

Greater Hope Christian Academy



Early Childhood Education and Child Care Policy and Procedure Manual

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Welcome to Greater Hope Christian Academy

Greater Hope is licensed by the State of Pennsylvania, Department of Human Services. The on-site Directors, Jackelyn Church and Principal is Dr. Marilyn Miles will manage the day-to-day operations.

Greater Hope is licensed to care for no more than 60 children at any one time. We will serve children ages 2 years old through age 12. School aged children may only be enrolled during our summer program, dates are announced at the beginning of the year. We are inspected regularly to ensure that we meet licensing standards. **Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the premises of the center, indoors or outside.**

Greater Hope is covered by liability insurance in the amounts required to meet or exceed DHS regulations. Greater Hope is organized as a Nonprofit corporation. Our administrative structure is Marilyn Miles as the Administrator, and Jackelyn Church as the Director. We are always willing to discuss and assist with all questions and concerns. We will post the following items for parents' review at the front entrance on the parent information board:

- License certificate
- A complete copy of operating policies and procedures
- Results of our most recent licensing monitoring visit
- A copy of the licensing regulations
- Weekly menu
- Any other pertinent, or just good fun, information you may need or want
- If a parent needs any policy clarification or a copy of a Family Handbook, one is always available at a parent's request

Parents or authorized adults are required to bring children into the building and to sign the children in at the beginning of the day (documenting arrival time) and sign them out at the end of the day (documenting departure time). Staff will also take daily attendance to know the names and number of children at the center always.

In compliance with federal civil rights law relating to persons with disabilities Greater Hope is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination solely based on disability status. "Persons with disabilities" is defined as any persons who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, have a record of such impairment, or are regarded as having such impairment. We will never refuse to enroll a child based on race, sex, color, creed, political persuasion, national origin, handicap, or ancestry.

Dr. Marilyn Miles
Principal

Philosophy

Greater Hope Christian Academy recognizes the importance of play in the learning process for young children. Play is the basis for learning in our programs.

Greater Hope Christian Academy works to empower children, promote individuality, and develop strong partnerships with families while creating an environment that helps young children attain physical, cognitive, social, and emotional achievements, preparing them for the next step in life.

Each child brings to Greater Hope Christian Academy a history of life experience and cultural heritage. Partnerships between families and the Center are essential to the growth and development of the individual child. We strive to create and promote these strong partnerships with families and create a sense of community that is thoughtful, warm and compassionate.

Employee Qualifications and Volunteers

Early Childhood Overview

Greater Hope Christian Academy Pre-School begins and ends with a warm caring qualified staff in a safe and secure environment. We understand that this may be the first occurrence you and your child are experiencing away from the home environment and together we will share your child's milestones, goals, and experiences.

It is the vision of Greater Hope Christian Academy to teach and guide children every step of the way by exploring their educational journey through inviting and exciting opportunities that make learning fun.

Greater Hope Inclusion policy

Greater Hope Christian Academy welcomes all children and is committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning and development experiences that support the full access and participation of each child. We believe that each child is unique and work in partnership with families and other professionals involved with the child to provide the support every child needs to reach their full potential.

Greater Hope Christian Academy does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or citizen status, age, disability or veteran's status and shall comply with section 504, Title IX, and the ADA in employment, education, and all other areas of the early care and education centers. Greater Hope Christian Academy provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Please indicate if you need special services, assistance, or accommodations to participate fully in this program by contacting Dr. Marilyn Miles at 215-729-0374.

Inclusive Environment

Early childhood educators at Greater Hope Christian Academy use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the unique needs of all children when planning. Staff will make every attempt to make any adaptations or modifications necessary to meet the needs of the children. Schedules, routines and activities are flexible and early childhood educators will work with therapists, special educators and other professionals to integrate individual accommodations, modifications and strategies into classroom routines and activity any adaptations will be reviewed with families and other professionals supporting the child.



Policies and Procedures

Greater Hope Christian Academy is licensed and certified by the State of Pennsylvania, Department of Human Services <http://www.dhs.pa.gov/>. We are licensed to provide early care and education for infants, toddlers, preschool and school-age children. *We admit children from 2-school-age without regard to race, culture, sex, religion, national origin ancestry, or disability.*

Enrollment and Intake Process

Children of all abilities are accepted into Greater Hope Christian Academy and families interested in having their child attend the program will be given an equal opportunity for admission. A waiting list may be maintained, and children will be accepted from the list on a first come first served basis.

Prior to a child attending Greater Hope Christian Academy, the parents/legal guardians are required to have a visit and family interview with the Principal. During this time, the parent/legal guardian will have a tour of the child and school, complete the enrollment process, discuss their child's specific needs, and review the program policies. We make reasonable accommodation for a child with disabilities as specified under the American with Disabilities Act.

When you enroll your child, you become part of our family. It's important that we began to build trust and we feel this opportunity is a stepping stone to build the foundation of a strong relationship between the child, parent and our team. This is just to ease the transition for you and your child. We have an open-door policy for parents/legal guardians and urge you to visit any time during business hours.

Greater Hope Christian Academy acknowledges and respects the priorities each family has for their child. Families are encouraged and supported to collaborate with staff to ensure that each child has an opportunity for optimum success. Greater Hope Christian Academy communicated with each family daily and has regular meetings to discuss the child's successes and challenges

Enrollments are based on space available. The following forms will need to be returned prior to the first day of attendance or brought with you on the first day.

The following forms will be **MUST** be completed and submitted to the Principal prior to the child's first day of attendance. The information in these forms will remain confidential and will be shared with other caregivers only as required to meet the needs of the child:

- Application for ECE/Child Care Services / Completed Emergency Contact Form
- Current Child Health Assessment w/ Immunizations
- Tuition Fee Agreement
- CACFP Food Forms (updated yearly)
- Dietary Restrictions
- Civil Rights Awareness
- IEP/IFSP Information Sheet
- Received and Review of Family Policy Handbook and Parent Code of Conduct

- Required Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Mandated Reporter and Child Abuse Policy
- Custody Order (as required)
- **Special Care Plan:** Release of Information (ex. Asthma and, or IFSP, IEP)
- Consent for Child Care Program Activities/Transportation Consent (field trips, and outings)
- Authorization to Administer Medication
- Photo Release
- Media Authorization

All incomplete forms will be returned to the parent/legal guardian for completion prior to the child's first day of attendance. If upon review of a child's health record it is determined that a significant health service has not been done the Principal or Office Manager will notify the parent or legal guardian. Health care referrals will be provided when requested or needed. The parent or legal guardian will be given 30 days to obtain the health services before the child is considered for exclusion from the program.

When an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the childcare center, the parent or legal guardian may be asked to obtain special immunization. In event, of an outbreak, all children whose immunization are not up-to-date with the current recommended schedule of American Academy of Pediatrics and the U.S. Public Health Services will be excluded from child care until properly immunized or further notice for the safety and well-being of all a part of our program.

Confidentiality of information about the child and family will be maintained. Enrollment forms and all other information concerning the child and family will be accessible only to the parent/legal guardian, Owner/Operator and Department of Human Services or other state or city department personnel for review. Any information concerning the child will not be made available to anyone without the expressed written consent of the parent or legal guardian.

Program Services, Tuition Rates, and Payment Schedule

Registration- Registration: Greater Hope Christian Academy enrolls any child regardless of race, sex, color, creed, political persuasion, national origin, or ancestry. To reserve a space or to be placed on a waiting list, the enrollment application and the registration payment must be turned in to Greater Hope. Your child will also need his/her Pennsylvania Department of Health and Family services: Day Care Immunization Record, Child Health Report, Health History and Emergency Care Plan, and the Child Care Enrollment forms filled out completely (these are all included in your Family Handbook) and turned in within the allotted time as stated in your enrollment paperwork. All immunizations must be current.

Payment Policies and Fees:

All fees are payable in advance and are due the first day your child attends each week. A \$25 late fee will be charged to your account if payment is not made by Wednesday morning. If payment is more than 2 weeks overdue, services may be terminated. We accept cash, checks and money orders made payable to Greater Hope. All returned checks will have a fee

of \$35 charged to your account.

Enrollment Holding Policy

If a family and/or guardian would like to enroll a child more than 2 month before a prospective start date, Greater Hope requires payment for the first week of care as well as the non-refundable 50\$ registration fee. If the enrolled child does not begin school at Greater Hope, no fees will be refunded. When the enrolled child does attend on the scheduled start date, the first week of tuition will have been paid for.

Discharge/ Withdraw Policies

Greater Hope is a privately-owned ministry, we reserve the Right to disenroll any child/family whose behavior causes them to be a threat to safety or cause mental distress to other children and/or staff members. The principal also may discharge an enrolled child whose needs exceed what the ministry is able to provide. Staff will consult with the parent concerning how any problems might be solved before ending the care arrangement. The parent will be referred to other community resources. A child may be discharged from the center for Failure to pay fees on time, which is grounds for immediate termination, without notice. Repeated failure to pick up the child at scheduled time and failure to complete and return required forms are grounds for immediate disenrollment. In addition, any parent or guardian who is abusive, rude or unreasonably uncooperative with the center's staff or who will not abide by the centers policies shall be subject to not being able to return to building. However, this does not affect your child's space.

Should immediate disenrollment be necessary, no refunds will be given Dr. Marilynn Miles, administrator and/or Jacqueline Church, director, will meet and discuss any problems relating to GHCA. Parents must give a 2-week written notice of their intent to withdraw the child. A Parent or Guardian must give 2 weeks written notice of intent to discharge a child. A child may be immediately discharged due to parent's failure to keep current with fees owed.

Any parent or guardian who feels Greater Hope has discriminated against them based on of race, sex, color, creed, political persuasion, national origin, or ancestry or may want to appeal any administrative decision by Sister Jackie Church or Dr. Marilynn Miles.

Useful Information about payment:

We are open Monday through Friday, from 6:30 AM to 6 PM, January through December.

- Children may be enrolled on a full-time basis of up to 11.5 hours a day at 5 days a week
- which equals 57.5 hours per week.
- Greater Hope only enrolls on full-day basis. We are open 6:30 AM - 6 PM and you
- may utilize those hours how you wish, there is a daily rate charged no matter what hours
- your child attends on any given day. See rate sheet in the front of Family handbook for
- specific rates.
- If there will be a third-party payment, as from an employer or the county, a special
- payment schedule will be arranged and detailed in the contract. Parents will be
- responsible for any specified co-payments or unpaid amounts. Greater Hope
- requires w-2 clients to provide authorization from the county before their child's first day

- of attendance.
- NO refunds will be given for days when children do not attend for illness or other reasons, including snow days. See “Snow Day” policy for more information.
- Rates are higher for younger than for older children because ratios for staff to children are higher.
- If a child will not attend on a regularly scheduled day, parents should let the Director know by 9:00 AM.
- Greater Hope will announce any tuition increases at least two weeks in advance. There will be a rate increase September 1st every year.
- If Greater Hope takes a field trip an extra fee may be charged for your child to attend
- A \$1-dollar fee will be charged to your account for every minute that your child is in attendance after 6 PM. A \$2 fee will be assessed for every minute after 6:15 that a child is not picked up. At 6:30 PM if we are still unable to contact you or the people listed on the authorized persons/emergency contact list, we will call the police to make decisions on the child’s welfare.

TAXES

A W-10 form will be given to you by January 31.

COURT FEES: Shall it become necessary; the parent will be responsible for any Small claims court fees, my lawyer fees, and any other miscellaneous fees, will be charged to your account if we must settle a payment dispute this way.

Hours of Operation and Holiday Closings

We are open Monday through Friday, from 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM, January through December. Greater Hope enrolls children daily. We do not enroll on a part-time daily or hourly rate. See Current Rate Sheet for more information regarding this.

All staff will take 10 vacation days. No service will be provided on:

- New Year's Eve (2 weekdays will be taken as holidays this will vary as the holidays may
- New Year's Day fall on a weekend)
- Memorial Day
- July 4th /Independence Day- A Monday or Friday will be taken if this falls on a weekend
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve (2 weekdays will be taken as holidays this will vary as the holidays may
- Christmas Day fall on a weekend)
- 1 teacher in-service/continuing education day to be announced in advance

All regular fees will be charged for the weeks containing these holidays. Fees are due whether your child is full or part time, as we provide our staff with the benefit of these paid holidays. Greater Hope will be closed one “extra” day in the year to provide us staff time to attend a conference or seminar to learn useful and relevant information that relates to early childhood education. As stated above, all regular fees will be charged for the week containing this in-service day.

“Snow-Days”

As we all know, the weather in Pennsylvania can be unpredictable and extreme at times. To keep our small clients and staff safe and warm we may occasionally have a “snow-day”. Any day that any local school (Philadelphia and Parochial) is closed, we will be too. These are the only days that will be considered “snow-days” and regular tuition will still be due. You will find our closing on local news channel 6 WPVI. We will post any “Snow-Day” closing on our Facebook page by 6AM. If Greater Hope needs to close early or be closed the next business day, we will notify you as soon as possible by blast.

Absences and Vacation Time

- NO refunds will be given for days when children do not attend for illness or other reasons. Including “snow-days”. It is very important that you call the center as soon as you are aware of any contagious illness your child may have so that we can let other families know that their child may have been exposed to an illness. We keep the ill child's name confidential and each families' information private.

- If a child will not attend on a regularly scheduled day, parents should let the Director know by 9:00 AM. This will help us plan our daily activities and adjust curriculums accordingly.
- Parents will sign each child in and out on the sign-up sheet located on the parent board each day. The child's teacher will also record the daily attendance in each classroom.

Each family is eligible for one week of vacation for every 6 months of attendance with no tuition charge. Vacation is defined, by Greater Hope, as taking your child away from the center for 1 week of regularly scheduled days, with no tuition payment. Vacation time is applied to the number of days your child is regularly enrolled per week. A two-week written notice of vacation time is required to be eligible for vacation time. Your vacation time is not based on a calendar year, but rather on the date that your child was

Child Tracking Procedure

Every day upon arrival each parent/guardian must sign their child in, including name and time the child was dropped off, same goes for pick-up time. Each classroom has a white board with the number of children present in the classroom always, as counts change, so will the number. Teachers are responsible for knowing the number and names of children in their care **AT ALL TIMES** throughout the day.

Each teacher will also have an attendance sheet on a clipboard hanging in their classrooms, this is where child tracking will be documented by name and days of attendance. As students arrive in each classroom, the teacher will put an X near the students that have arrived and an A if they have called in absent for the day. The final number is totaled on the bottom of each teacher weekly attendance sheet. Also changes in normal attendance will be documented by a director in the comments section of any day that a child "status" has changed, teachers will be notified of any changes in attendance.

In the event of any emergency requiring evacuation, the attendance clipboard will be taken with each teacher to the location children will be evacuated to, as it has emergency forms also attached to it.

Policy for Handling and Unauthorized Person Seeking Custody

1. The Principal will contact the custodial parent or legal guardian named on the Application for Early Childhood Education and Child Care Services.
2. Telephone authorization to release a child to someone who does not usually pick up the child will be accepted only in concert with prior written authorization from the custodial parent or legal guardian. For such an exceptional release, the staff person who accepts such authorization will call the documented phone number of the parent to verify that the parent is activating such a phone call. The staff person will document the results of this call in the child records, as well as the time of guardian gave telephone authorization for release of the child.
3. No child will be released without the presence or permission of the custodial parent or legal guardian.
4. Any authorized person who is not recognized by the staff will be required to provide photo identification such as a driver's license, work or school identification. The custodial parent may provide a photograph of authorized persons for pick-up of the child, which will be kept in the child's record at the facility.
5. The Principal will notify the police if an unauthorized person seeks custody of the child.

Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

Divorce Records/Custody Agreements

Divorced parents are required to provide at enrollment a copy of custody papers to be kept in the child's file. Without custody papers, we have no legal way of preventing the child's natural parent(s) from removing them from the program. Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Policy for Handling Person Who May Pose a Safety Risk

(Includes abusive parents or legal guardians any adult who cannot take the child safely from the program.)

1. The child will not be released to anyone who cannot safely care for the child.
2. The Principal will notify the police by calling 911 to manage an adult under the apparent influence of drugs or alcohol or an individual who poses a safety risk.
3. The Principal will contact a person from the emergency contact form to decide for the child to be transport to a place of safety. If no one is available to care for the child, the Principal will contact child protective services for guidance.

Mandated Reporters and Child Abuse Policy

We, as caregivers at Greater Hope Christian Academy ECE/Child Care are required by law to report any suspected child, abuse, physical or sexual, to the Department of Human Services.

Prohibited Practices (Child Abuse)

Caregivers will not use physical punishment or abusive language.

Suspected Child Abuse

All observations or suspicions of child abuse will be immediately reported to the child protective services agency no matter where the abuse might have occurred. Our principal will call Child Line 1-800-932-0313 to report suspected abuse or neglect. The principal or other caregivers will follow the directions of child protective services agency regarding completion of written reports.

If parent or legal guardian is suspected of ABUSE

A staff that is accused of child abuse may be suspended or given leave without pay pending investigation of the accusations. Such caregivers may also be removed from the program. Parents and guardians of suspected abuse children will **NOT** be notified. Parents and legal guardians of other children in the program will be contacted by the principal if a caregiver is suspected of abuse so they may share any concerns they have had. However, no accusation or affirmation of guilt will be made until the investigation is complete. Caregivers found guilty of child abuse will be summarily dismissed or relieved of duties.

Emergency Preparedness

The Principal and staff are prepared to deal with a variety of emergency situations. During all circumstances, they will remain calm and stay with the children. In the case of a weather-related emergency, such as a tornado warning, children will be evacuated to the designated shelter. In cases of structural damage to the building, staff will follow the directions of the Incident Commander and/or Philadelphia Police. Staff will follow procedures outlined in the Greater Hope Christian Academy ECE/ Child Care. Safety Manual.

We also conduct Fire Drills every 30 days. All employees are required to attend Fire Safety and Shelter in Place trainings yearly.

Please the Emergency Plan is located on the Family Communication Board near the entrance.

Confidentiality Policy

The only information teachers should share with parents, is information concerning his or her child. Conversations about other children, other parents, co-workers, supervisors, etc., are unprofessional and in some instances illegal.

- To protect each family's confidentiality, Greater Hope will not share information about a child or a child's family with anyone who is not authorized to receive this information. All records and reports maintained on your child are available by request to a director at any time including enrollment forms and medical/injury logs.
- As a child care center, all staff are required to report any suspected abuse or neglect to the county's Child Protective Services (CPS) office. We must notify the proper authorities if we suspect that any child is being improperly treated.
- When a child is known to have any special health care needs, that information will be shared with those staff who are assigned to care for that child, but will otherwise be treated with confidentiality. Such special needs, including dietary requirements, will be posted on the inside of each teacher's cupboard/cabinet door, where medication and medical logbook are stored. When specialized equipment is needed, such as nebulizer or epi-pen, the child's parent or a medical professional will train staff in correct procedures.

Parent Code of Conduct

Greater Hope Christian Academy ECE/ Child Care requires the parents of enrolled children always, to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of Greater Hope Christian Academy is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of Greater Hope Christian Academy, but is the responsibility of each parent or adult who enters our program. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment.

Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on our property thereafter. Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding disenrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing our property.

SWEARING/CURSING:

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on our property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

THREATENING OF EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN OTHER PARENTS OR ADULTS ASSOCIATED GREATER HOPE WITH:

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. Today, we cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted fully of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the program will not assume the risk of a second chance. **PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR ALWAYS.**

PHYSICAL/VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF YOUR CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN AT EARLY FOUNDATIONS, FCCH:

While Greater Hope Christian Academy does not necessarily support nor condone corporal punishment of children, such acts are not permitted in the child care home. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress.

Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures. Parents are prohibited from addressing, for correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Principal.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the Principal are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our agency have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

SMOKING:

For the health of all Greater Hope Christian Academy employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on agency property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot of Greater Hope Christian Academy. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot.

VIOLATIONS OF THE SAFETY POLICY:

Parents are required to follow all safety procedures always. These procedures are designed not as mere inconveniences, but to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children and associates of Greater Hope Christian Academy. Please be particularly mindful Greater Hope Christian Academy entrance procedures.

We all like to be polite. However, we need to be careful to not allow unauthorized individuals into the center. Holding the door open for the person following you may, in fact, be polite; however, that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the Principal.

CONFRONTATIONAL INTERACTIONS WITH EMPLOYEES, ANOTHER PARENTS OR ASSOCIATES OF GREATER HOPE :

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of Greater Hope Christian Academy or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

VIOLATIONS OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY:

Greater Hope Christian Academy takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the agency. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families and employees associated with Greater Hope Christian Academy. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other parents for information which is not necessary for them to know, will be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

Family Involvement

Parents are welcome visitors at any time during the hours of operation unless prohibited by a court order. If so, a copy of the order must be on file at the center. It is important that we communicate daily concerning the needs and interests of each child. If there are issues or concerns that need to be discussed, parents should arrange a convenient time to talk with us on the phone or by other means of communication. To foster communication on a regular basis, Greater Hope provides scheduled conferences/written newsletters/ a parent bulletin board and daily conversations. All visitors must provide current photo identification and they will be accompanied by a staff member always. It is mandatory that your child has a password. Nap time is observed between the hours of 12:00-2:00.

It is important for our little learners to be well rested, please take this into consideration when choosing to visit. Most of our active learning takes place during the morning hours. We strongly encourage parent involvement and hope to see you as a visitor throughout the year!

Appropriate Clothing for Child Care:

Children enrolled at the program are active and busy. They play indoors and outdoors. They work with paints, glue, sand, water, etc. Children should wear comfortable wash and wear clothing to school that you do not mind having soiled. Avoid sending children to school with sandals, clogs, flip flops, etc. as these shoes may present a safety hazard. Sneakers are recommended.

Be sure your child's teachers always have clean; complete seasonally appropriate change of clothing for your child for is in case of accidents. Include at least one of everything (underwear, t-shirt, socks, etc.) Your child's clothes will be kept in his/her cubby. Label all articles of clothing, including coats, scarves, hats, gloves, boots, etc.

Health Policies

Greater Hope Christian Academy is committed to the health, safety, and well-being of children, staff, and families at the home. We maintain a Health Care Consultant agreement, current CPR and First Aid certifications, and direct contact with your child's physician. We have approved written plans as evidence of access to emergency medical services, prevention and control of communicable diseases, administering of medication, and training.

Greater Hope Christian Academy will administer medication to children with written parental and/or physician's consent. We will also administer medication to children with a specific condition for any child in our care for which a plan has been made and approved by the Principal

Because administration of medication poses an extra burden for staff and having medications in the program is a safety hazard, medication administration in our child care will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside child care hours cannot be made. Whenever possible the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction. Parents or legal guardian may administer medication to their own children during the childcare day.

A medication log will be maintained by the staff to record the instruction for giving the medication consent obtained from the parent or guardian, amount, time of administration each dose of medication. Spills, reactions and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log.

When a medication error occurs, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at our program.

Illness/Medication Policy

To keep your child healthy and as free from contagious disease as possible, we enforce these guidelines regarding illness and medications, as is provided by The Department of Children and Family Services of Pennsylvania: Child Illness

Children who are ill are not to be brought to the center. Examples of children who are ill:

- A temperature of 101 degrees F. or higher. Vomiting or diarrhea has occurred more than once in the past 24 hours
- A contagious disease such as chicken pox, strep throat or pink eye
- An unidentified rash
- Have not been on a prescribed medication for 24 hours or continue to have symptoms of illness
- Has a constant, thick colored nasal discharge

Children may return to the center only when they are symptom free, have been appropriately treated, or have been given medical approval to return to child care. We will follow procedures on personal cleanliness and communicable diseases stated in licensing rules and the guidelines for exclusion of children from child care as adapted from the Division of Public Health. More information on this is available upon request; we retain a book of licensing rules here at the center for anybody to access.

Parents will be informed whenever their children have been exposed to a communicable disease. Certain diseases must also be reported to the public health department and to our licensing specialist.

If a child should become ill or seriously injured while at the center, parents will be contacted immediately. Sick children will be isolated within sight and hearing and made as comfortable as possible. Children should be picked up as soon as possible. If the child is not picked up within 1-2 hours, the emergency contact person on the child's enrollment form will be called.

Superficial injuries will be washed with soap and water and covered with a bandage or treated with ice. Parents will be told about the minor injury, as well as receive an incident report when they pick their child up. All injuries and medications dispensed daily will be logged in a medical log book. Each entry will be dated and signed by a member of Greater Hope staff. All records and reports maintained on your child are available by request to a director at any time. We will practice universal precautions when handling all blood injuries and bodily fluid. All staff will use disposable gloves when treating blood injuries. Surfaces touched by blood will be washed and disinfected, and all materials used to treat the injury will be wrapped in an airtight plastic bag and disposed of immediately.

If there is a need for emergency medical treatment, 911 will be called. If it is a life-threatening situation, with no time to consult the child's file or parent, the child will be taken to either Children's Hospital or the nearest hospital. The medical center chosen will be at the Paramedic's discretion. Should an ambulance be needed, parents will be responsible for any costs. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible after contacting 911. All staff will have training in infant and child CPR and first aid. First aid supplies will be stored in the office area and each classroom will have their own first aid kit.

When children are off-site for walks or field trips, staff will take along emergency contact information, attendance sheets and a first aid kit in case an injury occurs to children or staff. The injury will be recorded in the medical log book upon return to the center. A cell phone will be carried along, in case help is needed.

Medications

Greater Hope will administer medications under the following conditions:

Prescriptive and non-prescriptive medication will only be given to children if parents have completed the authorization form provided in the parent handbook. All medicine must be in its original container, bearing the label with child's name, dosage and administration directions. It will be stored in a medication box that is inaccessible to children. Medicine requiring

refrigeration will be kept in a covered, labeled container in the refrigerator. We will not exceed the age-related dosage on the label of any medication without a written doctor's authorization.

All medication administered, accidents or injuries occurring on-site, marked change in behavior or appearance, or any observation of injuries to a child's body received outside of center care will be entered into the center's medical logbook and you will also receive an incident report at the time of pick up. A Medication Form must be filled out with the exact time that your child needs a medication. We will not administer medication based on anything but a parent/guardian's exact authorization.

Special Health Care Needs

When a child is known to have any special health care needs, that information will be shared with those staff who are assigned to care for that child, but will otherwise be treated with confidentiality. Such special needs, including dietary requirements, will be posted on the inside of each teacher's cupboard/cabinet door, where medication and medical log book are stored. When specialized equipment is needed, such as nebulizer or epi-pen, the child's parent or a medical professional will train staff in correct procedures.

NON-MEDICINAL PRODUCTS

Sun screen, insect repellent, lip balm, diaper creams and other non-medicinal products will only be used on a child when signed authorization is on file, and the specific products are supplied by the parent and labeled with the child's name. These authorization forms are found in the enrollment form at the back of your parent handbook.

We follow the National Center for Disease Control policies and standards at Greater Hope Christian Academy. We understand the needs of working and student families; however, we must make our best effort to protect all children, families, and staff at Early Foundations, FCCH. You will be notified if your child displays symptoms of any illness, serious injury, or accident.

We will document any accident, injury, or emergency in the child's record the day that it occurs. Families should exercise every caution and keep their child home if:

- A child is not well enough to participate in daily classroom activities.
- A child has a temperature over 100°F in the last 24-hours.
- A child has vomited within the last 24-hours.
- A child has had diarrhea three times within the last 24- hours.
- A child has an unexplained rash.
- A child has discharge in the eyes or ears.
- A child has been treated for less than 24-hours for conjunctivitis
- A child has open or seeping sores from chicken pox.

Please keep in mind that these are only guidelines. If the staff believes that child cannot fully participate in the programs daily activities, families will be notified to pick up their child. Your child must be picked up within one hour of this request. Please notify Greater Hope Christian Academy if your child has been exposed to any highly contagious disease such as strep throat, pinworm, viral infection, measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, fifth disease, scarlet fever, conjunctivitis, and impetigo. Families will be notified of any exposure to contagion at Greater Hope Christian Academy and given specific information from the National Center.

The Principal will check the contents of the first aid kits and replace the missing or expired items monthly. A first aid supply is kept on-site and easily accessible to employees. If a child is injured and doesn't need professional medical attention (i.e. minor cut, scrape, bruise), we will cleanse and treat the wound with ointment and a bandage. In the event of a more serious injury, requiring professional medical attention, we will call "911" and follow appropriate measures. Should an Emergency Room visit be required, your child will be taken to the nearest Emergency Room and the parent/guardian will be immediately notified.

Please make sure your child Emergency Contact Form is updated every six months, or as necessary. Your child Health Insurance Provider and ID number should be provided. Emergency numbers will be verified by calling the numbers to make sure a responsive, designated person is available.

Accident Report Forms

If your child is involved in a mishap that requires any type of attention or first aid, and the Principal does not feel that you need to be called, you will be notified with an accident report. You will be advised of what happened, where it happened, and what action was taken. A copy will be left with your child's teacher or the Principal.

Hand Hygiene

In conjunction with several other organizations, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) published recommendations for hand hygiene in health care settings. The CDC is explicit in the corresponding Hand Hygiene Guidelines Fact Sheet about the type of hand hygiene recommended in non-health care settings; "Hand washing with soap and water remains a sensible strategy for hand hygiene in non-health care settings and is recommended by CDC and other experts." Part of the education of young children is teaching personal hygiene as part of daily routines. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association recommends the following hand washing standards for children and staff.

Before

- Upon arrival for the day or when moving from one child care group to another;
- Before and after
- Eating, handling food, or feeding a child
- Giving medication
- Playing in the water that is used by more than one person

After

- Diapering
- Using the toilet or helping a child use a toilet
- Handling bodily fluid (mucus, blood, vomit) from sneezing, wiping and blowing noses, from mouths, or from sores.
- Handling uncooked foods, especially raw meat and poultry
- Playing in sandboxes or playing outside
- Handling pets and other animals
- Cleaning or handling the garbage

The rationale for this standard cites studies that show reduction of diarrheal illness and colds when frequent and proper hand washing practices were used. We appreciate your cooperation and assistance to ensure every person at this facility is protected from contagions. Thank you.

Contingency Plans for Fire, Tornado and other Emergencies

Attendance will be kept in each classroom daily and arrival/departure times recorded. Durably AM arrival and late PM pick-up, teachers will be kept aware of children they're responsible for, as rooms are condensed, and staff leave the enter. Teachers will know the names of each child and their whereabouts always. Emergency phone numbers will be posted in all children's classrooms. These numbers include Hospitals, CPS, local fire and police as well as poison control.

Staff and/or Child Emergency Procedure

In the event of a lost child, staff will check all areas of the center. If the child cannot be found, the child's parents and/or emergency contact and the police will be immediately notified. The Department of Children and Families will also be notified within 24 hours.

If a child who is scheduled to arrive at the center, via transportation other than the parent, does not arrive within 15 minutes of the specified time on the written agreement signed by the parent, the Director will call the parent to inform them that the child has not arrived

In the case of life threatening emergency and there is no time to consult the injured persons file, 911 will be called and child/staff will be transported to either St. Christopher's or Children Hospital this will be determined by the medical professional working with the injured person. When there is a medical emergency that is not life threatening, director or staff will consult the person's file and parents will be immediately contacted to insure their preference is met.

Fire and safety

A third party is contracted for fire extinguisher inspection and maintenance. Director will inspect monthly also.

Fire and Tornado evacuation plans will be practiced monthly. Miss Pam, Miss Church and/or Dr. Miles will document dates of fire and tornado drills and check the smoke detectors (weekly) on a form provided by the state.

If the center should lose the use of heat, water or electricity *while* children are in attendance, the Director will call the parents of all children and ask them to pick them up within 2 hours. If the center should lose the use of heat, water or electricity *before* the center opens; parents will be notified by 6:15 AM and will be asked to not bring their child that day.

In case of an emergency that would require an evacuation, children will be evacuated by all available staff through the nearest exit. The attendance form and list of phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts will be taken out by the staff member designated to be "in charge" to assure that all children are accounted for and all families can be notified. Children will be assembled at the South side of the parking lot, near the church's garage. The Director will call the fire department at that time and parents will be notified. If we are unable to return to the building following an evacuation, the children will be taken to the shelter near the south side of the parking lot until parents or another authorized adult can be reached and come for them. In the event of a tornado warning, the children will be taken to the women's restroom on the north side of the hallway, at the entrance to our center and is an interior space with no windows, by all available staff members. Blankets, a portable radio and flashlight, with extra batteries for both, are kept in the tornado shelter area always. The attendance form and emergency

contact information will be brought along by the staff member designated to be “**in charge**”. Staff will engage the children in activities until we are assured by the authorities that the danger has passed.

Nutrition

Greater Hope follows USDA guidelines when planning our menus. Meals are prepared at the school. The cook and all our kitchen staff have received the appropriate training in food service procedures. We will provide a healthy breakfast, lunch, morning and afternoon snacks to all children in attendance at the times identified in the daily schedule. Healthy choices for the children will be age appropriate. NSLP guidelines for serving size, nutrition will be met or exceeded in quality and portion size.

Menu will be posted on the parent’s board at least one week in advance. If changes to the menu become necessary, parents will be notified on the parent board as per the menu located on the parent board.

Children who attend during the early morning or late afternoon hours will be offered a snack to ensure that they never go without food for more than 3 hours. A weekly menu of meals and snacks are available for parents to review at the entrance of our classrooms on the parent bulletin board. If a menu must be changed for any reason, the food substituted will be noted on the menu posted near the front entrance of the center.

Children will sit together as a group and will be served by their teacher, to encourage new foods and taste experiences. Children may have as many helpings as they want/need to feel satiated. We feel that growing and playing every minute of every day is exhausting and nutritious meals will provide each child with the energy needed to be a kid! Mealtimes will include meaningful conversation and we will promote social interaction, encourage good table manners and develop sound nutritional habits. Children will be encouraged to clean up after themselves. Eating surfaces will be sanitized before meals and snacks and everyone will wash their hands and face before and after eating. Children will not be forced to eat; they will be encouraged to try new foods as appropriate. Meals will not be withheld as a form of punishment. Birthday and holiday treats are allowed. However, they must be store bought. Please try to provide nutritious choices low in fat and sugar, although cupcakes etc. are allowed and are occasionally a fun treat. Your child’s teacher will let you know how many children is in his/her class. Holiday parties will be announced to each family in advance and there will be a sign-up sheet for healthy snacks your child may want to bring in for his/her friends!

If your child has special dietary needs or has food allergies parents must notify the center in writing. Food allergies will be posted for all staff to view. Special dietary requirements

will be posted on the inside of each teacher's cupboard/cabinet door, where medication and medical logbook are stored.

- If your child has special dietary needs (vegetarian, kosher, gluten-free etc.) please discuss this with a director.
- Food will be stored off the floor and once opened, in airtight containers.
- Refrigerator (40 degrees or colder) and freezer temperatures (0 degrees or colder) will be properly maintained.
- Dishes will be washed and sanitized in accordance with licensing regulations: manually following the posted 3-step procedure: wash, rinse, sanitize.

NDS

In accordance with Federal Civil Rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Civil Rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Diaper/Toilet Training

Greater Hope will assist families and work together with parents to help children get “potty-trained”. Any wet or soiled clothing will be put into a plastic bag and tied for parents to take home at pick-up time. Toilet training will be closely coordinated with the child's family,

using terminology and procedures that are as consistent as possible at home and at the center. This can begin when the child shows an interest in doing so, rather than on an arbitrary timeline. Accidents are to be expected, and will never be cause for punishment or humiliation. Soiled clothing will not be cleaned at the center, they will be bagged and sent home at pick-up time for parents to deal with. Potty training children must have at least three clean, season appropriate, outfits in their cubby always. Children that may have an accident and do not have extra clothing will be dressed in new clothing provided to them by Greater Hope at the parents expense.

Rest Time/Quiet Time

Having enough sleep makes it more likely that children will enjoy and benefit from learning opportunities throughout the day. Other than satisfying the need for sleep, sleeping and rest time enable children to develop trust and competence as they move from being awake to falling asleep to waking up again. As we learn your child's individual style of preparing for sleep and waking up, we can offer the support he/she needs. For example, while some children prefer to be rocked or have their backs rubbed, others prefer to be left alone as they drift off to sleep.

The Department of Human Services requires a rest period for children less than 6 years of age. All children rest at the same or close to the same time and we are required to observe these regulations. Rest periods can be scheduled for a minimum of 1 hour and are not to exceed 2½ hours. We will provide a cot for each child. All children are required to have sleeping materials for quiet time/naptime, such as a sheet and blanket. All sleeping materials should go home on Fridays or at the end of your child service week.

Outdoor Policy

We all value the benefits of outdoor play for children. The children will have many opportunities to exercise and develop their emerging gross motor abilities as well as enjoy the many rich sensory experiences outdoors. The Department of Human Services requires children are expected to go outside when the forecast temperature /wind chill is above 25 degrees and the forecast temperature/heat index in less than 90 degrees, no precipitation falling and there is no current air quality alert. The regulations state: Infants shall have a minimum of 30 minutes of outdoor activities per day. Toddlers and Preschool children shall have a minimum of 60 minutes of outdoor activities per day. Please make sure that your child has appropriate clothing for the current weather conditions. Outerwear and footwear are important considerations.

Some suggestions for seasons are:

- Summer: Light jackets, sweaters, swimsuit, raincoat, etc.
- Fall: Jackets, hats, mittens, and sometimes boots, etc.
- Winter: Jackets and snow pants or snowsuits, hats, mittens, boots, etc.
- Spring: Spring jackets, snow pants, hats, mittens, boots, etc.

All clothing, including underwear, must be labeled with the child's name or initialed to assure they return home with their own clothing. A permanent marker or laundry marking pen work well and last through the wash.

If you have any questions at any time about what your child may need for outside play, please ask the staff.

We frequently have fire drills, so all the children must have footwear on always. Sneakers, shoes, slippers, and closed-toe sandals are allowed if they do not have an open back.

Guiding Children's Behavior

Young children need adults to help them learn what acceptable behavior is and how to relate positively to others. We take a positive approach to guiding behavior focusing on social skills and self-discipline because we know that children who practice these behaviors are more successful in life. Research has also proven that children who learn to take personal responsibility for their actions are better able to make good decisions in as adults.

Positive guidance involves having realistic expectations of children and gently guiding their behaviors in ways that demonstrate respect and help children feel good about themselves. We are able to meet the children's needs by employing our understanding of child development and building upon the trusting relationship between the teacher and the child. Because children grow and change so rapidly during the first three years of life how we guide their behavior depends largely on their developmental abilities and temperament.

Children's behavior will be guided by setting clear limits and/or rules for children. We will talk with children about expected behaviors and model those behaviors consistently for them. Greater Hope' staff will state positively what children can do, using specific terms; e.g. "you need to walk" rather than "don't run"). Undesirable behavior will be redirected to another activity. Children will be given a wide variety of age-appropriate activities to choose from and will be given the attention they need before they demand it. Behavior management will be for the purpose of helping children develop self-control, self-esteem and respect for the rights of others.

When a child is crying, fussy or distraught, staff will work to calm and comfort the child, in ways that are appropriate for the child's age and personal disposition. This may include stroking, cuddling, rocking; offering a drink; acknowledging the child's fear, separation sadness, and/or conflict; distracting or redirecting to another activity; talking calmly with the child about how she/he is feeling or what has happened. If the unhappiness persists, we may contact a parent to share what is occurring, to perhaps inquire if this might indicate the onset of an illness or some other outside problem.

"Time-Out" is a guidance technique that can be effective in reducing challenging behaviors of young children. Time outs may be used with children age 3 and older, but never for more than 5 minutes. The term 'time-out' is short for 'time out from positive reinforcement.' The strategy is like an extended form of selectively ignoring disruptive behavior. Children are removed for a brief time from all sources of reinforcement (e.g., teacher and peer attention) following serious challenging behavior. Usually this strategy requires that a child be removed from an ongoing activity for a brief time, typically by having a child sit on the outside of the activity within the classroom until the child calms down and is ready to rejoin the activity and try again. Time-out is intended to be a response to conflict that stops the conflict, protects the victim, and provides a 'cooling off period' for the child. **"Time-out" is only effective when used in the context of a comprehensive approach to behavior support** that is designed to teach, nurture and encourage positive social behaviors. Time-out should be used only by well-trained teachers and caregivers when less intrusive discipline procedures have been tried and deemed unsuccessful and only in combination with positive procedures designed to teach new skills and prevent challenging behaviors from occurring....

Effective management of behavior should always start with praise and encouragement for prosocial behavior and self-regulation and be accompanied by distraction, redirection,

Prohibited Punishments Statement

We recognize that no single technique will work with children every time. If a child exhibits unacceptable behavior, Greater Hope will request a conference with parents to consider how to deal with the behavior. If the behavior continues, the next steps may include referrals to appropriate community resources.

In accordance with "Pennsylvania Rules for Group Child Care Centers," actions that are aversive, cruel, humiliating, and actions that may be psychologically, emotionally or physically painful, discomforting, dangerous or potentially injurious are prohibited. Prohibited actions include spanking, hitting, pinching, shaking, slapping, twisting, or inflicting any other form of corporal punishment on the child; verbal abuse threats or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family; physical restraint, binding or tying the child to restrict the child's movement or enclosing the child in a confined space such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle;

withholding or forcing meals, snacks or naps; punishing a child for lapses in toilet training. These forms of punishment will never be used, even at a parent's request.

Our program recognizes that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when small children are in a group setting. Biting is a common and natural behavior for young children, especially toddlers. Unfortunately, even with constant direct supervision, biting still occurs. When children are bitten in our center we recognize how upsetting it is for parents. We know our little learners may bite for a variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not due to behavioral problems, but result from frustration and the inability to express themselves, due to lack of verbal skills. Our program does not focus on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting. When biting occurs, we have three main responses:

- Care for and help the child who was bitten. The child who bit will assist the teacher in applying the ice pack on the bite mark to help the child learn responsibility for their actions and compassion for their classmates.
- Help the child who bit learn other behavior. We will try to teach the child alternative ways to express their frustrations.
- Work with the child who bit and examine our program to stop biting. The program will make changes necessary to alleviate the possible reasons for biting that occurs.

Biting

When a biting incident occurs, parents will be informed via the center's standard accident/incident reporting form. This form is completed and signed by a teacher and Director. This form is given to the parent on the day of the biting occurrence. When a child's biting becomes more than Greater Hope's staff can handle, prevent and all ideas have been exhausted to find a solution, Greater Hope may discharge a student until the biting- problem has been resolved.

We recognize that no single technique will work with children every time. If a child exhibits unacceptable behavior, Greater Hope will request a conference with parents to consider how to deal with the behavior. If the behavior continues, the next steps may include referrals to appropriate community resources. withdrawal of attention, and logical and natural consequences." The child will be praised after completing the time-out, and will be helped to rejoin the group.

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Curriculum Statement

Greater Hope Christian Academy Pre-School begins and ends with a warm caring qualified staff in a safe and secure environment. We understand that this may be the first occurrence you and your child are experiencing away from the home environment and together we will share your child's milestones, goals, and experiences.

It is the vision of Greater Hope Christian Academy to teach and guide children every step of the way by exploring their educational journey through inviting and exciting opportunities that make learning fun.

The Preschool Program for our two to three-year old's is the first step to becoming a life-long learner through hands-on experiences. Learning is both educational and fun through opportunities such as the Early Start program, tracing shapes, copying letters, cutting and pasting. Mathematic skills are also developed through hands-on activities. In our science centers, students learn about the natural world and how they interact with objects, people, and other living things. Dramatic play encourages social interaction, creativity, and language skill development.

Greater Hope's Pre-kindergarten Program provides children with a strong foundation that not only builds on the preschool program, but also helps prepare the child for a successful kindergarten experience. Our well-balanced curriculum provides for academic advancement and developmental growth. Our pre-kindergarteners learn to use strategies of phonics by identifying sounds and relating them to word structures. Phonics, language, and writing development go together as children explore the writing process. In our mathematics program, students learn not only identification and written recognition of numerals but also the basic concepts of addition and subtraction. Upon exiting our Pre-kindergarten program, students will have completed a Kindergarten curriculum in phonics, math and handwriting. Our technology program is also an integral part of our pre-kindergarten program. They are taught terminology, care of the computers and software, and the appropriate use of the main keys. The children have access to creative and age appropriate educational programs that support our educational philosophies and goals.

Greater Hope's staff will plan activities and provide children with a variety of experiences.

- Language development: Books, writing materials, music, stories and games, finger plays, poems and flannel board stories.
- Large muscle skills: Balls, hoops, running, jumping, dancing and outdoor play
- Small muscle skills: Puzzles, art and craft activities, manipulative toys and blocks
- Creative expression: Dramatic play props, puppets, musical instruments and movement activities
- Self-help skills: Cleaning up after ourselves, helping with mealtime preparation, daily responsibilities, and dressing ourselves.

Learning through play is the major component of our program. Enough time, materials and space will be provided for children to actively explore the world around them. Children will have an opportunity to use a variety of art materials, manipulative and housekeeping equipment. Our curriculum will provide exposure to a variety of cultures through music, stories, games and art, and we will celebrate how we are all the same and how we are all different from one another. Preschool age children will have opportunities to play and explore their surroundings. They will be given many learning experiences in a variety of developmental areas that are age appropriate. Daily activities will include math, science, large and small muscle movement, art and literacy.

We have provided the following short article that states the lasting benefits of superior early childcare. High-quality preschools provide lasting benefits: In high-quality preschools, well-trained early childhood teachers use children's ideas, interests, and activities to guide their learning. In such programs, children make choices among developmentally appropriate activities. Such child-initiated activities were key components of the high-quality preschool programs that showed strong evidence of success. Other studies provide evidence that highly structured, scripted, primarily teacher-directed instruction is as effective in promoting young children's academic success as is teaching that supports and extends children's self-initiated activities and interests. In fact, research suggests that balanced use of didactic teaching supports young children's self-confidence and motivation to learn.

Greater Hope is committed to the fun and education of each individual child. This curriculum, coupled with a trained teaching staff ensures a quality service for our children and their families. There is a religious component to our program, such as mealtime prayers and songs, stories and displays of the religious aspects of holidays. We strongly believe the scripture in Isaiah, "and the children shall be taught of the LORD."

We will occasionally take field trips. There may be an additional cost to parents for field trips and parents/guardians will be notified at least two weeks in advance. Emergency information for each child will be taken whenever the children leave the premises as well as a permission slip for each child before departure from the center. You will be notified well in advance of any field trip requiring transportation and chaperone-volunteers.

A schedule of daily activities is posted in each classroom. Activities at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day will be designed for a wide age range of children working and playing together. Groups of children may be combined at the beginning and at the end of the day. A program of activities is planned a week in advance. Staff will use a variety of resources in their planning. Greater Hope will take a diverse view of the world we live in. Activities and themes will include art, music and books from around the world. We will also use the services of the Early Start Curriculum, Dolch sight words, and Pennsylvania Keys and other sources to access their resources to plan activities. Every classroom's curriculum at Greater Hope will be based on a weekly theme and a letter for every week of the year (November thru May for alphabet), lesson plans are available for parents to review on a bulletin board in every classroom.

Daily Schedule

- 6:30-8:00 Both the 2 and 3's and the 4 and 5's will be combined for free play and story time according to the state regulations of staff to child ratios
- 8:00 All children will go to their respective classroom with their teacher and Breakfast served
- 8:15-9:00 Pre-school activities such as letter time, reading, science, sensory and art will be taught during the morning
- 9:00-9:30 Snack time and Potty/diapering time
- 9:30-10:45 More pre-school activities as stated above will continue, letter time, reading, science, sensory and art- all may be taken outside if weather permits
- 11:00-11:30 Lunch and getting ready for nap time (Potty/diapers, cots etc.)
- 11:45-1:45 Nap time- Quiet Time
- 2:00-3:00 Wake up and put away cots, Potty/diapers/activities
- 3:00-3:30 Snack and get ready to go outside/ large muscle activity
- 3:30-5:00 Play and organized games
- 5:00-6:00 Both the 2 and 3's and the 4 and 5's will be combined for free play and story time according to the state regulations of staff to child ratios the centers policies shall be subject to not being able to return to building. However, this does not affect your child's space.

Play and Education

Children including infants and toddlers, will go outdoors daily when weather permits. Here in Pennsylvania, inclement weather occurs often, but the children at Greater Hope will still enjoy large muscle activities in the gym located across the hall from our classrooms. Children younger than two years will be kept indoors if the temperature, including wind chill, is below 20 degrees. Children will also stay indoors when it is raining or when the temperature is above 90 degrees. If the inside temperature rises above 80 degrees, we will provide fans or air-conditioning; if it falls below 67 degrees we will call for furnace repair and contact parents to come for their children.

Assessment

Policy for screening

In collaboration with each child's parent and with parental consent, our program must complete or obtain a current developmental screening to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills within 45 calendar days of when the child first attends the program.

Ages and Stages and Ages and Stages emotion and social, (ASQ and ASQE) is the screening tool used.

School Age Program: (Kindergarten- age 12)

Our center operates a school-age license religious private school all year around.

We offer our big kids a variety of age-appropriate activities and equipment including math, reading and pre-reading electronics such as the Tag Reading System and Tablets with appropriate applications, although many tend to love old fashioned paper reading materials though, which we have plenty of. We encourage board game play as well as sensory experiences every day. During the summer months we go outside 2 times a day as well as play golf and other awesome activities. During the warm months we use nature and free play as a foremost means of education. Our approach with all the children is a play based one. Our school age program's purpose is to help each child become a productive and positive member of his or her community. It is our goal that each school-age child will:

- Learn to interact peacefully and meaningfully with peers and adults.
- Develop thoughtful decision-making skills.

Can recognize and pursue his or her interests. Learn how to build a positive self-image.

- Learn how to recognize and address the physical/social/emotional needs of himself or herself and peers.

The basic schedule of the center will be followed for school agers except for nap.

They will be allowed a shorter rest period to work on a quiet activity of their choosing. Meal and snack time will remain the same. All the policies in our Family Handbook are consistent for all ages (except nap and maybe snow days in the summer, but you never know in Pennsylvania)

Before, After and Wrap Around Care

Before and after school child care program provides for children from Kindergarten through the early years of elementary school. At Greater Hope will be provided between the hours of 6:30 am and 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Southwest school Children can be dropped off anytime in the morning and the bus will pick them up at the front door. They can be dropped off in the afternoon. A simple breakfast and a hot healthy lunch will be provided.

While children are attending before or after school program they will be given the opportunity for play and socialization. Art projects and basic skills reinforcement will be available. The staff is highly qualified to care for children and each teacher has more than the minimum education required by the state of Pennsylvania.

Observation, Assessment, and Portfolios

Family Connections

The assessment process is also an essential tool at Greater Hope Christian Academy. It is used to guide instruction and individualization, design professional development and to track children's progress. Along with on-going observations, we use developmental age appropriate screenings and assessments to measure our children's progress in areas of language and literacy, math, physical, and social-emotional development. The tools we use to measure progress are the Ages and Stages Questionnaires, ASQE and Teacher's Strategies Gold.

Family Conference (Parent-Teacher Meetings)

All parents and caregivers are requested to attend three parent-teacher conferences to discuss their child progression. You will receive an invitation from the teacher to schedule a time that is convenient during the conference weeks. See calendar for dates.

Early Intervention Services

Referral Process

All children needing a referral to outside agencies for social, mental, educational, wellness, and medical services must first follow this process:

- Observation/Documentation of the child's behavior or skill (ongoing)
- Tier Level One (Team Meeting)
- Tier Level Two (Team Meeting w/ Family)
- Tier Level Three (Agency Referral Meeting)
-

Child Link/Philadelphia County provides the following services for all children, birth to age three, who reside in Philadelphia:

- Arrange for evaluations to determine if a child is eligible for early intervention services
- Develop an IFSP to meet the individual needs of eligible children and their families
- Coordinate and obtain early intervention supports and services needed by eligible children and their families monitor supports and services and facilitate reviews and changes to the IFSP
- Assist eligible children to transition at age three to pre-school early intervention and/or other community and specialized supports and services
- Monitor children until age three for their development if they are at-risk for a developmental delay due to medical or environmental factors

Children's Behavioral Health Services serves children and adolescents, ages 3 through 21, who have social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. These residential and community-based behavioral services, which are in Delaware and Philadelphia Counties, empower children and adolescents to develop their full potential.

Greater Hope has a partnership with Delaware County Intervention Unit and Elwyn to refer children for services of intervention.

Collaboration with Other Professionals

Many children with disabilities or other special needs are supported by developmental and educational professionals such as therapists, teachers and others. Greater Hope Christian Academy welcomes those professionals and works with them to assure the child's success. The service provider is encouraged to provide services to the child in the context of the early childhood classroom environment and the child's teacher and the service provider work collaboratively to determine the best strategies to support the child in the group setting. Greater Hope Christian Academy supports the teacher's participation in Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

Transitions

Your child's transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

Transition from home to program Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

Transition between learning programs Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program.

Transition to elementary school Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

Transportation Policy

Parents who need transportation for their children can contract with transportation vendors that serve the community. The transportation company driver or designated adult is required to escort the children into the building upon arrival.

Greater Hope will contact a child's parents and/or emergency contact if a child does not arrive at the center on a regularly scheduled day, when we have not been informed of an absence. We will phone parents if a child has not arrived within 15 minutes of his/her scheduled time.

Our center does not personally provide transportation for field trips.

- We transport children in a chartered vehicle for school field trips.
- To be sure no child is left unattended in a vehicle, an attendance form will be carried along, and children will be checked when they board the vehicle and when they exit.
- General emergency numbers, emergency contact information for all children, and a cell phone will be carried along by the teacher(s) in charge.
- A first aid kit will always be in the vehicle.
- The vehicle(s) will be kept clean and uncluttered, with the aisle open for quick exiting.
- Drivers will be at least 18 years old, have been licensed for at least 1 year, and have a clean driving record, which will be checked annually.
- Smoking is prohibited in the vehicle.
- Should there be an accident, the center administrator must verbally inform the licensing office within 24 hours, and provide a written report within 5 business days after the incident. Parents will be immediately notified of the accident.
- When transportation is contracted or chartered, the name, address and phone number of the contracting firm, and after-hours contact information for a representative of the firm will be on file at the center.

Field Trips

Greater Hope will occasionally take field trips. Emergency information for each child will be taken whenever the children leave the premises as well as a permission slip for each child before departure from the center. You will be notified well in advance of any field trip requiring transportation and chaperone-volunteers. An extra fee may be charged for each child attending a field trip.

When children are off-site for walks or field trips, staff will take along emergency contact information, attendance sheets and a first aid kit in case an injury occurs to children or staff. The injury will be recorded in the medical log book upon return to the center. A cell phone will be carried along, in case help is needed.

MOVIES AND VIDEOS

Staff are actively involved in use of tv, video, or computer. Ex: watch and discuss video with children: do activity suggested in educational tv program: help child use computer program
Movies, videos, and other audiovisual materials may be important tools in the educational process. At the same time, the use of movies and videos should be limited to 30 minutes a week, so that they are used legally and appropriately in achieving legitimate educational objectives. Therefore, it is the purpose of this policy to promote the appropriate educational use of movies and videos in schools. Therefore, the following guidelines represent advisory council policy regarding how and when movies and videos may be used as an instructional strategy to supplement approved course curriculum.

Copyright – About rented or privately-owned movies and videos, all district employees must comply with copyright laws and other applicable regulations. The director of instruction will be responsible for providing information regarding regulations.

Educational Relevance of Movies and videos:

– The showing of movies and videos must be limited to specific educational purposes.

The following must be considered before showing a movie or video:

The age, maturity, and sophistication of the group of students;

The movie or video's MPAA rating or television parent guideline rating;

The presence of profanity, sexual content, prejudicial stereotypes, or violence in the movie or video;

The course curriculum and educational benefit of the movie or video;

The availability of alternate sources to accomplish educational objectives;

The feasibility of using a lawfully edited version or specific portions of the movie or video rather than in its entirety without seriously weakening the movie or video's educational value;

The student, teacher, and community interest in viewing the movie or video.

The following ratings and guidelines apply before showing a movie or video:

A movie or video with a G, TY-Y, or TV-G rating may be shown to any grade (k-12) with teacher and parent discretion.

A movie or video with a PG, TV-PG, or TV-Y-7 rating may be shown in grades 2-12 with school approval and parent notification.

A movie or video with a PG-13 or TV-14, R, NC-17, or TV-M rating is prohibited.

Parent Objections: If a parent objects to a student's viewing of an approved movie or video and personally communicates such objection to the teacher or administrator, the teacher shall not allow the student to view the movie or video. The teacher shall provide the student alternate assignments or course work like that done by students who view the movie or video.

Nothing in this policy grants parents, students, or school staff the authority to prohibit an approved movie's showing based solely on individual objections. At the same time, educators should be sensitive to individual complaints and take all reasonable steps to resolve complaints equitably in a manner that would allow the child full participation in the curriculum.

The principal will be responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

Celebrations

Your child's birthday is a momentous occasion! We do not host birthday parties at the center, but we do acknowledge a child's special day! You are welcome to provide a special treat/hats/streamer etc. For your child's birthday, just give us a day or two no week notice!

Please try to provide nutritious choices low in fat and sugar, although cupcakes etc. are allowed and are occasionally a fun treat, any celebratory snack must be store bought.

Celebrating holidays are a great way for children to experience a wide array of cultures and different ethnicities. We encourage families to share their traditions and become involved in classroom activities surrounding them! Please let us know if your child is unable to participate in any party or celebration at the center, we will provide a fun activity for him/her away from the festivities.

We do know that children and their families often like to have parties, we also know that not all children can participate. **If your child is having a birthday or holiday party, invitations must be given to his/her teacher so she may personally hand invites to another child's parent.** Children will not be allowed to discuss party plans at school. This helps prevent any hurt feelings that may occur. Please discuss this policy with your child so that our center remains a happy one.

Pets

There will not be pets on the premises. If a new pet will be added in the future, a notice will be posted to inform parents in advance, and whether children will have access to the pet(s). Any allergies children may have will be taken into consideration.

Release of Information

Parents/or Legal guardians must complete and sign a consent to release information forms, before we can complete documents to transition schools, pediatrician, or other agencies. This is in guidelines with the HIPPA guidelines and reinforces our centers confidential policy.

Photographs and Online Media

We love to capture the moments when children are learning and having fun simultaneously! We request that each family fill out the permission slip that permits Greater Hope staff to photograph

your child throughout the year. We will often hang these pictures around the classroom and use them for your child's works-of-art! We will also use a great picture on our website, daily Facebook updates and for other advertising projects. Facebook is a great way to see what your child is doing daily at the center, you can comment on or just look at the learning throughout the day! If you do not wish your child to be photographed or on Facebook do not sign the waiver!

Waiver

Lack of enforcement of a certain policy at any time does not indicate that the particular policy is no longer in effect". If we do not exercise a right that is provided by this agreement that does not mean that we have given up that right. And failure to enforce one or more terms of the contract does not waive the right to enforce any other terms of the contract. Greater Hope Christian Academy reserves the right to make any policy or financial changes at any time when it is in the best interest of the child care and will not compromise the quality of the children's care any changes will be given a two-week notice.

*** Information for Phl-Pre-K Parents**

Pre-K Attendance Policy

Greater Hope Christian Academy is dedicated to providing the Phl Pre-K Program to the young learners in our community free of charge to help ensure a strong start to their education. Our goal is to have every student attend school on a regular basis in order to allow this to happen. Your continued support in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

If a Pre-K child is absent without a doctor's excuse for more than three days in a row or consistently maintains below 85% attendance per month, the teacher will notify the Director of Preschool Programs. The Director will contact the family through a Warning Letter.

If a fourth consecutive unexcused absence occurs, or the student's attendance remains under the required 85% for any two months, the Director will send a letter informing the family that the child is being withdrawn from the Greater Hope Preschool Program. At that time, the open slot will be filled with a child from the community who is on the waiting list.

The following are *acceptable* reasons for excused absences:

1. The child is hospitalized
2. The child is incapacitated due to a serious injury
3. The child contracts a communicable disease (virus or flu)
4. The child has other ongoing health related ailments which temporarily prevent attendance (such as asthma)
5. There is a death in the family
6. Limited medical/dental/therapy appointments
(these should be made around school hours unless absolutely necessary)

Because funding for these programs is provided by the city, guidelines require this program to maintain an 85% attendance rate. In order to meet that requirement, the Greater Hope must keep the average daily attendance as close to the enrollment as possible. A call should be made to the classroom teacher to excuse any child's absence for each day. Upon return, the parent should submit a written excuse and return it to school within one day.

If there is an issue that the Director Dr. Miles cannot address, she will refer the issue to said HUB (UAC) specialist.

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