

Graceful

Beginnings

Pre-Kindergarten

Grace Covenant Community Church

99 Café Lane
Middleburg, PA 17842

(570) 837-5809
GBPreK@hotmail.com

Dear Parent(s),

Thank you for choosing Graceful Beginnings Pre-Kindergarten as your child's preschool! We have reserved a spot for your child in the fall and look forward to meeting, getting to know, and teaching him/her. If you have not yet paid your \$30.00 registration fee, please remember that it is due within two weeks to save your child's spot in our program.

I am sure that you have some questions about the preschool program and schedule. I have enclosed a "typical" daily schedule, some general information about the program, and some goals and objectives for our preschool. Also included is a student information sheet, which needs to be filled out and returned to us as soon as possible. The first day of school is set for Tuesday, September 3rd.

We would also like to invite you to join us for an open house in our classroom on Thursday, August 22nd from 6:00-7:30pm. Feel free to stop by at any point in this time period to see the classroom, meet the teachers, and get acquainted with some new friends your child will be making during the year. Mark your calendars now!

Also, please add the above email address to your contacts. We will contact you before school begins with reminders or announcements.

Again, we appreciate your trust in our program and are excited about meeting you and your child. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at or send me an email.

Thank you,



Bethany L. Zechman ("Miss Beth")
Director & Teacher

A Typical Day's Schedule

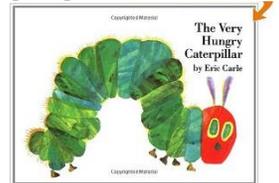
Morning Circle (9:05–9:25 or 1:05–1:20)—includes announcements, morning message, sharing time, show and tell, calendar, weather, setting the schedule for the day, and activities corresponding with the week's theme.

Music and Movement Time (9:25–9:40 or 1:20–1:35)—includes songs, fingerplays, games, and other activities to encourage expression and improve gross motor skills. Examples of movement activities include ball handling skills, large group games, or playground time.



Bathroom/Snack Time (9:40–10:10 or 1:35–2:05)—before snack each day, all preschoolers will use the bathroom, wipe, flush, and wash their hands. Each day, a different student will be responsible for bringing a snack and drink to share with both classes. Students are asked to use good manners “please” and “thank-you” during snack, and conversation is encouraged to develop language skills.

Interactive Read-Aloud (10:10–10:25 or 2:05–2:15)—students will hear a book to teach a concept based on the weekly theme. Read-aloud time includes prereading activities such as discussing pictures or making predictions, reading the book, and discussing it afterward to evaluate comprehension.



Math (Tuesday/Wednesday, 10:25–10:50 or 2:15–2:40)—we will learn a weekly math concept, such as a shape or number, as well as work on other math skills such as sorting, classifying, completing patterns, telling time to the hour, and identifying and using coins. This is usually done through short lessons followed by math “games” to reinforce the skills being taught.



Journals (Thursday, 10:25–10:50 or 2:15–2:40)—students draw “stories” in their own journals. Skills taught during journal time include how to draw particular objects, using a variety of colors in drawings, and adding details to the drawings. After the story is drawn, students dictate to the teacher what happens in their stories and the teacher writes down, word for word, what the students say, encouraging letter identification, sounds, and other prereading skills. For the second half of the year, “kidwriting” is introduced, where the students who will be entering kindergarten in the fall will do their own writing with their own invented spelling, listening for the beginning, middle, and ending sounds in words while learning conventions such as writing left to right and top to bottom and using spaces.



Shared Reading (Big Book) (10:50–11:05 or 2:40–2:50)—each week, we will use one book, poem, nursery rhyme, or other large text to focus on a letter of the week, rhyming words, rules of reading, beginning sounds, and other pre-reading skills. After hearing the story, students will be asked to help “read” the book by chiming in on predictable or rhyming text.

Center Time (11:05–11:50 or 2:50–3:20)—students choose and engage independently or in small groups in centers that will likely include the following: letters/literacy skills, math, building, sensory, dramatic play, writing, art, library, or listening to books on CD. They use this time to practice on their own the skills that we have been learning through manipulating materials and using hands-on learning. Besides letters, shapes, and numbers, as students work together they are learning to cooperate with others, share, improve language skills, problem-solve, follow directions, and complete a task. Whew! No wonder the kids come home tired!

Clean up/Review Time (11:50–12:00 or 3:20–3:30)—students clean up materials and review the day.

Graceful Beginnings Handbook



Read on to learn some important information about our program!

Absences

If your child will not be in school for a day, please contact us via phone, email, or ClassDojo (an app that we use) *before the start of school that day* to let us know that he will not be attending. If your child has a fever over 100 degrees, excessive coughing, diarrhea, vomiting, chills, a contagious or unidentified rash, goopy eyes, or any other contagious illness, please keep him home so we do not have a preschool epidemic! Please do not give your sick child Tylenol and then send him to school. Children should be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to preschool.

Arrival Routine

As the children come into school, we would like them to become accustomed to a routine. Please help your child to find his hook and hang up his coat and backpack, find his apple and place it in the correct spot, and enter the room quietly and choose an activity. While your child will need help at the beginning of the year, we would like this routine to become more independent as the year progresses. Preschoolers are very capable of removing coats, getting materials out of backpacks, and hanging their things up. They should also be practicing putting their coats back on (including zipping) and putting their things in their backpacks. They will need to do these things independently in kindergarten!

Behavior Management

We use a “Red and Green” choices behavior management plan. In our classroom, we will have green choices that are “good to go” and red choices that we must learn to “stop.” There is a picture chart in our classroom to remind us of which are the green and which are red choices. We use this chart to reinforce green choices and redirect the red ones. If a child is frequently making red choices (after the first few weeks of school), we will use a behavior chart to encourage him to make green choices. The class can also work together to earn class rewards by making green choices!



Book Orders

You will receive a set of Scholastic book orders about every month for you to look through with your child and have the option to choose some books to add to your collection. Book orders are an excellent way to purchase books at a discounted price for birthdays, Christmas, or just for fun for your child or other young friends and relatives. They are also great ways to reinforce skills that we are learning in school. Participation is completely optional!

Communication

Communication between parents and teachers is very important! If you have any questions or concerns, please voice them to a teacher. We will work to keep communication lines open by sending home monthly newsletters describing what will be



happening throughout the month. We will also send home progress reports in January and May so you can see how much your child has learned! If you have any concerns about your child, feel free to let us know so that we can help out or watch for warning signs. If we see a problem or concern, we will let you know, but consider no news as a sign that your child is doing just fine!

Entrance to the School and Security

The entrance to the school is on the left side of the building if you are looking at the building from the front parking lot. Go up the steps onto the porch, through the black doors, and straight ahead into the classroom.

For security purposes, the doors to the school will be locked each day from 9:07-11:50 and 1:07-3:20. If you arrive late or need to pick up a child early, you will need to enter the building through the glass doors in the front and report to the church secretary, Denise.

Expectations of Parents

We are only blessed enough to have your child in our care for 5 or 9 hours per week. This is only a fraction of the time that you will spend with him/her weekly! While we will be called your child's teachers this year, you are still the first teacher in your child's life! We will do our best to prepare your child for kindergarten, but unless you are supplementing our curriculum at home, your child will not be learning as quickly as he/she could. Therefore, while we do NOT give formal "homework," we do ask that you spend at least 15 minutes per day working on letters, numbers, shapes, counting, patterns, or whatever else we are learning in the classroom. Read the newsletters for ideas on how to do that, or talk to us if you are in need of resources. However, it can be as easy as counting bubbles in the tub or looking for letters on the cereal box! No fancy lessons needed!

Also, we cannot stress enough the importance of reading to your child EVERY DAY! We want each kiddo to develop a love of reading, and that will start at home. If you are having trouble finding time, make it a specific part of your daily routine—after school, before nap, before bed, after dinner, etc. Reading to your child will help with his language skills (speech AND vocabulary), letter recognition, rhyming, attention span, book handling skills, and so much more! Read, READ, **READ!**

Field Trips

Our classes will be taking field trips from time to time to supplement our curriculum. A signed permission slip will be required in order for your child to participate in the trip. Parent chaperones and drivers will be requested for each trip; we ask that each parent attend at least one trip throughout the year. Criminal History and Child Abuse clearances are required for all chaperones.

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, we will operate on the same schedule as Midd-West School District. If they run on a delay, we will begin school at 10:00, rather than 9:00. We will also follow the district for early dismissals and closings unless the problem is not weather-related (water main break, etc).

Parent Volunteers

We want parents to feel welcome in our classroom, but we do not require parents to volunteer. During the first month or two of school, we avoid bringing parents into the classroom until we are adjusted to routines and have worked through separation anxieties, but beginning in October–November, parents (or grandparents!) are welcome. We realize that many parents work during the day and are not able to help out in the classroom, and that is fine! In order to volunteer in our classroom or chaperone field trips, you must provide us with copies of your Criminal History and Child Abuse clearances. Please let us know if volunteering is something that you would like to do or if you need more information on how to obtain clearances.

Parenting a Preschool Child..

Here are some things that you can be working on with your child in the next few months before school starts (if you haven't already).

- **Drinking from a regular cup (if your child still uses a sippy cup)
- **Pulling up, buttoning, snapping, and zippering pants as well as putting on shirts and coats and zippering them.
- **Wiping after using the bathroom. For liability reasons, we do not assist the children in wiping.
- **Putting on shoes and socks and keeping them on. We do not allow children to go barefoot in the classroom for safety reasons.
- **Washing hands with soap and water.
- **Cleaning up toys when finished with them and cleaning up after a meal
- **Establishing a bedtime and (somewhat) consistent waking time. Preschool can be exhausting, so don't be surprised if your child needs extra sleep. If he doesn't normally roll out of bed until 9:30 and is in the morning class, keep that in mind in the weeks before school starts! If he normally naps from 1:00–2:00 and is in the afternoon class, you may need to start to phase out the nap or adjust the time a bit.
- **Playing short games (Candyland, Memory, etc) to get your child accustomed to focusing on a task for more than just a few short minutes
- **Coloring/drawing/writing and holding a crayon (or other writing utensil) correctly.
- **Hearing, understanding, and obeying boundaries and the word "no."

Payment

Payment is due on the first school day of each month, with the exception of September's payment which is due on or before Open House on August 22nd. No cash will be accepted as payment; please pay by check or money order. You will not be billed. If tuition is not paid by the third school day of the month, there will be a \$10.00 late charge. Monthly tuition for will be \$155 per month for the AM class and \$105 per month for the PM class.

Releasing of Students

We will only release students to the people listed on your child's information sheet (included in this packet). If an emergency arises, we need written or in-person consent to release your child to another person, and we will ask to see identification.

School Day

The morning class runs from 9:00-12:00 each day, and the afternoon is from 1:00-3:30. We have had issues in the past with parents repeatedly picking up their children late or dropping them off early. We are not a babysitting service; please do not arrive before 8:55 or 12:55, and failure to pick up your child within 10 minutes after the end of school will result in an additional charge.

School Year

The school year will begin on Tuesday, September 3 and run until Thursday, May 28th. We will be closed on the following days: Wednesday, November 27, Thursday, November 28, and Tuesday, December 3 for Thanksgiving, December 24-January 2 for the Christmas holiday, and Thursday, April 17 for Easter. *(Days off are subject to change pending the release of the Midd-West School District calendar for next school year).*

Show and Tell

Your child's show and tell day for the month will be the day that he/she brings snack. He/she can bring in an item/photo/etc. to share with the class on that day. There is a **secret box** outside the classroom in which your child can place his/her show and tell to keep it a surprise until circle time. Show and tell is an excellent way to foster expressive language development, so we encourage you to have your child practice sharing his item and a few things about it (such as where he got it, what he likes to do with it, or why it is special to him.)

Snack

Part of our routine each day is snack time, where the kiddos will be practicing good table manners, saying please and thank you, and eating together as a group. Children are expected to stay at the table until snack time is over. Each day, one child will bring snack for all of the students. If your child's snack day is a Tuesday or Thursday, you will need to provide snack for 24 students. If it is a Wednesday, there are 12 students. When you bring snack, please bring a healthy snack (fruit, veggies, pretzels, whole-grain crackers, etc.) We try to schedule snack days on or near birthdays, so if you would like to bring in a special treat for birthdays, that is fine, but we ask that you send something healthy as well to supplement. Your child's snack day will also be his/her show and tell day. (See show and tell).

Teachers

Your child will have one teacher, Miss Beth (Zechman), and one assistant, Miss Jess (Ward).

Withdrawal

You are registering your child for the entire preschool year, from September through May. If, for some extenuating circumstances (relocation or illness), you need to withdraw your child from our program, there will be a \$50.00 early termination fee. In addition, we require one month's notice so that we can fill your child's spot. If you do not give one month's notice, you will still be required to pay for that month.

Goals and Objectives of Graceful Beginnings Curriculum

Our vision is to “build solid foundations” for children as they enter their educational career that will last, at least, for the next 13 years! We want children to learn letters, numbers, shapes, and how to color inside the lines, but we also want them to have a desire for learning, enjoy school, get along with others, and be kids! Our philosophy is that children learn best when engaging all of their senses, so we do our best to teach by having the children watch/see, hear, move, and touch. If we are learning the letter Ss, rather than complete a worksheet, we will skip while singing words that begin with the letter Ss. We will slither like snakes while saying the /s/ sound. We will write the letter S in sand. All of these activities teach the letter Ss while keeping the kids moving, allowing them to be creative, and using multisensory (more than one sense) strategies.

We also use a variety of group strategies to reinforce concepts, so children will learn in a large group environment (circle time, story time, shared reading) as well as small groups or individually (centers, math games, kidwriting, etc). While new concepts are taught by a teacher, many of our centers and games are child-directed, so children will be exploring and learning on their own or with a buddy.

Listed are some of the goals that we want children to reach before they enter kindergarten. While all children develop at different rates, we will do our best to facilitate learning in each child. Do not be alarmed if you see less progress in your child than in others; many of the skills focused on at this age are based on brain development, so your child may not be quite physically or mentally ready for a particular skill and will catch on when his brain decides that it is ready!

S o c i a l a n d I n t e r p e r s o n a l S k i l l s

- Students will develop good relationships with peers and teachers by sharing, using manners and kind words, and working together.
- Students will focus more on others by helping teachers and peers and displaying caring attitudes.

S e l f - H e l p S k i l l s a n d I n d e p e n d e n c e

- Students will gain independence by learning to complete tasks independently and help others.
- Students will make choices about how to spend their time and explain why.
- Students will participate in the passing out, collecting, and organizing of materials.
- Students will develop and implement problem-solving skills.



A c a d e m i c s

- Early Literacy
 - Students will identify and write most letters of the alphabet and say their sounds.
 - Students will become familiar with a wide range of books.
 - Students will produce basic rhymes.
 - Students will develop comprehension skills including retelling a story, recalling events, and identifying characters and setting.
 - Students will recognize, write, and spell their names.
 - Students will recognize some words.
 - Students will develop a foundation for the mechanics of writing (left to right, top to bottom, spaces between words, punctuation, etc)
 - Students will develop phonemic awareness, the ability to hear and manipulate individual sounds in words.
- Math
 - Students will identify up to 8 shapes and draw some of them.
 - Students will develop number sense by identify and writing numbers 0-10, counting to 30, and ordering numbers from 1-10.
 - Students will sort objects.
 - Students will engage in activities that involve collecting, building, counting, comparing, and sorting.
 - Students will learn the meanings of position words such as under, over, and behind.

- Students will complete patterns with two pictures (AB and AABB) and three pictures (ABC).
- Science/social studies
 - Students will engage in activities based around a theme for each week. Students will learn about themselves, their families, and their friends, as well as their senses and bodies.

Spiritual Life

- Students will learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit through Bible lessons and music.
- Students will pray before snack, thanking God for their food and other blessings.

Learning Readiness

- Students will follow directions, learn to work cooperatively and independently, develop an attention span, develop self-control, and stay on a task until it is completed.
- Students will enjoy school, have fun, and develop a desire to learn new things.

Language

- Students will verbally communicate with teachers, parents, and peers.
- Students will increase their vocabularies.
- Students will sing songs and recite nursery rhymes, poems, and fingerplays in order to improve speech, fluency, and vocabulary.

Music, Art, and Drama

- Students will use a variety of materials (markers, paint, crayons, etc.) to create original work.
- Students will participate in music activities, such as singing, playing instruments, or doing finger-plays.
- Students will participate in dramatic play activities.
- Students will respond to music through physical movement.

Motor Development

- Students will improve gross motor skills such as hopping on one foot, running, climbing, swinging, and ball handling.
- Students will practice fine motor skills such as writing, cutting, and pasting.

Ways we accomplish those goals...

Letter of the week—recognizing and naming the letter, producing its sound, writing it

Shape of the week/Number of the week—recognizing and naming the shape or number and writing or drawing it

Calendar time—counting, number recognition, patterns, reading left to right

Nursery Rhyme of the month—rhymes, speech and language, letters, prereading skills, art, music...(I could go on and on about how much can be taught through nursery rhymes!)

Journals/Kidwriting—learning to draw “parts” of things (Ex.—a person has a head, body, arms, legs, face, etc.), drawing pictures, using a variety of colors, drawing the setting and characters and showing what is happening, listening for sounds in words, spelling words by listening for sounds and matching letters to those sounds.

Crafts—expressing ourselves, learning to use art supplies such as markers, paints, crayons, glue sticks, glue bottles, scissors, and glitter.

Games—learning all of our skills and concepts while moving and getting our whole bodies involved in the process!

And many, many more ways! Everything we do has a PURPOSE!

Student Information Sheet

_____/_____/_____/_____/_____
Last Name First Name Middle Sex Date of Birth

_____/_____/_____/_____/_____
Address—Street City Zip Code Home Phone Number

_____/_____/_____/_____/_____
Email Address Cell Phone Number

_____/_____/_____/_____/_____
Father's Full Name Address and Daytime Phone Number Place of Employment

_____/_____/_____/_____/_____
Mother's Full Name Address and Daytime Phone Number Place of Employment

Names and Ages of Siblings

Names of people who live in the same household as the preschooler

In case of a problem or emergency, whom should we contact? (Please list at least one other person besides parents in case parents cannot be reached).

_____/_____/_____/_____/_____
Emergency Contact #1—Name Relationship Telephone

_____/_____/_____/_____/_____
Emergency Contact #2—Name Relationship Telephone

_____/_____/_____/_____/_____
Emergency Contact #3—Name Relationship Telephone

_____/_____/_____/_____/_____
Physician's Name Telephone Health Insurance Co. Group & Policy Numbers

List any prescription medications that your child is taking:_____

Does the child have any conditions (allergies, medical conditions, etc) that could affect him/her during the hours in attendance at Graceful Beginnings Pre-Kindergarten? If so, what, and how should we respond?_____

Continued on back ----->

Please list all adults (besides parents) who are authorized to pick up your child from Graceful Beginnings Pre-Kindergarten.

Name

Relationship to Child

Phone Number

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I have read and agree to all of the procedures and policies of Graceful Beginnings Pre-Kindergarten, and I agree to them and release my child into the care of the preschool during school hours.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

A few more things about your child....

Five words that describe your child and his/her personality are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What Motivates your child?

What upsets your child?

What are 3 goals that you have for your child this year in Pre-K?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.