

“To Learn and Grow Surrounded by God’s Love”

Northminster Christian School

PARENT HANDBOOK

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MISSION STATEMENT

Northminster Christian School is committed to providing a Christ-centered educational environment where each child can learn and grow emotionally, physically, intellectually, socially, and spiritually. Northminster Christian School serves as a ministry, Christian education resource, and nurturing setting for children, families of the school, church, immediate neighborhood and Tucson community.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

The school is a ministry of Northminster Presbyterian Church and is an extension of Northminster's Christian Education Program. Our goal is to nurture young children in the love of Jesus Christ and to provide each child with a positive learning experience. We believe that the early years of education lay the foundation for all future learning. We believe that each child is a unique gift from God. We use an approach that seeks to meet the needs of the whole child and recognizes that each one develops at his or her own rate.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

- Jesus Christ, the Son of God, alone is Lord of all and salvation is found in no one else, "for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). [John 14:6, I Timothy 2:5-6, I Corinthians 8:5, Colossians 1:15-20].
- Holy Scripture is God's revealed Word, the Church's only infallible rule of faith and life. We celebrate that "all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). [Romans 15:4, I Thessalonians 2:13].
- God's will and guidance for all people, as revealed in Scripture, is a call to holiness and wholeness in all aspects of life (Ephesians 1:4 and I Thessalonians 5:23).
- We accept children of all family structures, however we are committed to teach and promote Christian family values as written in the Holy Scriptures.
- NCS is in direct alignment with the values and beliefs of Northminster Presbyterian Church.

STAFF

Teachers at NCS are all practicing Christians who live out their faith on a daily basis. Teachers at NCS see their job as a calling. The staff participates in continuing education in the areas of childhood development, spiritual development, developmentally appropriate practices and training in First Aid and CPR.

CURRICULUM

At NCS our curriculum that combines Christian values and beliefs, Arizona State Standards to provide a well rounded education for our students. The goal of our curriculum is:

- To provide experiences which meet each child's needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas including physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual.
- To view each child as a unique person with an individual pattern of growth and development. Different levels of ability, development, and learning styles are expected, accepted, and used to design appropriate activities.
- To design interactions and activities which develop children's self esteem and positive feelings toward their learning experience.

Spiritual Development

We believe that spiritual growth is an integral and inseparable part of a child's well being. If nurtured properly, this spiritual growth occurs naturally in conjunction with the other aspects of a child's development. Our objective is to provide this spiritual nurturing by our day-to-day actions, speech, and our non-denominational Christian curriculum. We endeavor to show God's love for us by teaching and practicing the "Golden Rule," and we encourage an attitude of thanksgiving for God's gifts by teaching and using simple prayers in class. A Scripture verse is part of the weekly activities, and lessons include Bible stories. Additionally, students attend Chapel every Wednesday.

This integration of the Bible into the curricula is vital to the program. The Bible curriculum that is used in our classrooms is from Christian Schools International: Walking With God and His People. This curriculum is designed to increase the students' understanding of God's plan for them, deepen their faith, direct their lives and help strengthen them as lifelong Christians.

Educational Development

We embrace this concept that children, especially young children, learn better through play and provide a wide range of hands-on activities that encourage children to experiment with all subject areas. Our classes contain three basic instructional strategies individual choice activities, small group encounters, and whole group teacher-directed experiences. All curriculum decisions, including specific content, activities, texts, outside speakers and special guests, are made by Teachers and the Head of School with oversight by the School Advisory Leadership Team. Scope and sequence are available per request for each age level.

STATE-REQUIRED POLICIES

Northminster Christian School is a state-licensed program open to children of all races, nationalities, and faiths. We are licensed through the Arizona Department of Health Services, as a Child Care Facility for full day and school age care. They are located at 400 W. Congress, Suite 100, Tucson, Arizona. Their phone number is (520) 628-6541. License CDC #7510.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Northminster Christian School is open from 7:30 am until 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. We are closed for Labor Day, Fall Break (one week), Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Break (three days), Christmas Break (two weeks), Civil Rights Day, Rodeo Break (two days), Spring Break (one week), Easter Break (two days), Memorial Day, Fourth of July. Refer to our detailed calendar for more details. Our office hours are from 8am until 4pm each day we are open.

ENROLLMENT

NCS welcomes all families who seek a Christian-based learning program for their children. We do not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, handicap, religious faith, personal creed, national origin, or ancestry.

Enrolled families are required to follow all Arizona State licensing regulations which pertain to their child, and all school policies as specified in the Parent Handbook or other official school documents. Families are responsible for reading, understanding, and following all school policies and state regulations. NCS reserves the right to refuse services to enrolled families who fail to follow state regulations and school policies.

A parent has access to all areas of the facility where the parent's enrolled child is receiving child care services.

AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

The age for enrollment corresponds with the standard age policies for the school districts in and around the Tucson area.

Class	Age Required	On or Before Date Below
Raindrop	18 months	First day of attendance
Garden	2	August 31
Apple	3	August 31
Sea Creature	4	August 31
Sky	5	December 31

SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

NCS gladly accepts children with special needs so long as we have the staffing, and ability to accommodate and serve the child and family well. The Head of School, teacher and School Advisory Leadership Team will review each situation individually. The school does not provide direct support services but welcomes specialists to provide services on site.

TOILET TRAINING POLICY

We are authorized by the state to change diapers or pull-ups for our 18 month and 2 year old classes only. Please send a supply of diapers and wipes labeled with your child's name on the package. The only exceptions made will be for children who have an IEP or accommodation plan that states toilet training as a goal. We gladly work with children and parents to encourage and teach toilet training to children still in diapers.

DISENROLLMENT POLICY

Two weeks advance notice are requested if you need to disenroll your child from NCS. In the event of withdrawal tuition will not be prorated for any reason. Please allow three business days for processing requests for transcripts or other records.

ADMISSION AND RELEASE REQUIREMENTS

Upon admission and release all children must be signed in and out by a parent, legal guardian or approved adult. The signature must be a fully legible signature and the exact time of drop off or pick up. If a person is not the child's parent, then a picture I.D. is required and the person must be listed on the child's Emergency Information Card.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Our school uses the principles of Conscious Discipline, and the teaching of Jesus from Matthew 22:39 that states, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' Both of these are rooted in respecting others, and finding loving ways to communicate. Behavior is a form of communication. When we experience behavior challenges with a student, we are learning what communication strategies we need to teach them. Our methods include ensuring safety, connecting with the child and problem-solving. This starts with the nurturing and safe environment we create, the predictable routines and the sense of calm that comes from this environment. Through this we develop meaningful connections with children that help us get to the root of the challenging behavior and model the behavior we want to see. We encourage students to resolve issues on their own as much as possible. However, at times it is necessary for a teacher to intervene and model the desired behavior. We will communicate regular behavioral challenges with parents. If the challenges are recurring we will set up a team meeting to further discuss the concerns and come up with a plan. This will be done with the child's parents, teacher, Head of School and if needed an outside professional. We highly encourage all parents to take a Conscious Discipline parenting class as the principles used align with our discipline methods and are extremely valuable both at home and school. Arizona law prohibits our teachers and staff from using any form of physical, emotional, or verbal abusive disciplinary action to control the students.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

NCS does not offer transportation to or from the school for any child for the purpose of attending our school.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

Written permission is needed for any child to attend a school field trip. This includes field trips that may only take us to the parking lot, such as a fire truck coming. A field trip permission slip shall include the date, purpose of trip, times of departure from and return to property in addition to the name, street address and telephone number of the destination. A written field trip plan will be filed at the school office including the name of each participating child, staff member and other individuals on the trip, as well as the license plate number of any motor vehicle used on the trip. Attendance will be taken at the beginning, upon arrival and each hour while on a field trip, before leaving the destination,

and upon arrival back at the school. Water will be provided for each child. Identification stating the facility's name, address and telephone number shall be on each child.

TUITION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

RATES FOR 2020-2021: Prices effective August 2020			
For all preschool children who in the 18 months and 2 year old classrooms-			
# of days	Full Day Tuition 7:30am-5:00pm	Partial Day & Enrichment Tuition 8:45am-2pm	Partial Day 8:45am-12pm
5	\$730	\$600	\$450
4	\$630	\$550	\$400
3	\$580	\$500	\$350
For all preschool children in 3 year old and 4 year old classrooms-			
# of days	Full Day Tuition 7:30am-5:00pm	Partial Day & Enrichment Tuition 8:45am-2pm	Partial Day 8:45am-12pm
5	\$730	\$600	\$450
4	\$630	\$550	\$400
3	\$580	\$500	\$350
Kindergarten for Children Age 5 by December 31st (M-Th 8:45am-2pm, Friday 8:45-12pm)			
Tuition Only	\$650		
Before and Aftercare 7:30am-5:30pm	\$250		
Prices are subject to change			

- Rates are subject to change and prior notification will be provided.
- Tuition is a yearly amount that has been divided into 10 EQUAL PAYMENTS and is determined by the NCS School Advisory Leadership Team. Tuition payments do not change due to school holidays. No adjustments will be made to tuition for illness or vacation.
- A non-refundable registration fee of \$150 per child is due at the time of registration.
- Tuition payments are billed on the first day of each month. Payments received after the tenth day of the month will be considered late, and will incur an additional \$25.00 late fee. If tuition fees become more than one month in arrears, and no arrangements have been made for payment, we reserve the right to drop your child from our school rolls.
- A \$25 bounced check fee will be charged for all checks returned by a financial institution.
- Drop in charges are available at \$6 per 30 minutes when space allows.

- A partial drop in day is \$35 (8:45am–12pm) and a full drop in day (7:00am–5:30pm) is \$65 per day.
- Late pick up fees to be assessed at the drop in rate of \$6 per 30 minute increment before 5:30pm or \$1 per minute late charge after 5:30 pm.

MAKING PAYMENTS

Payments are the responsibility of each individual family. We accept cash, checks or online payments through our software system. For instructions on how to pay through our online system please see our online form or contact the office. Checks should be made to Northminster Presbyterian Church.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Tuition assistance is available for qualified applicants on a limited basis. For the Preschool, interested parents need to fill out an application. The returned forms will then be reviewed and decided by the School Advisory Leadership Team.

Kindergarten students are eligible to receive Tax Credit Scholarships. Applicants need to apply through IBE (Institute for Better Education) and/or ACSTO (Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization) and/or ALF (Arizona Leadership Foundation) and/or AAA Scholarship. Forms are available online at www.ibescholarships.org, www.acsto.org, www.arizonaleader.org, or www.aaascholarships.org. Application deadlines are posted on each individual website.

PRESCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP FAMILIES

Preschool Scholarship students must be in attendance everyday unless there is illness, doctor's appointments, or family emergency. If a Preschool Scholarship student misses more than 75% of their scheduled days in a month the child's scholarship may be revoked. A parent must call or message the school office by 9:30a.m. if their child is going to be absent. Payments are charged on a monthly basis. The payment is due by the 10th of the month. If payments are not made on time the scholarship will no longer be available.

DES SUBSIDIES

We are a DES approved child care center. To see if your family qualifies for DES you can go to <https://des.az.gov/services/child-and-family/child-care>. Co-payments are charged on a monthly basis. The payment is due by the 10th of the month. Attendance is required 75% of DES approved days that the school is open per month. For Example: If we have 20 days in a month and the child is approved for full time the child must attend 15 of those days. If the child is registered for and approved for 10 days in a month they must attend 7 days in that month. Families will be charged our daily rate for each day the child does not attend beyond the 75% requirement.

BEFORE CARE AND AFTER CARE

Before and After Care is available for all age groups as space permits per class. Drop-ins will be permitted on a space available basis only for a rate of \$6 per 30 minutes. Payment for After Care is due on the first of the month. There are no refunds for absences. We reserve the right to cancel Before Care in the event that three or fewer children reserve a spot.

Our Before Care Program runs from 7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. five days a week. We offer the extension of our preschool class from 12:00pm until 2:00pm. Our younger students nap during these hours, while our older students have a quiet time. Our Kindergarten After Care program runs from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Drop-ins are available if space allows. After Care on Friday's begins at 12pm as each Friday is a half day for the kindergarten students.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

The involvement of parents at our school is necessary for the success of our students. We require parents to volunteer five hours per semester in any of our needed volunteer hours. Please see our volunteer sign up to choose how you would like to support our school with those five hours. Family members can volunteer in your stead.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

Each class uses the Arizona State Early Learning Standards in conjunction with early childhood developmental milestones to develop the curriculum for the year and lesson plans for each day. We use Emergent Curriculum which means we take the interests of the children to guide our lesson plans. Lesson plans and schedules are posted in each classroom and are available upon request at any time.

LAST FRIDAYS

The last Friday of every month we close at 12:00pm. This is a time for professional development, deep cleaning and team collaboration for our staff.

MEDICAL POLICIES

ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES

- If your child receives a minor scrape, bruise, or scratch while at school, we will send home an "Ouch! Report" to tell you what happened.
- If a more serious accident occurs, you will receive an Incident Report, which describes the incident in detail. If a serious incident happens during school hours, a member of the staff will notify the parents by phone.
- If a child is unconscious/not breathing/bleeding profusely and/or the child's condition is considered to be in need of immediate professional medical attention 911 will be called immediately.
- If a decision needs to be made concerning your child and the reason for parental contact is not life threatening to the child, unless direction by the parents, in writing, is to the contrary:
 - Attempt will be made to contact the parents first.
 - If parents are not able to be reached attempts will be made to contact an emergency contact person on the child's Emergency Information Card.

- If none of the above are able to be reached and the teacher and/or Head of School feel that an opinion is necessary, the child’s doctor will be contacted and the doctor’s instructions will be carried out.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Each child is required to have an official copy of his or her immunization record on file in the school office. Arizona law requires that all children enrolling in a licensed care program show proof of immunizations. As children receive their regularly-scheduled booster shots, these must be entered into our records as well.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

We cannot administer any over-the-counter medications to your child without a written statement from your child’s physician. This includes aspirin, Tylenol and cough syrup. A child may not return to school for a full 48 hours after beginning any antibiotic treatment. Only the Head of School or their designee may administer doctor prescribed medications. A Medication Consent Form must be completed in order for this to be done. All medications must be kept locked in the school office, with the exception of Epipens and Anti-Seizure medication, with signed statement from a doctor.

We are able to apply non-prescribed medication such as ointments, sunscreen or lip balm as long as it is in the original package, is labeled for use by the manufacturer and labeled with your child’s name.

ALLERGIES

We take allergies very seriously at NCS and want to ensure the safest environment for your child. If your child has any kind of allergy, please notify the office staff, fill out the necessary paperwork and we will take the necessary precautions. Children with SEVERE ALLERGIES, who may need an EPI-PEN in an emergency, must provide an action plan and medication consent form filled out by a parent and the child’s doctor. (Request more detailed allergy policy for further information)

ILLNESSES

In light of COVID-19 we have updated our illness protocols. We do all that we can to prevent the spread of illness at school, however it is a reality that children get sick and share illnesses easily. This is why it is imperative for you to keep your child home if they are showing any symptoms of illness. A child will be asked to stay home from school if he or she presents with symptoms of a contagious illness. If a child becomes ill at school, the child will be taken to the school office and a member of the staff will notify the parents by phone to pick them up immediately. Please see the following chart to determine when your child can return from home if they are ill.

Symptom	May return when
Temperature of 100 F / 37.8 C or higher (orally) or 99 F / 37.2 C or higher (under the arm)	May return to child care after 10 days or when symptom free, whichever is longer

Runny nose	May return to child care after 10 days or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Cough	May return to child care after 10 days or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Sore throat	May return to child care after 10 days or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Difficulty breathing or wheezing	May return to child care after 10 days or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Unexplained fatigue, aches or cold/flu-like symptoms	May return to child care after 10 days or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Sinus congestion	May return to child care after 10 days or when symptom free, whichever is longer
Children who have, or children with others living in the same home who have just returned from international travel	May return after self-isolating for 14 days and being symptom free
Children who have, or children with others living in the same home who have been identified as at-risk of potential Covid19 exposure	May return after self-isolating for 14 days and being symptom free

(Reference: Health Authority memo; COVID19 in childcare)

Additionally, children may not attend our program while they have any of the following symptoms:

- unusual, unexplained loss of appetite, fatigue, irritability, or headache
- eye infections
- unexplained rashes *or* any rash that is not confirmed by doctor to be non-contagious
- known or suspected communicable diseases (measles, chicken pox, pink eye, hand foot and mouth, etc)
- ear infection
- nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea in the last 48 hours

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

All parents are required to read and follow, and sign our COVID-19 Protocols. You will receive a copy of this upon your child's enrollment.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

In the event of an emergency where the school grounds must be evacuated, the children will be brought to Tucson Community School. Parents will be notified and will be able to pick their children up at Tucson Community School; 2109 E Hedrick Dr, Tucson, AZ 85719. The phone number is (520) 326-9212. A detailed emergency evacuation plan is available upon request.

CHILD ABUSE

Northminster Christian School is obligated to report suspected abuse, mental or physical to the proper authorities within 24 hours of observing the child.

STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT INSPECTION REPORTS

Inspection reports by the State Health Department available at anytime, upon request.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

NCS carries liability insurance from Willis of Ohio, Inc. as required by the Arizona Department of Health Services.

NOTICE OF PESTICIDE APPLICATION

NCS will provide to parents, upon request, written pesticide information at least 48 hours before a pesticide application occurs on facility premises. A posted notice of the most recent pesticide application remains in the school office at all times.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

COMMUNICATION

Great communication is essential for student success. Our office sends out regular emails, messages through our online application, fliers home and posted notices to update parents on what is happening at NCS. Teachers also use a combination of application messages, email and paper notices to alert you of any important items. Please make sure to read them all carefully.

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

- The NCS school day begins at 8:45 a.m. Each student is expected to be ready for school and on time daily. All children need to be at school by 9:00am. If your child is not at school by 9:00am they will not be permitted to attend that day, unless there is a written valid excuse. This is to help classroom routines and consistency for our students and teachers.
- Each student is encouraged to attend everyday unless sick, or there is a family emergency. A parent must call or message the school office by 9:30a.m. that day if your child will be absent.
- Departure time is 12:00 p.m. for Preschool, 2:00 p.m. for Kindergarten Monday through Thursday & 12:00 p.m. on Fridays, and 5:00pm for full time children.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

- **Strict Drop Off Times-** We will ask that your child is dropped off within 15 minutes of their paid time. No earlier and no later, (for before care between 7:30-7:45am, regular start time 8:45-9:00am) Due to new protocols needed for temperature checks, we will not be accepting children after 9:00am.
- **Drop Off Procedures-** You will be met by a staff member who will check your child's temperature. If their temperature is 100.4 or higher they will be sent home. The thermometer will be wiped down with an alcohol swab after each use. Additionally, if they are showing any signs of illness they will not be allowed on campus for the day. Children who attend before care will be dropped off at the North gate with a staff member greeting them. Children who arrive between 8:45-9am will be dropped off directly to their teachers at the back doors for the 1s,2s, and 4/5s classrooms. The 3s and Kinder and up kids will be dropped off at the front gate. The staff member will then take your child to wash their hands at the sink and to class. You will say goodbye at the gate, or back door. We ask that only parents pick up and drop off as the more family members we have doing this the more potential exposure we have.
- **Pick Up Procedures-** Pick up times will also be more strict as a staff member will be there to help facilitate the pick up. For students who leave at 12pm we ask that they be picked up between 12-12:15pm, for 2pm students 2-2:15pm, for everyone else pick up between 4-5pm. Parents will come to the gate and there will be a staff member ready to gather children who will be leaving at each of those drop off times.

KINDERGARTEN ATTENDANCE POLICY

- We observe the Arizona State Truancy policy which states that any student who is six years or older must be in regular attendance of a public, private or homeschool.
- Each student is encouraged to attend everyday unless sick, or there is a family emergency. A child will be considered truant if they are absent without a valid excuse. If a child is habitually truant, meaning they are truant for at least five school days within a school year, the school has the responsibility to report the child's truancy. Only absences due to illness, doctor's appointments, death of a family member, or up to five pre-approved planned absences per year will be marked as excused.
- A parent must call or message the school by 9:30a.m. that day.
- Recurring unexcused absences will result first in a letter home and a parent conference. The second step will be a report made to the proper authorities.
- Students absent in excess of two hours are considered absent for half of that day.
- If it is necessary for a child to be taken from school before dismissal, a phone call should be made to the school office from a parent or guardian; otherwise, a signed and dated note, written by a parent or guardian, stating the reason for the early dismissal should be brought to the teacher by 8:45 a.m. Any student leaving school during the school day must be signed out by an authorized, responsible adult.
- We do not categorize tardies as "excused" or "unexcused." When a student exceeds six "tardies" in any quarter, he/she will be monitored for chronic tardiness. A pattern of continued or recurring tardiness will result in a letter sent home and will be addressed in a parent conference.

DRESS GUIDELINES

Northminster Christian School dress guidelines:

- Children should wear comfortable clothes which are suitable for sitting on the floor, playing outdoors, and allow plenty of room for movement activities.
- Shoes should either be closed toed or have a back strap. No flip flops.
- Paint shirts or smocks are provided for art time and water play, but we encourage messy play. Send them in clothes that you are okay with getting messy.
- A part of each class will be spent outside, weather permitting. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather of the day.
- Clearly mark all outerwear with your child's name.
- Preschoolers are encouraged to be reliable in caring for their own bathroom needs. Clothing should be easy for the child to undo. Please supply a seasonal change of clothing in case of an accident. Label the clothing and send it in a labeled Ziploc bag. Launder and return, if used.

SPECIAL SCHOOL RULES

- Toys and other special items are not allowed on campus as they are prone to get lost.
- No dogs or pets are allowed on the school campus.
- No weapons of any kind will be allowed on the school campus by anyone for any reason.

LUNCH AND SNACK

Each school day your child will need to bring his/her own snack from home. Please make sure to pack enough food for the entire time your child is at school. Please include a labeled water bottle. Due to allergies children are not allowed to share food with their friends. In the event that a lunch or snack is forgotten the school can provide a snack for a fee of \$1 and lunch for \$3.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are very special days for our children. Parents may provide a special item, to share with their classmates. Parents must collaborate with the child's teacher one week ahead of time to make sure we account for food allergies, if food is brought.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are welcome in the classroom at the discretion and needs of the classroom teacher. If you want to volunteer on a regular basis please contact the office to fill out the necessary paperwork. Due to licensing we cannot accommodate siblings or other children in the classroom.

SCREENINGS, PROGRESS REPORTS AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

We have two scheduled parent-teacher conferences per year, or as needed or requested.

PRESCHOOL

Preschool parents will be required to complete a developmental checklist for their child upon entry of NCS. An intake conference will take place within the first few weeks of your child's start date to review the checklist. This is so that we can gauge your child's current abilities and use what you already know about them to help them grow. A written report providing parents with a summary of their child's development and progress will be provided to you two times during the school year. When appropriate, children will be referred to the Arizona Early Intervention Program (ages birth-3) (602) 532-9960 or to your local school district for further evaluation (ages 3 and up).

KINDERGARTEN

For our Kindergarten students we will complete an initial screening on each child at the beginning of each school year. Parents will be notified of the results of the observation shortly after they are completed. Regular assessments will be used throughout the year to measure student growth. Progress reports will be distributed at the end of each trimester.

SAFETY GATES

Our campus has safety gates that require a gate code to enter. Parents will be given a code that will change quarterly, or more often if needed. Children should not have access to this code. Only parents or guardians who are picking up should have knowledge of the gate code.

WHAT TO BRING ON YOUR FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

- All paperwork filled out to completion.
- A change of clothing in a plastic bag, labeled with your child's name.
- A labeled water bottle.
- A labeled snack and lunch (depending on the hours they come.)
- Diapers, wipes labeled (If child is still in diapers.)
- Washable crib sheet and blanket for napping children. To be sent home and washed weekly.
- Any school supplies requested by your child's teacher.

EMPOWER POLICIES

NCS participates in the ADHS Empower Program and is committed to encouraging children and families to develop healthy habits. The following are NCS's Empower Policies:

1. Physical Activity

We at Northminster Christian School are committed to our children's health. We encourage all children to participate in a variety of physical activity opportunities that are appropriate for their age, that are fun, and that offer variety. If children are inactive for long periods of time they can be at risk for problems associated with being overweight. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will follow the guidelines below:

- All children are provided at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day, including both teacher-led and free-play activities in accordance with the Empower guidelines.
- Staff will encourage moderate and vigorous levels of physical activity.
- Every child will have the opportunity to participate in outdoor physical activity.
- We encourage children to be active throughout the day exploring their environment by limiting sedentary activities to fewer than 60 minutes at a time (except during nap time).
- Screen time is limited to fewer than three hours per week for children ages two and older.
- No screen time during meal or snack time.
- Physical activity is never used or withheld as punishment.
- Information on screen time (in English and Spanish) will be made available to families at least once per year.

2. Sun Safety

We at NCS are committed to sun safety for all of our students. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

- Teachers must carefully monitor all children during outside play for heat exhaustion and over exposure to the sun. If a child appears to be suffering from either, a staff member with First Aid training shall evaluate and treat the child. This information will be written down in the child's log and the parents will be notified.
- On days that are hot teachers will plan activities in the shade. If the temperature is above 92 children will play indoors.
- Water will be accessible to children at all times.
- Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen before their children come to school. If a parent would like us to re-apply we will make arrangements to do so. It must be in the original container, labeled and in a locked cabinet in the classroom.
- Parents are encouraged to send hats and clothing that protects their child from the sun. If a parent provides a hat (or other protective garments) the teacher must see to it that the child wears it outside.
- Teachers will attend at least one training on sun safety yearly. Information on sun safety (in English and Spanish) will be available to families at least once per year.

3. Breast Feeding

We at NCS are committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers and will respect a mother's decision to continue to breastfeed her child. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere that encourages mothers to initiate and continue to breastfeed, even after returning to school or work.
- Provide a designated place for mothers to breastfeed their child on site (rocking chairs in Nursery of Room 2).

- Provide a refrigerator for storage of expressed breast milk for employees. (NCS does not care for infants.)

Information on breastfeeding (in English and Spanish) will be available to families at least once per year.

4. **Child and Adult Care Food Program**

At this time, the Northminster Christian School, does not participate in the CACFP.

5. **Fruit Juice**

We at NCS are committed to supporting children in establishing lifelong healthy eating and drinking habits. Too much juice may be linked to weight problems and is associated with tooth decay and decreased appetite for other nutritious foods. While NCS students bring their own lunches and snacks, the school keeps a limited supply of shelf stable snacks to provide for students who may not have one on a particular day.

- Only 100% fruit juice will be accepted as donations for children's snacks and served no more than twice per week to any particular student.
- Only 4–6 ounces shall be served at one time. Fruit juice shall only be served with meals and snacks and not continuously throughout the day.
- Water shall be used as the first choice for thirst and will be offered throughout the day.
- Information on fruit juice (in English and Spanish) will be made available to families at least once per year.

6. **Family Style Meals**

We at NCS are committed to supporting children in establishing lifelong habits of healthy eating patterns. Although NCS does not serve daily meals and snacks, in keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

- Serve meals family-style whenever possible (eg. For our annual Thanksgiving Feast, or when using food for any school lesson plans) to support children in learning to serve themselves and develop healthy relationships with food. On those occasions, our role as caregivers is to provide nourishing food. The child's role is to decide whether and how much to eat. We will never force a child to eat.
- While children bring their own meals and snacks, we sit with children at snack and meal time and encourage them to select food from their own lunch bags. We give help when needed but allow children to handle and select their food independently as much as possible.
- Model behaviors for healthy eating and positive body image in the presence of children by having staff members recognize the important role adults play as role models for children as they learn to live healthy lives.
- Healthy eating handouts (in English and Spanish) will be made available for the families at least once per year.

7. **Oral Health**

We at NCS are committed to protecting the health and safety of our students and staff in regards to tooth decay, which is an infectious disease and a serious problem among young children in Arizona. Our facility recognizes that we play an important role in preventing tooth decay and in educating children, their families and staff on tooth decay prevention.

In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

- Provide oral health education once a month.
- Guide our staff members on steps they can take to prevent tooth decay according to the age appropriate guidelines in the Empower Guidebook.

- Information on tooth decay prevention (in English and Spanish) will be made available to families at least once per year.

8. **Staff Training**

We at NCS are committed to furthering staff knowledge on the Empower Program and Empower topic areas including: physical activity, nutrition, oral health and tobacco. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will make sure that our staff receives or attends three hours of training annually on age-appropriate topics pertaining to physical activity, nutrition, oral health and tobacco education. All training shall be documented and records will be readily available.

9. **ASHLine**

We at NCS are committed to supporting the efforts of the Arizona Smokers' Helpline (ASHLine) to help individuals quit tobacco. In keeping with this philosophy and to protect the health of our children, their families and our staff, our facility will promote the ASHLine information on the dangers of second and third-hand smoke by placing them in a visible spot at least once per year so parents and staff can see them. We will also refer parents, when possible, to ASHLine.

10. **Smoke Free Campus**

We at NCS are committed to providing a smoke-free environment for children and staff due to acknowledged hazards from exposure to secondhand smoke. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will notify all employees, families and visitors of the smoke-free policy. Appropriate signage will be posted.