

# Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center PARENT HANDBOOK



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This handbook is intended to familiarize families with current Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center, Inc. policy, practices and standards. Electronic copies (PDF) of the handbook are available on our website at [www.gigglegrace.org](http://www.gigglegrace.org). Print copies are available upon request. Giggles & Grace reserves the right to revise its policies, practices and standards as deemed appropriate by the Director. Families will be notified of updates to the handbook.

## History

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center opened up its doors in the early summer of 2013. Barb Gerulf, owner of Giggle Tree Daycare wanted to retire, but saw the continued need to have a childcare center in Ontario. Barb and Pastor James Aalgaard presented the opportunity of opening up a childcare center at St. Paul's to St. Paul's Lutheran Church's congregation. Barb's dream of a new center and continuing to serve the families that are currently being served came true. Through a capital campaign and Mission Builders, Giggles & Grace has come to life to serve children ages 6 weeks up to 12 years of age.

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center is currently licensed for 70 children. Currently Giggles & Grace has four classrooms serving, infants/toddlers, two-three year olds, four-five year olds and before and after school age children as well as a daytime pre-school.

## Mission Statement

In our Triune God, Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center, Inc., with community, parents and teachers, is committed to providing a safe, nurturing Christian environment emphasizing the total development of each child; spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, and social, while accepting and celebrating our individual and cultural diversity.

As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, which fosters a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create, and become a lifelong learner.

## Philosophy

Our program is built around the concept that children are born ready to learn. As caregivers, we strive to create a learning environment that is safe, stimulating and encouraging. The following guiding principles are excerpted from the *Oregon's Early Childhood Foundations* and serve as the foundation for our curriculum.

- Children develop knowledge of their world through active interactions with caregivers, peers, materials, and events.
- Learning is continuous and sequential, building on prior understandings and experiences.
- Learning proceeds at different rates in each area and each child; children will show a range of skills and understandings in any one area of development.
- Learning in each area is interconnected. Young children learn best through experiences, which incorporate several areas of development.
- Learning is embedded in a culture. Children learn best when their learning activities are rooted in a familiar cultural context.
- Learning begins in the family, continues in early care and education settings, and depends on parent involvement and caregiver guidance.

## General Center Information

### ADMINISTRATION

Executive Director: Meghan Tschida  
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Office: (541) 889-6141  
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### HOURS OF OPERATION

Giggles & Grace ELC is open Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 6:30pm. The center is closed for the following holidays:

*New Year's Day*  
*Memorial Day*  
*Independence Day*

*Labor Day*  
*Thanksgiving (2 days)*  
*Christmas (2 days)*

## PROGRAMS

There are 4 childcare programs offered at Giggles & Grace. They are:

• Infant/Toddler	6 weeks to 24 months	11 children
• Squirrels	2.5 years to 3.5 years	20 Children
• Redbirds	4 years to 5 years	20 children
• Explorers	School Age (before & after)	19 children

In addition, Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center provides half-day preschool programs to children ages 3-5.

## RATIOS

At Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center, we maintain the following staff-to-child ratios at all times in our classrooms:

<u>Age of Children</u>	<u>Minimum Ratio of Staff to Children</u>
6 weeks to 2 years	1 staff for every 4 children
2 years to 5 years	1 staff for every 10 children
5 years to 12 years	1 staff for every 15 children

## LICENSING

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center is a public program voluntarily licensed to serve 70 children by the Oregon Employment Department Child Care Division. A copy of the licensing rules is available for review in the office and the staff break room.

## TQRIS

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center is a participant in the Oregon Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

## WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS

Giggles & Grace will remain open during most severe weather. The Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day.

In the event that Giggles & Grace closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home.

## UPDATING ENROLLMENT RECORDS

Each fall, Giggles & Grace completes an audit of enrollment records. At the conclusion of this audit, families will be notified if anything needs to be updated. Some forms must be updated every year, including the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form.

Other records must be updated throughout the year, such as immunization records. When visiting your child's physician for a yearly "well-child" appointment, please request a copy of your child's most recent immunization record. You may bring these items in yourself, or have your physician fax them to us at 541-889-6142. You may also bring in your child's immunization card.

In addition any time a family's information changes such as address, place of employment or health insurance provider, a new Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form must be completed.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is a top priority for Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center. Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason without prior written consent of the individual. When discussing a child's activities and friends in the classroom, only first names will be used. In situations regarding behavior problems and/or Incident/Accident Reports, names of children involved will never be given to families.

## Curriculum

Curriculum at Giggles & Grace includes the child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and experiences offered to young children that support and enrich their development physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Giggles & Grace uses the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos and the Creative Curriculum for Preschool as guides for planning the curriculum in each of its program rooms. Each classroom has weekly lesson plans, posted in the classroom. These plans contain a number of activities, designed to foster each child's development, and the development of the group as a whole. Lesson plans may be changed in order to accommodate the children's changing interests.

Each classroom is set-up in centers, which include blocks, dramatic play, books, gross motor, fine motor, and art. Outdoor play is important to a child's physical development and must be included in both the morning and afternoon schedule. Self-selection or "free-play" is a daily part of the curriculum and means a child has the opportunity to choose which center or activity he/she participates in. This promotes creative expression and development of important social skills.

### DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES

The classroom's teachers work cooperatively to create a daily schedule and plan activities that meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. The daily schedule and activities create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; small and large muscle activities; indoor and outdoor play times; as well as times for self-selection and teacher-directed activities.

Consistency from day-to-day is particularly important to the overall well-being of the children and classroom environment. Children **thrive** on consistency! Routines will be maintained whenever possible for arrivals and departures; meals and snacks; resting or nap times; personal care routines like diapering/toileting and hand washing; and transitions.

### FREE PLAY

"Free-play" (also called child initiated activities, free choice, self selection) activities are incorporated into the morning and afternoon schedule. During free-play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc. Free-play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

### OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule for both the morning and afternoon. There is less structure in an outdoor learning environment; however, staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom. In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children are able to choose their friends and who to interact with.

Children will go outside year-round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors.

It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). **Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name.** Giggles & Grace has a few extra hats and mittens, but not enough for every child. If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, he or she may have to remain inside. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

### NAP/REST TIME

The Oregon Child Care Division requires that all children must be provided a regularly scheduled nap or resting time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period of time. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should have to remain resting. Children should be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to rest after 20-45 minutes.

Children are encouraged to bring a familiar item from home to use during nap/rest time, such as a small blanket or stuffed animal. These items will be stored in your child's cubby or on his/her cot or mat; there is limited space for storage of such items. Please take this into consideration when deciding which items to bring. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's name, as all class laundry is washed weekly.

## WEAPONS/VIOLENT PLAY

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play at Giggles & Grace. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. Redirection should be used when a child is engaging in weapon or violent play. If a child brings a weapon to Giggles & Grace, the weapon should be placed out of sight and sent home the same day with a note explaining the policy about weapons.

Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others.

## VISITING ANIMALS

Visiting animals that are brought into the classroom must be carefully considered for their temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Giggles & Grace without first notifying and receiving permission from the Director. Once approved by the Director, pets and visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. Parents will be informed in writing on any animal that is visiting the center one (1) week in advance. If a child handles an animal, they will immediately and thoroughly wash their hands after handling the animal.

## Assessments

The Teaching Strategies GOLD™ is the assessment tool used by the programs to evaluate and track each child's individual development during their time at Giggles & Grace. It is an on-going assessment system, meaning that teachers are continually watching, observing, and documenting each child's development. The same tool is used from birth through kindergarten, to allow a more complete picture of your child's development. By tracking a child's development, our teachers are able to plan activities that are appropriate for each child's developmental abilities.

## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences will typically be held twice per year, as well as each time your child transitions classrooms. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child's development both in the center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

## ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIOS

A permanent assessment portfolio will be kept for each child, and passed to the next teacher when a child transitions. Assessment portfolios will contain a variety of items, including photographs, examples of artwork, assessment profiles, and parent-teacher conference forms. Portfolios may be periodically taken home by families but should be returned promptly. When a child leaves Giggles & Grace, the assessment portfolio will be given to the family.

## Field Trips

Giggles & Grace offers a variety of experiences both at and away from the center. Field trips are a creative way to enrich theme and expand the learning environment. The Director must approve all field trips. Parents must be notified at least one (1) week before the planned field trip.

Teachers may decide and our encouraged to conduct short, unannounced field trips including but not limited to: walks as a class around the perimeter of the building and/or nearby neighborhoods; trips to local businesses. Teacher-child ratios must be maintained at all times. Parents complete a "Parent/Guardian Permissions" form at enrollment for this type of field trip and do not need to complete a separate form for the above named instances

## TRANSPORTATION

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center will **not** provide transportation to children in our care. All field trips will be within walking distance of Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center. Ontario School District does provide busing for students who attend classes in the Ontario School District during the school year.

## Meals and Snacks

At Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center, children are provided a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and PM snack. Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center follows the nutritional guidelines established by the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Menus will be posted on the bulletin board in the parent center. You may request a copy to take home if you would like.

Children will be encouraged to sample all foods that are offered, but will never be forced to eat. Please inform your child's teacher if your child cannot eat a certain food or has different dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant) so a substitution can be made. For certain dietary restrictions, you may be asked to provide food from home for your child.

### FOOD FROM HOME

Children are welcome to bring in special treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we recommend supplying store-bought snacks still in the original packaging. A list of healthy snack options approved by the USDA is available from the Director.

### FOOD ALLERGY ACTION PLAN

If your child has a food allergy, please complete a Food Allergy Action Plan form, available in the office. This form will be posted in your child's room, as well as in food preparation areas. If medication for an allergic reaction is provided, please have your physician sign the Food Allergy Action Plan as well.

## Infant, Toddler and Two Year Old Program Information

The following information is specific to the infant, toddler, and two year old program rooms:

- Parents must supply diapers, diaper cream, bottles, formula, baby food, extra clothing, pacifiers and, blankets, for rest time. Please label all items with child's name.
- Children may use pacifiers during rest time. To reduce the likelihood of spreading illness, pacifiers must be kept in a child's cubby or diaper bag during all other times of the day.
- If you are breastfeeding, please discuss with your child's teacher when your child should be fed breast milk, and when you would like to come in and feed your child.
- Breast milk must be brought in ready-to-use containers. For health reasons, we are not able to store bags of frozen milk for extended periods of time.
- We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before. Please inform your child's teachers on the daily charts of any new foods your child has tried.

### SIDS

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the unexpected, sudden death of a child under age 1 for which a cause of death cannot be identified. It is not known what causes SIDS, however several sleeping practices have been linked to an increased risk for SIDS. Therefore, Giggles & Grace has a strict policy for infant sleep placement.

**All infants less than one year will be placed on their back to sleep.**

**Infants shall not be allowed to sleep in a car seat or swing for a period of longer than 15 minutes.**

Once a child has been placed in his or her crib for nap, if the infant rolls from back to front - and is also able to roll from front to back - it is acceptable to leave the infant sleeping on his or her stomach. NO heavy blankets, stuffed toys or pillows should ever be placed in a crib. A request for alternative sleeping positions must be accompanied by a signed and dated physician's note stating the reason for the request.

## Clothing and Items From Home

### PLAY CLOTHES

Please send your child to Giggles & Grace in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Play is usually active and often messy; comfortable, washable clothes are important if your child is to participate fully in the program. Outdoor play is scheduled every day as an essential part of our planned curriculum. We expect all children to be dressed appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities.

All children occasionally get their clothes wet and have toileting accidents. Whenever this occurs, it is best to change the child into an extra set of clothing provided by the family. Your child's teacher will request that you bring a complete change of clothing, including underwear, to be kept at school and replenished as needed. Please be sure to clearly label all items of clothing. Let the teacher know whenever your child's clothing or other items cannot be located.

### ITEMS FROM HOME

Toys, stuffed animals, or other items from home may help your child feel more comfortable at school from time to time. However, it is often difficult for young children to share their special "treasures" with classmates. We ask that all items brought to Giggles & Grace from home be placed in your child's cubby shortly after arrival. Please clearly label all belongings brought from home. It is recommended that items of value, such as iPods or handheld gaming systems be left at home, due to the risk of damage or theft. Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

## Arrival and Departure

### ARRIVAL

**CCD requires that a child be escorted into the child care program and the child be accepted directly by the teacher/caregiver. Children will be released only to the parent or an adult whom the parent has authorized by a written statement (enrollment form).**

Parents, or other adult supervising the child, **MUST ENTER** the child's code into Childcare Manager on the computer provided in the entry way of the building, when dropping off and picking up their child. Each parent will be provided with a child specific code. Each code must be entered for each individual child.

Parents are required to accompany their child into the center and into their child's classroom where they will sign in on the classroom sheet as required by the CCD. Parents should also speak with the teacher in the classroom, if only briefly. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teacher, about their child's temperament that particular day, how he/she slept the night before, whether he/she has eaten that morning, etc.

Most children go through periods of difficulty with separating from their parent(s). This is common and developmentally appropriate. Try these tips for a successful drop-off:

- **Establish a regular, predictable routine.** Whether you have a kiss and a hug and go, or help your child put his/her things in his/her cubby first, do it the same way every day. What often makes separating stressful for children is the uncertainty. If your child can predict what will happen, the separation won't be as difficult.
- **Separate once.** If you come back into the classroom again and again, it will increase your child's stress. Remember the moment of separation is the worst part for your child, so doing it more than once makes it more stressful for your child.
- **Be reliable.** Return when promised. Children who are picked up later than expected may have more difficulties separating. Phrase time in terms your child will understand. For example, you will be back after snack time or before nap time.

### DEPARTURE

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center closes at 6:30 PM Monday through Friday. We ask that all children be picked up by 6:30 PM sharp, to avoid a late charge. The Infant/Toddler Classroom closes at 5:30 PM Monday through Friday. We ask that all infants/toddlers be picked up by 5:30 PM sharp, to avoid a late charge. The late charge will be \$1.00 for each one minute late. This will cover the staff member's overtime. If someone we are not familiar with is to pick up your child, it is essential that you inform your child's teacher in advance of the pick-up. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form. Remind the authorized person that they may be asked for identification such as a driver's license to ensure your child's safety. Even if the individual has picked up before, he or she may still need identification if the teacher in charge has never met him or her.

Be-sure to check your child out of the Childcare Manager Program using the child specific code, provided by Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center, Inc. Be sure to say good-bye to your child's teachers so they know you are leaving. Once you have reunited with your child and are departing. Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center, Inc. is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside the building.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child from the program, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. If parents are unable to be reached, staff members will try to contact all emergency contact persons. If staff members are unable to contact emergency contact persons, the Director will be notified and she will then notify the Department of Human Services and/or the Ontario Police Department.

### ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the benefit of the child as well as the classroom as a whole. If your child will be absent, please **call the center by 9:00am** so your child's teacher may make accommodations to the lesson plan.

If your child will be absent for an extended period of time (more than 2-3 days), the center must be notified in writing of the date the absence begins and the expected date your child will return. Enrollment will be terminated if a child is absent for a period of 2 weeks or more, and no notice has been received or contact made by the family.

## Health and Safety Policies

### ILLNESS

Our first priority at Giggles & Grace is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. A child will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- **Fever** accompanied by behavior changes or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- **Diarrhea** (not associated with diet changes or medications) until diarrhea stops or the continued diarrhea is deemed not be infectious by a licensed health care professional.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- **Vomiting** (two more instances in past 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash with fever or behavior change, until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- **Pink eye** (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated
- **Head lice**, from the end of the day until after first treatment
- **Scabies**, until after treatment has been completed
- **Tuberculosis**, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care
- **Impetigo**, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- **Strep throat**, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- **Chicken pox**, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- **Pertussis**, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- **Mumps**, until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- **Hepatitis A virus**, until 1 week after onset of illness
- **Measles**, until 4 days after onset of rash
- **Rubella**, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion
- **Herpes simplex**, with uncontrollable drooling

A child who becomes ill while at Giggles & Grace must be removed from the classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease. An ill child will be sent to the office to wait for his/her parent to arrive. For this reason, we ask families to make every effort to pick up a sick child as soon as possible.

Giggles & Grace reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious.

**Please contact Giggles & Grace at (541) 889 - 6141 by 9:00AM whenever your child is ill.**

### NOTICE OF EXPOSURE & REPORTING DISEASE

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be posted at the door to your child's classroom. Additionally, families who have provided an email address will receive email notification of the illness. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the Director immediately.

In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Director will notify the health department.

## HAND WASHING

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm, running water is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in childcares such as the flu, diarrhea, and pink eye. Parents are encouraged to assist their child in the hand washing process upon arrival. Other times your child (and staff members) will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the center or when changing classrooms
- After **each** diaper change or using the toilet
- Before and after meal times
- Before and after administering medication
- After handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood vomit)
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground
- After handling pets and other animals
- After cleaning or handling garbage

Warm, running water (no colder than 60 degrees F) and soap must be used. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the backs of hands, between fingers, under nails, and under any jewelry. A disposable paper towel should be used to dry hands and turn off faucet. Help reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home as well. If a child is too young to wash their hands themselves, staff will wash the children's hands for them.

## MEDICATIONS

Prescription and over-the-counter medications must be given to a staff member in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's full name and birth date. Giggles & Grace staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. Forms can be obtained from your child's teacher or from the Director.

Medications are stored in a locked box (refrigerated medications) or in a locked cabinet (non-refrigerated medications) while in use at Giggles & Grace. The Medication Authorization Form must remain with the medication at all times. Unused medications must be immediately returned to the family and will not be stored at Giggles & Grace.

Medications are administered only by Head Teachers, the Director, or Program Manager. When a medication is given, the teacher will document the type of medication administered, the dosage, and the time it was given along with their signature.

## IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Each child must have a current immunization record on file at Giggles & Grace. Immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received. Updated immunization records may be faxed to Giggles & Grace directly from your healthcare provider, or you can bring in your child's updated immunization record card. Giggles & Grace's fax number is **(541) 889-6142**.

## DOCUMENTATION OF ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at Giggles & Grace using an Accident/Incident Report. We document all biting incidents as accidents. If a biter breaks the skin of another child, an accident/incident report needs to be completed for the biter as well as the child who was bitten. We use great detail when explaining events, but never include other children's names. If the injury is serious, a parent will be contacted before pick-up. The parent shall sign the report the same day as the incident. A copy may be given to the parent. All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the Director to be placed in the child's permanent file.

## DOCUMENTATION OF HEALTH INCIDENTS

Each time a parent is contacted regarding an ill child or symptoms of illness, a Health Incident Form will be completed. A copy of the form will be given to the parent and the original to the Director to be placed in the child's permanent file. All parents will be notified of any communicable illnesses present in the center via a sign posted on the main entrance to the center explaining the illness. In addition, parents with children in the classroom of the infected child will receive an email regarding the illness.

## DOCUMENTATION OF ALLERGIES

A child with allergies must have an Allergy Action Plan posted in a visible location in the classroom. If the allergy is food-related, an Allergy Action Plan must also be posted in the kitchen area. All staff working in the classroom of child with allergies must review the Allergy Action Plan to ensure understanding of emergency procedures should the child have an allergic reaction. All allergic reactions must be documented with a Health Incident Form.

## DOCUMENTATION OF SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

An Emergency Care Plan will be on file for any child with special health care needs (seizures, etc). A copy of the Emergency Care Plan must be kept in the classroom emergency binder. All staff working in the classroom must familiarize themselves with this plan, should an emergency arise. If necessary, staff will receive training regarding a child's specific health care needs.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL/DENTAL PROCEDURE

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Giggles & Grace Learning Center staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. **It is the responsibility of the parent to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.**

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, the Head Teacher will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Director until a parent arrives.

### **If the child requires immediate medical attention:**

- The staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911.
- A staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.
- The Director will contact the parent(s).

## TRANSPORTATION

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center will **not** provide transportation to children who attend Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center.

## SUNSCREEN & INSECT REPELLANT

Between the months of March and October, all children 6 months and older will have sunscreen applied before outdoor activities and throughout the day. Giggles & Grace will supply sunscreen for the children. A permission slip must be on file before sunscreen will be applied to a child. If a parent prefers to supply their own sunscreen, it must be SPF 15 or above, and will be applied by classroom teachers regularly throughout the day. The sunscreen cannot be in an aerosol can. Please label your child's sunscreen with their first and last name. Parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent to their child before arriving at Giggles & Grace for the day, as Giggles & Grace staff are not permitted to apply insect repellent.

## VISITING ANIMALS

Visiting animals that are brought into the classroom must be carefully considered for their temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Giggles & Grace Learning Center without first notifying and receiving permission from the Director. Once approved by the Director, visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. Parents will be informed one (1) week prior to the animals visit to the center in writing. If a child handles an animal, they will immediately and thoroughly wash their hands after handling the animal.

## CLOTH DIAPERS

Only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups may be used at Giggles & Grace Learning Center, unless the child has a documented medical reason that does not permit their use. Documentation from the child's physician must be provided to the Director before cloth diapers will be used while the child is at the center. Families must provide a container for storage of soiled cloth diapers while at the center.

## MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE REPORTERS

As childcare professionals who interact with children on a daily basis, each staff member of Giggles & Grace Learning Center is a mandatory child abuse and neglect reporter and must contact the Oregon Department of Human Services whenever abuse or neglect is suspected.

Parents will be informed of such reports in writing the day the report was made. The parent shall sign the report the same day as the incident. A copy will be given to the parent. All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the Director and/ to be placed in the child's permanent file.

## TOBACCO USE

Cigarettes, e-cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on Giggles & Grace premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas. Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco is also prohibited on field trips.

## ACCESS POLICY

Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care **shall not** have unrestricted access to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio. **Unrestricted access** means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care.

Person who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct supervision and monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the Head Teacher unless he/she delegates it to the Full Time Teacher due to a conflict of interest with the person.

Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If a staff member is unsure about the reason, the Director or Program Manager to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation, staff will follow the "Dangerous Adult" procedure. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc., will be monitored by a paid staff member.

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian or custodian) who is required to register with a state sex offender registry:

- Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.
- Shall not be on the property of the child care center without written permission from the Director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own minor child to and from the center. The Director is not obligated to provide permission and must consult with their DHS licensing agent first.

## AFFIDAVIT POLICY

At times families may be dealing with difficult situations at home. When legal matters are present in the home, families may need to collect affidavits for their legal team. Due to the nature of the relationship between caregiver and child, families may choose to ask a Giggles & Grace Learning Center staff member to provide such a statement. Our program's priority is providing the best possible care when children are away from home and our focus will remain on the child, making sure all their needs are met during what could be a difficult time at home. Giggles & Grace Learning Center staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits of a professional nature to families.

## Guidance Strategies

Every adult who cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct and socialize children toward appropriate behaviors. These adult actions often are called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial because they promote children's self-control, teach children responsibility and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effective caregivers are at encouraging appropriate child behavior, the less time and effort adults will spend correcting children's misbehavior.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and can teach the child to be unkind to others. However, actions that acknowledges the child's efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, is likely to encourage healthy development. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation and a good understanding of the child. Giggles & Grace staff will use **only** positive guidance techniques. There will be no physical discipline used at Giggles & Grace.

When interacting with young children, staff should ask themselves the following questions:

### “Am I...”

- Validating feelings?
- Asking open ended questions?
- Encouraging problem solving?
- Respecting children's choices?
- Using praise and positive reinforcement?
- Talking with children – not at them?
- Circulating throughout the classroom?
- At the child's eye level?

## REASONS FOR MISBEHAVIOR

If caregivers understand why children misbehave, they can be more successful at reducing behavior problems. Listed here are some of the possible reasons why children misbehave.

- Children want to test whether caregivers will enforce rules.
- They experience different sets of expectations between school and home.
- A child does not understand the rules, or are held to expectations that are beyond their developmental levels.
- They want to assert themselves and their independence.
- They feel ill, bored, hungry or sleepy.
- They lack accurate information and prior experience.
- They have been previously "rewarded" for their misbehavior with adult attention.

## PREVENTING MISBEHAVIOR

Child misbehavior is impossible to prevent completely. Children, usually curious and endlessly creative, are likely to do things parents and other caregivers have not expected. However, there are many positive steps caregivers can take to help prevent misbehavior.

- Set clear, consistent rules. (*e.g., walking feet; gentle touches*)
- Make certain the environment is safe and worry-free.
- Show interest in the child's activities. (*e.g., participating in activities with the children so they stay interested for longer periods*)
- Encourage self-control and independence by providing meaningful choices. (*e.g., “You may pick up the blocks or art center.”*)
- Focus on the desired behavior, rather than the one to be avoided. (*e.g., “Ashley, please use gentle touches with your friends.”*)
- Build children's images of themselves as trustworthy, responsible and cooperative.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Say "Yes" whenever possible.
- Notice and pay attention to children when they do things right. (*e.g., “Joey is playing so nicely. I like it when you keep the blocks on the table.”*)
- Encourage children often and generously.
- Set a good example. (*e.g., using a quiet voice when children should be quiet*)
- Help children see how their actions affect others.

## RESPONDING TO MISBEHAVIOR

Below are strategies Giggles & Grace staff will use to respond to child misbehavior. Remember, however, that it's always a good idea if rules are explained fully and clearly understood before misbehavior occurs. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the classroom.

- **Redirection**  
This strategy should be used most frequently when working with young children. If a child is not following the rules or being uncooperative, quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity. For example, "Kate, please help me water the flowers now. You've been riding the bike for a long time and it's now Logan's turn."
- **Logical consequences**  
These are structured consequences that follow specific misbehaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and the consequence are directly related. For example, Andrew is standing on his chair at lunch. His teacher should remind him that if he stands on his chair, he could fall and get hurt; this will make him sad.
- **Participate in the solution**  
If a child damages something, he/she needs to help in fixing it or in cleaning up. If a child causes someone distress, he/she should help in relieving that. For example, "It made Brandon very sad when you told him he wasn't your friend anymore. Please come apologize and help me make him feel better."
- **Natural consequences**  
Allowing children to experience the consequences of their behavior is also called learning the hard way. For example, Laura does not put her books back in her school bag after she finishes reading. One day she loses a book, and therefore must find a way to replace it. Only use natural consequences when they will not endanger the child's health or safety.
- **"Take a break" or "Calm down chair"**  
In some instances, a child may need to be removed from a particular situation in which he/she has become overwhelmed or violent. The child should be directed to "take a break" or sit in the "calm down chair." This strategy gives the child a chance to calm down, regain control, and reflect quietly on her or his behavior away from others. Once the child has calmed down, staff should talk with the child about the actions that led up to and resulted in needing a break or being sent to the calm down chair. For example, "Hannah, we have talked often about how hitting is not acceptable. But because you hit John, please leave the blocks center and go to the calm down chair. I will talk to you when you are ready."

If these actions do not help in reducing or changing behavior the following will take place:

1. Staff will report behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director.
2. The Director will observe the child and meet with the Head Teacher to develop a behavior management plan.
3. The behavior management plan will be discussed with the parent and then put into practice.
4. The Director, Head Teacher and Teachers, and parents will evaluate the behavior management plan. If needed, adjustments will be made.

*\*\* If a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, staff or teachers, the child will be removed from the classroom and possibly the program for a period of time.*

## USEFUL PHRASES

The following phrases are useful when problem-solving with children.

<b>Instead of Say</b>	"No" or "Don't"
<b>Say</b>	"Please stop", "I don't like that", "That's not OK", or "That is not a choice"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"That's not nice"
<b>Say</b>	"That's not OK", "Please use gentle touches", or "That hurts Jordan"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"No running"
<b>Say</b>	"I need you to use your walking feet" or "You may run when we go outside"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"Stop crying"
<b>Say</b>	"I need you to use your words to tell me what is wrong"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"Can you put away your toys?" (If it is not a choice, do not pose it as a question)
<b>Say</b>	"You may help me pick up the blocks, or help Alyssa pick up the puzzles"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"I said yes" (when a child tells you "no")
<b>Say</b>	"No is not a choice, I need you to..."

## Biting Policy

Biting is a behavior that usually appears between the ages of one and three years. While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teachers. There are a variety of strategies we implement at Giggles & Grace to prevent and stop biting. This is the process followed when a child bites:

- The biting child is stopped and told, “Stop biting. Biting hurts” in a firm voice. Teachers should remain calm, being careful not to show anger or frustration towards the child.
- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive for the bite, the separation may include re-direction or meeting the child’s needs. As little attention as possible will be placed on the biting child, to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
- Appropriate first aid will be provided to the child who was bitten. Bite will be washed with soap and water; cold compress will be applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage will be applied if necessary.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Teachers need to work with parents to gather information about the child’s behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are the steps the teacher will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior:

1. The teacher will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The following questions should be asked:
  - Was the space too crowded?
  - Were there too few toys?
  - Was there too little to do or too much waiting?
  - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times?
2. The teacher will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary.
3. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate ways
4. The teacher will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
5. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
6. The teacher, parent and Director will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and measure outcomes.
7. If biting continues the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

All information is confidential and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on an Incident/Accident Report which is completed and signed by a teacher and parent. A copy is provided to the parent and the original kept in the child’s permanent enrollment file in the office.

## Home and School Partnership

### NEW FAMILY ORIENTATION

Each family is strongly encouraged to schedule a time with the Director to complete a “New Family Orientation.” This orientation is a great time for parents to drop-off routine care items (diapers, bottles, etc.) as well as an opportunity to participate in a portion of classroom activities with their child, familiarizing themselves with their child’s routines at Giggles & Grace. Important policies and procedures are also reviewed with the Director at this time, as well as the paperwork required for enrollment completed. Typically, “New Family Orientation” is scheduled one week prior to the start date.

### NEWSLETTERS

A center-wide monthly newsletter will be posted on the bulletin board near the main entrance. If the Director has your email address on file, a copy of the newsletter will be emailed to you. This newsletter provides you with general information and announcements about the center.

### ROOM TRANSITIONS

Your child will transition to a new classroom when he/she has reached the developmental milestones for a particular classroom. As the time for a transition to a new room approaches, you will receive a letter containing information about your child’s transition into his/her new classroom. Both your child’s current and future teacher is available to address any questions or concerns you have during the transition process. Before the transition into a new classroom has been completed, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new teacher in order to familiarize themselves with the new classroom, children, and curriculum.

### PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation is strongly encouraged in our program. Some possible opportunities to participate and contribute to your child’s Giggles & Grace experience:

- Field trip supervision
- Leading or assisting special projects (sewing, carpentry, cooking, etc.)
- Construction or collection of raw materials for art projects, dramatic play props, etc.
- Eating lunch or snack with your child – please inform the teachers one day in advance
- Volunteering in your child’s classroom

### PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences will typically be held twice per year, as well as each time your child transitions classrooms. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child’s development both in the center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child’s development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

### PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Giggles & Grace asks parents to complete a program evaluation annually. The information gathered from these anonymous surveys is used by the staff to develop goals for our center and to improve the overall quality of care at our center. A parent’s point-of-view is different from a teacher’s point-of-view. Therefore, parent feedback on the program evaluations is very important to the success of our program and satisfaction of our families.

### QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher most directly involved. If the concern is not resolved, the director, Meghan Tschida, can be reached at 541-889-6141 or by e-mail at [gigglegraceoffice@gmail.com](mailto:gigglegraceoffice@gmail.com). The director is available to assist parents and staff in resolving concerns.

## Fees and Billing Policies

### FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

Upon enrollment and any changes to tuition, families are provided a Parent Agreement Contract. This agreement should be carefully reviewed, checked for errors

### MONTHLY STATEMENTS

Statements will be issued on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. All tuition is **due in advance by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month**. Any other arrangements need to be made through the Director. A monthly service charge of 2% will be assessed on accounts 30 days past due.

### REGISTRATION FEE

There will be a \$25.00 registration fee charged for the first child. Each additional child will be charged \$10.00

### MONTHLY RATES

RATES	1 <sup>ST</sup> CHILD	2 <sup>ND</sup> CHILD
Monthly	\$375.00	\$320.00
Daily	\$ 22.00	\$ 19.00
Hourly	\$ 3.00	\$ 2.50
Infant/Toddler	\$435.00	\$425.00

\*After School Kids will be charged by the hour a minimum of 1 ½ hours.

### PRE-SCHOOL ONLY MONTHLY FEES

5 days a week	\$140.00
4 days a week	\$125.00
3 days a week	\$110.00
2 days a week	\$100.00

### LATE PICK-UP FEE

Giggles & Grace closes at 6:30PM, Monday through Friday. Parents will be charged **\$1.00 for each minute** a child is present after 6:30PM. Teachers will record late fees for processing. If there is a late pick-up fee, parents will receive a written notice from the Director stating the amount of the late pick-up fee. The fee will be added to your payment the following week.

### RETURNED CHECKS/INSUFFICIENT FUNDS

All returned checks rejected due to insufficient funds will be charged a **\$25.00 penalty**. Missed payments and late fees must be paid within 2 weeks. Repeated incidents of returned checks or insufficient funds notices could result in termination of child care services. A payment plan should be discussed with the Director if a family is having trouble making tuition payments.

### DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Families that are more than 4 weeks or \$600 behind in payments may have their child care services terminated. For information about assistance programs that will help cover the cost of child care tuition, please speak with the Director. A payment plan must be agreed upon between family and Center before an account will be considered “in good standing” and no longer eligible for termination.

## Holidays and Vacation

### PAID HOLIDAYS

Giggles & Grace will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

*New Year's Day*  
*Labor Day*

*Memorial Day*  
*Thanksgiving (2 days)*

*Independence Day*  
*Christmas (2 days)*

If the holiday falls on a weekend day, Giggles & Grace will close during the week. For example, if New Year's Day falls on a Saturday, Giggles & Grace may close on Friday or Monday. Families will be given one month's notice in the event of additional closings. Vacation days may not be used on a holiday, but may be used on days immediately preceding and following a paid holiday.

### VACATION DAYS

Each family who attends Giggles & Grace full time will receive fourteen (14) vacation days per calendar year. Please provide the Director with one week's notice when you wish to use vacation days. Requests to use vacation days must be provided in writing.

## Emergency Procedures

### EMERGENCY MEDICAL/DENTAL PROCEDURE

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Giggles & Grace Learning Center staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. **It is the responsibility of the parent to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.**

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, the Head Teacher will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Director until a parent arrives.

#### **If the child requires immediate medical attention:**

- The staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911.
- A staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.

### FIRE, BOMB OR OTHER EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Fire regulations procedures are posted near the exits in each classroom. Fire drills are conducted each month; all classrooms are required to participate.

In the event of a fire, bomb threat, or other evacuation emergencies, the children and teachers will immediately leave the building and meet on the grass in between St. Paul's Lutheran Church and Giggles & Grace. Parents will be called as soon as safely possible following an emergency situation.

**For the safety of children, parents, and staff, we ask that parents do not attempt to pick up their child during an emergency situation.**

### BLIZZARD/SEVERE WINTER WEATHER

The Director will monitor the weather and local news stations throughout the day to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. Head Teachers are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the situation. Routine classroom activities will continue until parents arrive.

### MISSING OR ABDUCTED CHILD

- In the event of a *missing* child, the Head Teacher will search for the child in the immediate area, while another staff member calls the Director to help with the search.
  - If the child cannot be located in a reasonable amount of time, the Director will notify the **Ontario Police Department – 541-889-5312** and the child's parents.
- In the event of an *abducted* child, the Head Teacher must **immediately** contact the Director, the Ontario Police Department, and the child's parents.

### POWER FAILURE

Staff members and children should remain in the classroom and if possible, proceed with activities as usual, or may go to the outdoor playground until power resumes.

If power cannot be restored within a reasonable amount of time, the center will close and parents contacted.

- Head Teachers are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the closing and of the need to immediately pick up their child.
- Activities will resume as possible until parents arrive.