

NCS
Preschool

2009-2010
Parent Handbook





Welcome! *We are so glad you are a part of our Northland Christian School family and want to work together to make your child's first school experience a positive one. This Handbook is designed to inform you of our policies and procedures so we can work effectively together. Please familiarize yourself with this information and keep it to refer to when needed. We are looking forward to a great year at NCS!*

– Rachel Partin, Preschool Director, 281.440-1377.

MISSION

Northland Christian School is committed to providing a Christ-centered environment that creates an educational experience of challenges, security, growth, and fulfillment. Our principle goal is to work with the family and church to build a firm foundation for further development through educational excellence and Biblical values. The school is dedicated to the development of Christian leaders for our families, churches, community, country, and world.

Preschool Program

Northland Christian School strives to maintain a high quality early childhood program providing a safe and nurturing environment – promoting the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families. Children are encouraged to explore learning opportunities in the center based developmentally appropriate program. It has been said that “play is a child’s work”. Children’s play is a primary vehicle for and indicator of their mental growth and enables children to progress along a preferred developmental sequence. Therefore, child-initiated, child-directed, teacher supported play is an essential component of developmentally appropriate practice. The preschool program relies heavily on active learning experiences. As children progress through the program, academic elements and activities are introduced to prepare them for the formal school setting.

Arrival and Pick-up

Children should be in their classroom by 8:30 a.m. They must be brought into the classroom and signed in. They must never be left in the room without a teacher.

If your child is not picked-up at their designated time late fees will be charged as follows:

- 3:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. (\$17.00)
- 6:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. (\$9.00)
- 6:30 p.m. (When a student is picked up after 6:30 p.m. a late fee will be assessed, \$1.00 per minute penalty for every minute beyond 6:40 p.m. Repeated late pick-up of a student may result in loss of extended care or holiday care services.)

Behavior Requirements

After a reasonable period of time, if we determine that your child’s needs require the teacher to be excessively distracted from the needs of the rest of the class you will be asked to make other arrangements for child care.

Classroom Activity Guidelines

Northland Christian School preschool classes do not participate in water activities involving swimming pools. Special activity days may use water squirt toys, sponges, sprinklers, etc.

Animals are not kept or allowed in the preschool classroom. If special guest animals will be at school, proper notification will be sent home to parents prior to the visit.

Guidelines set forth by TDFPS** in Minimum Standard Rules will be followed.

Classroom Visits

Northland Christian School welcomes parents to visit classrooms at any time. Parents are asked to sign-in at the Welcome Center and wear a visitor’s badge when visiting. As a courtesy to teachers and in an effort to support structure and routine for the students, long visits are not recommended. Special event days and parties will provide good opportunities for parents to enjoy visiting.

Clothing

Children should wear clothing suitable for their work/play. Please do not send them in anything you will be concerned about getting soiled. Children should be able to manage their clothing independently. Students should wear rubber sole shoes; no hard soles or thong sandals are permitted. Children in Upper and Middle Preschool will wear uniforms available from the Cougar Store at the Secondary Campus, 4363 Sylvanfield, 281-587-6412. Wednesdays are Spirit Days and the children may wear spirit wear, also available at the Cougar Store.

Communication

The staff and administration of Northland Christian School encourages communication between home and school. Parents are welcome to call at any time if they have concerns or questions. Teachers will return phone calls when messages are left with the office. Periodically notes and progress reports will be sent home in an effort to support good communication between school and home. The Northland Christian School website and email will be used to provide information in a timely manner. Parents are encouraged to keep all contact information current.

Questions regarding policy and procedures may be discussed with classroom teachers or Administration in the Preschool Office -281-440-1377 ext. 1 -including the Preschool Director and Administrative Assistants. If satisfactory answers are not received the Head Administrator of Northland Christian School can be contacted – 281-440-1060.

Discipline and Guidance

Maintaining good behavior in a classroom setting is essential and sometimes requires teachers to enforce discipline. The primary method of discipline and guidance used in Preschool at Northland is redirection. Our goal is to teach the students to make good choices, resulting in self-direction. Discipline must be individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding, and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control. The teachers will use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourages the development of self-esteem. After a reasonable period of time, if it is determined that a child's needs require the teacher to be excessively distracted from the needs of the rest of the class, parents will be asked to make other arrangements for child care.

Drop-in & Make-up Days

The Northland Christian Preschool Program is unable to accommodate drop-ins or make-up days.

Extended Care

AM EXC - Morning Extended Care

(6:30 a.m. - 7:50 a.m.)

Extended Care staff receives children, serves breakfast to students arriving by 7:15 a.m., and cares for them until school begins.

PM EXC - Afternoon Extended Care

(3:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.)

Extended Care staff serves snacks. The afterschool schedule includes art, story time, Bible, gym, and play-ground activities.

If you need child-care before class begins at 8:00 a.m., our AM EXC program is available. Reassurance that your child will always be safe and well taken care of in the event you are delayed in picking them up at 3:00 p.m. will provide peace of mind. Unless you have chosen an extended care plan in your tuition package, Extended Care fees should be paid in advance online at northlandchristian.org using credit, debit or electronic check. If you are unable to pay in advance you will be asked to pay online at the time of pick-up. Payment is due when services are rendered or an additional \$5.00 late fee will be added. We are unable to accept cash payments. Failure to pay Extended Care fees may result in the loss of Extended Care services. If repeated attempts to obtain payment are required by NCS staff, the Preschool Director, or Business Office personnel, alternative collection methods will be pursued.

Students will be released to parents/legal guardians and adults designated on the Enrollment Form who have permission to pick up. All children must be signed out.

Faculty

The faculty is the cornerstone of the preschool program. Teachers are fully qualified Christian professionals who not only see their work as a ministry, but are also dedicated to excellence in education. They are committed to creating an exciting learning environment and helping each child succeed. An emphasis is placed on caring.

Field Trips

All Preschool field trips will use Northland Christian School approved transportation. Private vehicles will not be used. Parents are welcome to meet us at our destination, but will not be allowed to ride the school bus. Safety is a priority and all necessary measures will be taken to ensure safe, educational, age appropriate field trips.

If you would like to participate in any field trip or school function, parents and other volunteers are required to undergo a criminal background check. Forms can be accessed on the Northland Christian School web site under "Quicklinks." The Consent to Perform Criminal History Background Check in Compliance with the FCRA (Fair Credit Reporting Act) should be submitted to the Business Office at least two weeks prior to the field trip or school function.

Handbooks

Parent Handbooks are distributed at Parent Orientation prior to school beginning in August, during the first week of classes and are available on the Northland Christian School web site and in the Preschool Office. The Northland Christian School website, email and handouts will be utilized to communicate any policy changes or other important information.

Hearing and Vision Screening

Northland Christian School will conduct hearing and vision screening for students in our 4 year old classes. This is done in the fall and again in the spring for any new students who have enrolled. If concerns are noted, written notification will be sent home to parents suggesting follow-up evaluation.

Holiday Care

Holiday Care is available from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. when the school is closed for holidays, teacher conference days, or other days the school is closed. Summer Holiday Care includes the two transition weeks between the school year program and the summer programs in June and August. The list of Holiday Care days is posted on the Northland Christian School web site on the school calendar.

In order to adequately schedule staff members, advance registration is requested at least one week prior to the Holiday Care date. The fee for Holiday Care is \$30 per day with advance registration. The fee for Holiday Care after the registration deadline is \$45 per day. Students who are not pre-registered cannot be guaranteed a spot will be available and will be accommodated as staffing levels allow. If the student's tuition and/or fees are not in good standing, holiday care services may not be used.

Extended Care staff serves breakfast to those students arriving by 7:15 a.m., morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack. These are uniform free days and allow the children to play in a fun, relaxed atmosphere with their friends.

Illness and Exclusion Criteria

Any child who has an armpit temperature of 100.4 degrees, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting illness (two or more episodes in 24 hours) or other symptoms of illness will not be admitted to class. If a child becomes ill while at school, parents will be called to pick her/him up and need to be prepared with a good back-up system in case you are unavailable. If we are unable to contact parents/legal guardians we will contact the person/persons designated on the Registration Form with permission to contact in case of an emergency.

Please note: A child may be re-admitted when temperature has been below 100.4 degrees F. for 24 hours without the use of fever suppressing medication. Therefore, if a child is sent home with a fever, he would not be eligible to attend classes the following day.

Immunizations

Northland Christian School requires all students to follow the guidelines set by the state for childhood immunizations. Current immunizations must be provided at the time of registration and it is the parent's responsibility to keep these updated. Reminders will be sent home if immunizations are found not to be current.

Items to Bring To School

Each newly enrolled child will receive a canvas tote bag with the school logo to bring to school everyday. Children will need a change of clothes (including underwear and socks) in a zip-lock or plastic bag. Extra clothes for Middle and Upper Preschool students need to meet uniform requirements. For rest time, a small blanket and soft security item (teddy bear) is recommended. All items, including the tote bag, need to be clearly marked with the child's name. Please include a sweater or jacket in case of changing weather. Children will be outside daily, weather permitting. Please be sure to label everything and please check with your child's teacher to see if there are any other needs for the classroom.

Licensing

The Preschool Program is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and meets or exceeds standards set by this agency.

The most recent Licensing inspection report is always available for review in the Northland Christian Preschool Office. The TDFPS** website is www.dfps.state.tx.us and the local office can be reached at 713/940-5200. Suspected child abuse should be reported to 1-800-252-5400.

Meals and Snacks

Breakfast is served to students in AM EXC if they arrive by 7:15 a.m. Northland Christian School provides a mid-morning snack to all students. Preschool students who stay in PM EXC will also receive an afternoon snack. Menus and a list of snacks are available in the Preschool Office.

Students may bring their own lunch and drink in a lunch box, clearly marked with their name, or they may order a hot lunch through ECI (Educational Catering Institute), our cafeteria food service provider. Monthly menus will be posted in the classrooms and online. Lunch accounts must be set up and maintained online at the ECI website diningpay.com. Full care students are provided a hot breakfast and tot-sized lunch daily with no extra charge. If you are sending a lunch, our licensing standards require us to ask you to send a nutritious lunch and drink. Some suggestions for good lunches include: fresh or dried fruit, fresh vegetables, cheese, peanut butter or meat sandwiches, dry cereal, fruit juice or milk. Please limit the amount of sugar, caffeine, and food coloring that your child eats. Do not send carbonated drink, an excessive amount of sweets (i.e. candy, frosted cookies or cake) as a part of your child's lunch. Microwaves and refrigerators are not available. In an effort to prevent severe allergic reactions, should a teacher or child in your student's class report a severe food allergy, you will be notified and requested not to send those foods in your child's lunch. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation with this matter.

Medication

ALL medication must be in its original container with the child's name on it as prescribed by a physician or age appropriate if over-the-counter. A separate authorization form must be completed for each medication administered. All medications should be given directly to the school nurse. Northland Christian School will not dispense any medication without following these procedures. NEVER LEAVE ANY MEDICATION IN TOTE BAGS. The school

nurse will administer all medications. All Preschool teachers at Northland Christian School are CPR and First Aid trained. They are prepared to handle the everyday “bumps and bruises” that may occur and will administer basic first aid. Accident reports are completed by the staff and copies sent home in a timely manner. In the event of a serious or life threatening accident/injury, 911 will be called. Parents and/or persons listed to call in the event of an emergency will be contacted by phone.

Optional Activities

Northland Christian Preschool Students ages 2 and older may participate in gymnastics classes offered through Athletics on Wheels for an additional fee. Classes are offered once or twice per week during a portion of the afternoon nap time. Please contact Coach Jeff Martin at 281-440-1377 ext. 33 for additional information.

Potty Training

Northland recognizes that each child develops individually. Although potty training is not considered a part of the preschool curriculum, your child’s teacher will work to support the efforts of parents in this endeavor. Potty training in a home environment vs. a school environment often presents different challenges. Patience and communication between you and your child’s teacher will be necessary.

Summer Program

The Northland Christian School Summer Program is designed to be a fun learning environment for children ages 18 months through 5 years of age. The program includes daily curriculum with Bible lessons, songs, finger plays, arts and crafts, group and individual play. Opportunities for letter and number recognition, science, social studies and other areas of preschool learning will be explored. Fine and gross motor skill development is supported and special activities are planned that will provide hours of fun and entertainment. The teachers are loving, trained professionals who enjoy teaching in a Christ-centered environment.

This nine-week summer program is June 8 - August 7, 2009, with a two-day (Tuesday/Thursday) option, three-day (Monday/Wednesday/Friday) option and a five-day option. The regular program day is 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. with extended day hours available (6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.). The non-refundable enrollment fee for the summer program is \$75.

Tuition will be due in full on or before May 22, 2009. Tuition for 5 day students only may be paid in two installments with one-half due on May 22, 2009 and the second half due on July 1, 2009. Payments may be made online at northlandchristian.org.

Uniform Requirements

Most uniform items may be purchased through the Cougar Store located in the Central Administration Building on the secondary campus, 4363 Sylvanfield, 281-587-6412.

PRESCHOOL BOYS

Monday through Friday:

- Knit polo shirt with logo, short sleeved, red, white, yellow (not currently available in the Cougar Store), and black
- Knit polo shirt with logo, long sleeved, red, white, and black
- Turtlenecks with logo
- Slacks, knee length shorts or sweat pants (elastic waist acceptable), black or khaki (Please note that pants/shorts are available for purchase at the Cougar Store, but may be purchased elsewhere if pants/shorts are solid black or khaki and do not display logos, designs or insignias. Cargo pants/shorts may also be worn as long as they do not display logos, designs or insignias.)
- Socks: black, white, or red
- For safety reasons, rubber-soled shoes are to be worn daily. Sandals are not allowed.

Friday (optional):

NCS/Cougar logo spirit wear purchased through the Cougar Store

PRESCHOOL GIRLS

Monday through Friday:

- Knit polo shirt with logo, short sleeved, red, white, yellow (not currently available in the Cougar Store), and black
- Knit polo shirt with logo, long sleeved, red and white
- Turtlenecks with logo
- White blouse with collar
- White midy blouse with sailor collar
- Slacks, knee length shorts, skirt, or sweat pants (elastic waist acceptable), black or khaki (Please note that pants/shorts are available for purchase at the Cougar Store, but may be purchased elsewhere if pants/shorts are solid black or khaki and do not display logos, designs or insignias.)
- Socks: black, white, or red
- For safety reasons, rubber-soled shoes are to be worn daily. Sandals are not allowed.

Black Stewart Plaid Items:

- Jumper
- Skirt
- Culottes

Friday (optional):

NCS/Cougar logo spirit wear purchased through the Cougar Store.

PLEASE NOTE:

A red knit polo shirt with school logo is required for preschool students to wear on field trips. Uniforms are not required for Lower Preschool (18 months - 2 years) students.

**Some uniform items are limited to quantities in stock.*

Weather

In case of bad weather (such as hurricanes, flooding, icy streets, etc.) or in other crisis response situations, dismissal or delayed school schedules will be published on the NCS webpage at northlandchristian.org. Resumption of school also will be published in

like manner. Please note that webpage access can be achieved even if electricity is off at your current location. For example:

- Make a telephone call to a relative or friend who would have internet access, regardless of where he or she might live.
- Text Message a friend or relative (Texting will work even when signal strength is too weak for cellular service).
- Visit commercial establishments (Starbucks; Kinkos; etc.) which advertise internet access.
- Access the web via cellular telephone. In the past, we have published our school closing information on local media sources. As the number of schools continues to grow, these outlets are moving to "web-based" services for these listings, or, are not available to us. We know that we will be able to publish this information on the web in most situations. Therefore, we will continue to drive information through this world-wide access point.

*** TDFPS - Texas Department of Family and Protective Services*



www.northlandchristian.org

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3/6/09