communication.
3. Communication will be clear, concise and specific. The following emergency directives will be used:

* **Secure the Campus**
* **Evacuate the Building**
* **Weather Emergency**

1. In the event of an emergency the following procedures are to be followed:

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| --- | --- |
| **Type of Emergency** | **Safety Procedures** |
| **Secure the Campus**  This is used with possible intruders, stray animals that appear dangerous, and neighborhood alerts from the Sheriff’s Department. | * **An Operations Staff person will lockdown all electronic door locks.** * **Immediately lock the door and turn off interior lights.** * **Move away from windows and doors.** * **Remain quiet and still until directed to do otherwise.** * **If outside go directly to the nearest building and follow directions.** * **Do NOT exit the building if the fire alarm sounds unless so directed** |
| **Evacuate the Building**  Most used with the sounding of the fire alarm. Could be some other type of life safety issue. | * **Exit the building and walk to the designated meeting area.** * **Movement is to be swift, quiet and orderly.** * **Confirm that you have all of your students, volunteers, and staff accounted for.** * **Remain in that place until directed to return to the building.** |
| **Weather Emergency**  Used for high winds, hail, and heavy rains | * **Go inside of the building and move away from windows and doors.** * **Remain inside until directions are provided to resume activities.** * **Staff can move between rooms and buildings if safe** |
| **Lightening Red Alert**  Used when the ThorGuard Lightening System indicates lightening in the area | * **Go inside of the building and move away from windows and doors.** * **Remain inside until directions are provided to resume activities.** * **Staff need to remain indoor also** |

1. **Stranger on Campus** – If someone unknown or suspicious is observed on campus, report this information to an administrative staff person immediately. Do not approach the individual if you feel that the situation may be unsafe. Children should be quickly escorted away from the situation to a safe location.

**Campus Safety Precautions**

* **Wear a Grace Place name tag at all times while on campus.**
* **Classroom doors should remain locked at all times. The use of the electronic fob is provided to staff in order to control access to the classroom from outside.**
* **Each door has a dead bolt look or has an access bar that can be locked.**
* **In the event that the door cannot be locked in an emergency, push furniture in front of the door to act as a barricade.**
* **Be aware and monitor surroundings at all times.**
* **Be sure that children are escorted by an adult outside of the classrooms and that children are supervised at all times while on campus.**
* **Report any safety or security concerns immediately.**
* **Be a proactive part of the Grace Place Safety Plan.**

**Our overall approach to an intruder, potential or active shooter is**

**ALERT – make everyone aware of the situation and contact Sheriff’s Department**

**LOCKDOWN- Secure the Campus (in place)**

**INFORM – keep everyone informed of changes and desired actions (paging system & radios)**

**COUNTER – Counter moves include creating barricades. Other alternatives are discussed during safety training.**

**EVACUATE – safely, when told and in the specific direction as instructed, which could include leaving by a back door.**

**AoL Elementary Family Agreement**

**I understand that:**

* My child must attend the program regularly (minimum 90% attendance – no more than 2 absences per month).
  + If I do not comply with the attendance requirement, my child is at risk of losing his/her placement in the program.
* I must notify the office by 12:00 PM (NOON), if my child is unable to attend programming.
* My child will be respectful of his/her classmates, staff and teachers.
* I will be involved in a minimum of 3 family events this year.
  + *For example: Parent Orientation, Family Literacy Days, Student Led Conferences, Parent Cafes, etc.*
* I will participate in school events at my child’s school.

**Transportation**

* I understand and will ensure my child utilizes the seat belts while on the bus.

**X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent’s Name please print/ Nombre de padre**