



GIANT LEAP LEARNING CENTER, LLC

3925 Grissom Parkway Cocoa, FL 32926
(certified by Florida League of Christian Schools Member# 13783)

Parent Handbook

Welcome to Giant Leap Learning Center. Our program exists for you and your child. We will strive to provide the loving care and guidance that your child needs as he/she grows and develops.

As parents, you play a vital role in our ministry to your child. This handbook is designed to help you understand our program, its mission, and the guidelines under which we operate. You are always welcome to visit, ask questions, and make suggestions. Cooperation between parents and staff will contribute to a successful experience for your child.

Our Church values children and believes in families. We sponsor this Center as a ministry of the Church to provide a learning environment that will help children grow as Jesus grew.

This handbook has been prepared so that you may know the policies and better understand the program as we work together to help your child grow.

Educational Philosophy of the Center

A child develops mentally, physically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally. We are committed to providing biblically based, age-appropriate experiences to allow each child to progress in these areas at his/her own level of ability while enjoying feelings of success. This is primarily done through hands-on activities in learning centers and positive Christ like role modeling of the staff.

Curriculum

Your child will participate in a variety of learning center activities, which include art, books, puzzles and manipulatives, nature, music, and dramatic play. Social skills are developed through sharing, taking turns, thinking, reasoning, and solving problems. Bible stories, thoughts, and verses are included in each teaching unit.

Hours Of Operation/ Days Center Is Closed

We provide care for children from 6 weeks - 5 years.

The hours of operation for our center are 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, throughout the year, except for the following holidays:

New Years Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, The Friday after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, The Day After Christmas

Communication

Parents are welcome to visit the center at anytime. We will inform you of any special activities we plan such as class parties, Week of the Young Child, programs or other events. We encourage parents to participate in such events. To provide the best possible care, please feel free to communicate any needs, or concerns regarding your child. It is only through parent/care provider interaction that a goal of quality, nurturing care can be achieved. You may request to schedule a parent conference any time with your child's caregiver or the director.

Admission and Enrollment

The following forms need to be completed prior to attending the center.

1. Handbook read and parent agreement signed
2. Enrollment papers filled out and signed.
3. Required immunizations specified by the Florida Department of Health, TB test if required by Florida Department of Health. Please remember to update all shots as soon as possible so we can keep your child's records current.
4. Document stating that the child is able to take part in the program from licensed health personnel.
5. Signed consent for child to receive emergency medical treatment, medicine, and permission for transportation.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the center of any change such as new address, new phone numbers (home, work, and cell), or any other information that would be needed in order to contact the parent or release the child to the appropriate person. The center will notify the parents in writing of any policy changes made. The parents will need to sign off upon receiving and reading any policy changes.

Illness

We want to provide the best care possible for every child. Our staff will strive to maintain the highest standards of cleanliness. Proper hand washing procedures will be followed and taught to the children. Toys, eating surfaces, toileting and diapering areas will be sanitized between children's use. One way you can help us prevent the spread of disease is by not bringing your ill child to the Center. If your child becomes ill at the Center you will be notified to pick them up immediately. According to the Florida Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, your child cannot attend the Center if one or more of the following conditions exist:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the Centers activities including outdoor play.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
3. The child has one of the following:
 - a. Oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.

- b. Armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
- c. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill.
4. The child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease. The child may return when a health-care professional determines that the child is no longer contagious and is able to participate in the Centers activities.

Our Child Care Centers policy also requires that your child be free of symptoms of illness: such as fever, vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to illness, they may not return for a full 24-hour period, or be accompanied by a doctor's note.

Medications

We will administer medication only if the Medication Consent Form has been signed and filled out, and only as stated on the medicines label directions or as amended by the physician in writing. Medicine will not be administered after its expiration date. We can administer only to the child for whom it is intended for. All medicine brought to the Center must:

1. Be in the original container
2. Be labeled with the child's full name
3. Be labeled with the date brought

Medication will be dispensed only once mid-day. Exceptions to these times need to be discussed with the Director.

Emergency Procedures

Medical Procedures:

In case of a medical emergency that requires immediate attention of a physician we will:

1. Contact emergency medical services or take your child to the minor emergency or nearest hospital
2. Childs parents (or emergency contacts) are notified immediately
3. Contact the physician identified in the child's record
4. Give the child first-aid treatment or CPR when needed

An accident report will be filled out and a copy given to the parents as well as the Florida Department of Protective and Regulatory Services notified.

Fire Procedures:

Fire drills are held monthly to teach your child the evacuation procedures. Severe weather drills are held once every six months. The evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. In case the Center is evacuated the children will be taken to **Central Church of Christ**. Emergency persons listed on the enrollment form will be contacted. If necessary your physician will be notified and 911 emergency personnel will also be called.

Parental Notification

After we have ensured the safety of your child, you will be notified immediately if:

1. Your child is injured and the injury requires medical attention
2. Your child has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the Center
3. Your child has been involved in a situation that placed them at risk
4. Your child has been involved in any situation that renders the Center unsafe, such as fire, or damage to the Center as a result of severe weather
5. Parents will be notified when they pick up the child about less serious injuries requiring the staff to render first aid.
6. Parents will be notified in writing within 48 hours if a child in the group has been diagnosed with a communicable disease or there is an outbreak of lice. Arrival and Release of Children

Each day you will need to sign your child in and note the time on the sign in/out sheet. As children arrive at the Center they will be given a health check. Health checks are done each day to ensure that your child is feeling well. This takes a few minutes. This process has been found to prevent the spread of disease. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Drop Off/Pick Up

When children are picked up from the Center, be sure to sign them out and inform the staff. Children will be asked to pick up materials that they are using before they leave the room or the playground. Please remember to check their cubbies for artwork, soiled clothing, and notes to parents. The safety of all children is of utmost importance to us that is why we only release children to persons authorized by **written permission** from the parents. Parents should provide the Center with names and telephone numbers of any person designated to pick up the child. Before the child is released, the designated person if not known will be asked to show a picture I.D. **No child will be released to an unauthorized person.**

Guidance And Discipline

Child guidance is an approach that helps children learn how to gain self-control. It involves teaching children how to solve problems and take responsibility for their actions and feelings.

Child guidance results in developing a healthy sense of self-esteem. We believe that discipline and positive guidance should be consistent and based on an understanding of individual needs and development. This positive method of discipline does not include the following and makes these methods unacceptable at our Center. There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment. Corporal punishment and threats of corporal punishment are prohibited. Children will not be pinched, shaken, bitten, or hit, or have anything put in or on their mouth as punishment. Children will not be humiliated, yelled at, or rejected. No child will ever be placed in a room alone unsupervised. Children will not be subjected to harsh, abusive or profane language. Children will not be punished for not eating, not napping, or toilet training accidents. The following steps will be taken in inappropriate behavior.

1. Verbal redirection to a more appropriate activity or positive behavior.

2. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child will be removed from the situation. He/she may be redirected to another activity or asked to sit in time out (a chair away from the group activity within the room). When the child returns to the group or activity the caregiver will be very aware to praise desirable behavior.
3. Time out with the director will be used as a last resort for inappropriate behavior. Parents will be called to help with the situation.
4. If a child's behavior continues to be such that his/her safety is in danger and/or the rights of others are not respected, thus making him/her unable to function in the group, the parents will be requested by the director to find an alternative situation for him/her.

Please discuss with your child's caregiver specific guidance techniques that work best with your child. Communication is key. Changes at home do affect a child's behavior at the Center. We are eager to work with you regarding behavior problems at the center or home. We believe children become better adjusted and happier adults if they learn and play in an environment of love and understanding.

Meals and Snacks

Parents provide all food for children. Each container should be labeled with the child's name and placed in an insulated Lunch Box with ice block. Older children will also be served a morning and afternoon snack.

Nap Time

The Center is required to have a rest time after lunch for children 18 months and older. The Center will provide a mat/cot. You will need to bring a crib size sheet, pillow and blanket. In case you child awakes before the other children, quiet activities such as reading, or puzzles will be offered to them.

Binging Items from Home

We discourage children from bringing toys from home. We know that bringing toys from home makes it difficult for any child to share and could get lost or broken. We discourage it and we will not replace or be responsible for lost or damaged toys or items. We do welcome items if they support the topic being studied. For example, children may bring a picture of Grandma or Grandpa when talking about families. It is always a good idea to check with your child's caregiver first.

Clothes /Infant Needs

Diapers and Wipes are provided by parents. Washable play clothes are recommended for all activities. Please bring an extra set of clothes labeled with the child's name for emergency purposes.

Outdoor Play

The children will go outside every day, weather permitting. Dress your child appropriately to enjoy Gods beautiful world. **Tennis Shoes are required** for Outside Play time

Child Custody Issues

It is the Centers intent to meet the needs of the children especially when the parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation, or remarriage. Sharing information about such situations may be helpful to the Center and will be held in the strictest confidentiality. We cannot legally restrict the non-custodial parents from visiting the child, reviewing the child's records, or picking the child up unless the Center has been furnished with legally filed, executed and current documents. Copies of all court documents must be submitted to the Center. In case of conflicts, we will contact the proper authorities.

Child Abuse And Neglect

Our staff has been trained to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. In an effort to protect the well-being and safety of the children, the State of Florida requires anyone who suspects child abuse and neglect to report it to the proper authorities. The Center is required by law to cooperate with any investigation of child abuse and neglect. You will be notified if your child is questioned as a part of an investigation.

Child Care Licensing

A copy of the current Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Care Centers is available to you in the Office. The most recent licensing inspection report will be posted on the parent bulletin board. Parents may contact the Florida League of Christian Schools licensing office with any questions at the following address:

FLOCS Member# 13783
(Florida League of Christian Schools)
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Lakeland, FL 33802-4687
(863) 683-5726 ext 251