



**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
ACADEMIC YEAR
2016-2017**

2450 East Fort Lowell Road
Tucson, Arizona 85719

School Office 327-2321

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LICENSING STATEMENT

Northminster Christian School is a state-licensed program open to children of all races, nationalities, and faiths. Our inspection records are available, upon request, for public viewing. We are licensed through the Arizona Department of Health Services, Daycare Licensing. They are located at 400 W. Congress, Suite 100, Tucson, Arizona. Their phone number is (520) 628-6540.

ACCREDITATION

Northminster Christian School is accredited by Christian Schools International (CSI).

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 and families of the school, church, immediate neighborhood and Tucson community.

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.

CORE VALUES

NCS is in direct alignment with the values and beliefs of Northminster Presbyterian Church.

Truth: Scripture is the revealed Word of God and is taught as truth.

Students will be taught that:

- They are created in the image of God. (Genesis 1:26-27)
- They can know Jesus Christ personally. (John 17:3, Philippians 3:8-11)
- By continuing to follow in Christ's steps, they will become like Him. (I Peter 2:21)

Integration: Every aspect of the curriculum is permeated with God's Word.

Learning will include an understanding of:

- God's work in creating, ordering, and sustaining our universe.
- God's principles in communication skills and creative expression used to glorify God.
- How Christians are to live by obeying God's Word.

Potential: Students are encouraged to become all God made them to be through their learning experiences.

Learning will include a focus on:

- The individual's relationship to society. (I John 17:15)
- Intellectual development through the academic disciplines. (Luke 2:52)
- Making disciples. (Matthew 28:19-20)
- Preparing for works of service. (Ephesians 4:12)
- Developing an eternal view of life. (Colossians 3:2, II Corinthians 5:16)

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

Philosophy:

The school is a ministry of Northminster Presbyterian Church and is an extension of Northminster's Christian Education Program. The primary goal at NCS is to nurture young children in the love of Jesus Christ and to provide each child with a positive introduction to formal education. A child's primary school experience is important because it lays the foundation for all future educational experiences. Therefore, NCS provides an encouraging atmosphere conducive to individual growth and development.

Each child is a unique gift from God. The NCS approach involves the whole child and recognizes that each one develops at his or her own rate. NCS strives to provide an environment that is safe, loving and rich in opportunities for learning and growth through age-appropriate, hands-on activities.

The philosophical foundation of Northminster Christian School is the Christian faith, which is revealed in the Bible and summarized in the Book of Confessions, which includes the Westminster Confession of Faith. The Christian faith is the foundation of the school's entire existence, including doctrinal and ethical instruction, its academic program, its teaching methods and its community life.

Northminster Christian School seeks to integrate this faith into all aspects of its mission and teaches all of its elementary subjects from a distinctly Christian perspective. Adherence to the Christian faith in the Reformed tradition is not an excuse of narrowness; instead it is open recognition of the concern of the Creator in this endeavor called learning that should stir all students to strive to reach their full potential.

This integration of the Bible into the curricula is vital to the program. The Bible curriculum that is used in first, second and third grade is from Christian Schools International: Walking With God and His People. This curriculum is a thoughtful and comprehensive one in which first and second grades students are introduced to the Old and New Testament books in an overview of the Bible. In third grade, the students start to dig deeper into the Bible and learn how to apply its truth to their lives. 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 life-long Christians.

Purpose:

The purpose of NCS is to minister to children so that they develop positive attitudes about God and themselves and that they would receive foundational teachings so that, when they are developmentally ready, they can receive Jesus Christ as their personal savior. The faculty serves to plant the seeds so that children will bear much spiritual fruit in God's timing ("In this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be my disciples." John 15:8).

Like adults, children have spiritual needs, and without Christ they have no hope of these needs being met. God warns that if children are not taught His ways, future generations will cease to follow His Word (Judges 2:10, 11; Psalm 78:1-8) (Children's Ministry Resource Bible, developed by Child Evangelism Fellowship, p 1469).

The world is battling for children with many anti-God approaches: drugs, alcohol, violence, abuse, humanism, false cults, etc. No home is exempt from problems. An increasing number of today's families are deeply troubled. Even homes where both mother and father are present may suffer from destructive behavior patterns. Christians are charged with helping to equip and empower these children to live God-centered lives by helping develop the firm Christian foundation to sustain them through whatever life brings.

Research bears out the fact that children experience tremendous growth during the first eight years of their lives. Because of this, it is the duty of NCS faculty to help children become well-grounded spiritually. Children need to be assured of the truth that they can draw on God's strength when they face adversity. Jesus is concerned about their spiritual welfare and came to provide for their salvation (Matthew 18:2, 10-14). It is therefore essential that NCS provides a place where children are encouraged and taught to succeed academically, socially and physically, but most importantly, spiritually.

As a school and a ministry of Northminster Presbyterian Church, NCS strives to help transform children into spiritual champions. George Barna, describes the strategic thinking that facilitates the creation of an effective church-based ministry to children. Barna suggests that children not be rushed; an effective ministry allows enough time for transformation to occur.

STAFF

Teachers at NCS must be practicing Christians who live out their faith on a daily basis. Teachers at NCS see their job as a calling. They are godly models of Christian living made possible by their Biblical world view. They inspire and instill a love of learning in each student. Each teacher

is state certified and/or CSI (Christian Schools International) certified. The staff participates in continuing education at their teaching level in the areas of childhood development, developmentally appropriate practices and training in First Aid and CPR.

Being a Christian educator in a Christian setting is a spiritual ministry that has meaning and purpose. The teacher's responsibility is twofold; she or he needs to be both a spiritual leader and an academic leader. Christian teachers need to have a strong worldview based on the Word of God. They see their students through God's eyes. They love their students with God's love. God created these children in His image. They must be able to inspire, spurring the coming generations to reach beyond present levels of knowledge to greater heights of understanding.

As teacher and student interact, the learner's inherent potential should emerge. Under the guiding hand of the teacher as model and mentor, the learner can reach their God-given potential.

The home, school and the church must work in harmony if children are to be educated to the full extent of their God-given ability. The goal is to lead students into their highest academic level. The higher goal however, is to lead students into a life changing relationship with God, to grow them as disciples and to encourage them to be lifelong Christ followers.

INSURANCE

NCS carries liability insurance as required by the Arizona Department of Health Services.

CURRICULUM

CURRICULUM APPROACH

Through sound curricula that include Christian values and beliefs, Arizona State standards, and Core Knowledge objectives, using thematic unit and creative enrichment, students will have an outstanding year of quality learning in a loving environment.

Most experts will agree that children, especially young children, learn better through play than through highly structured academic activities. We embrace this concept and provide a wide range of hands-on activities that encourage children to experiment with science, math, language, music, and art. Blocks, easel painting, toys, career dress-up, puzzles, math manipulatives, sand and water play, games and role-play are the kinds of activities that are available to the children during class time.

Our classes contain three basic instructional strategies, each of which are designed to aid in specific developmental areas. During the course of each class, the children will have the opportunity to participate in individual choice activities, small group encounters, and whole group teacher-directed experiences. Individual choice activities allow for personal interests and self-expression; small group encounters are designed to enhance social skills and provide individual attention; and whole group experiences are intended to develop listening skills and the ability to follow directions, as well as allow practice being part of a large group.

All curriculum decisions, including specific content, activities, texts, outside speakers and

special guests, are made by Teachers and the Director with oversight by the School Board of NCS. For further details ask for a copy of the curriculum guide in the School office.

CURRICULUM GOALS

- 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.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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 appropriate Bible stories. Additionally, students attend Chapel every Wednesday.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

REGISTRATION FEE

A **non-refundable** registration fee of \$105.00 for preschool or registration fee of \$125.00 for Kindergarten and Elementary is required at the time of registration. This fee is separate from tuition and is not applied toward your child's monthly tuition payments. **Tuition and fees for the current school year must be paid in full prior to registration.**

TUITION & REFUND POLICY

NCS operates on a 10-month school year. Upon registering, your child is signed up for the entire school year. In the event your plans change, we require at least a two-week notice of withdrawal. Before classes begin in August, each family must submit their first month's tuition. **Monthly tuition payments cannot be refunded or prorated for early withdrawal.**

Tuition payments are due by the **first day** of each month, August through May. Payments received after the eighth 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, decline registration for the next school year and give your child's place to the next child on our waiting list. A \$25 bounced check fee will be charged for all checks returned by a financial institution.

There is **NO TUITION REDUCTION** for absenteeism or for the months of **December or May**. Our fees are based on a 10-month school year with payments divided into 10 equal installments. **No prorations of package-rate monthly fees will be made with the exception of new students starting mid-month.**

FEES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR

Preschool Full Day Program (7:00am-5:30pm)

2/3 Year Olds Dragonfly and Ladybug Classrooms

- 5 Days \$595/month
- 4 Days \$585/month
- 3 Days \$575/month
- 2 Days \$565/month

4/5 Year Olds Butterfly Class

- 5 Days \$570/month
- 4 Days \$560/month
- 3 Days \$550/month
- 2 Days \$540/month

Preschool Partial Day & Enrichment (9:00am-2:00pm)

(3, 4, & 5 year olds)

- 5 Days \$520/month
- 4 Days \$510/month
- 3 Days \$500/month
- 2 Days \$490/month

Preschool Partial Day (9:00am-12pm)

- 5 Days \$370/month
- 4 Days \$320/month
- 3 Days \$270/month
- 2 Days \$220/month

- **Kindergarten** \$470/month
- (9:00am-2:00pm Monday-Thursday; 9am-12pm Friday)
- **Kindergarten Full Day (9:00am-5:30pm)** \$650/month
- **First-3rd Grade** \$520/month
- (8:30am-2:00pm, Mon-Thurs.; 8:30am-12:00pm-Fri.)
- **First-3rd Grade Full Day (8:30am-5:30pm)** \$700/month
- **One week of elementary aftercare**
- (2-5:30 and Friday 12-5:30) \$75

- **Kindergarten and Elementary Book Fee** \$50/year

Early Care Drop-in (7am-9am)	\$25 per day
Enrichment Drop-in (12pm-2:00pm)	\$25 per day
Aftercare Drop-in (more than 2 hours)	\$35 per day
Early and Aftercare Drop-in	\$45 per day

MAKING PAYMENTS

Payments are the responsibility of the individual and we do not give monthly reminders. When paying in cash, please bring the exact amount due to the school office, as change is not available. Checks are also accepted in the school office. Credit/debit cards and checking account payments are accepted methods of payment through RenWeb (see below) for an additional fee. In addition, credit card payments may be made in the school office from 9:00AM-2:30PM for the first 8 days of the month. There is a 2.75% charge per transaction added for this form of payment. Please do not mail tuition payments or place tuition checks in the church offering plates. The school is not responsible for payments made this way, nor can we guarantee they will be posted to your school account. Payments are due the first day of each month, and a *late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed for payments made after the eighth day.*

RENWEB

RenWeb is the web-based administrative software system that we use. This system allows for communication between NCS and home: activities and updates, student grade progress, quarterly and end of year reports, homework and assignments and much more. An accounting system is an additional function of this system, so online payments may be made for all school accounts. If you choose to use your *credit* card, there will be a nominal fee. Further information about this program can be obtained through the office.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Tuition assistance is available for qualified applicants on a limited basis. For the Preschool, interested parents need to fill out an application and provide a copy of their most recent 1040 tax form. The returned forms will then be reviewed by the School Board.

Elementary and Kindergarten applicants need to apply through IBE (Institute for Better Education) and/or ACSTO (Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization) and/or ALF (Arizona Leadership Foundation), OR AAA Scholarship Foundation. Applications must be accompanied by the family's most recent 1040 tax form. Forms are available online at www.ibescholarships.org, www.acsto.org, www.arizonaleader.org, and www.aaascholarships.org or you may apply online. Application deadlines are posted on the websites.

B.A.S.E. (Before and After School Education)

BEFORE CARE

Our Before Care Program runs from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. five days a week, Monday through Friday as a part of our packaged full day programs. See fee schedule for rates. **We reserve the right to cancel Before Care in the event that three or fewer children reserve a spot.** Drop-ins are permitted on a space-available only basis for a daily rate of \$25. Payment for Full Day Care is due by the first day of each month. **No refunds for absences.**

PRESCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Our Enrichment Program runs from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Enrichment provides themed hands-on learning experiences and activities for non-napping preschool children. This program continues to build and enhance skills taught in the morning. The children enjoy an extended time of enrichment classes such as music, movement, science, and technology with the loving supervision of our staff. **Children are required to be toilet trained and three years of age to stay for Enrichment.** Children are also required to bring lunch; ice packs are encouraged for keeping lunches cool, as our facility does not provide refrigeration for lunches. See fee schedule for pricing according to age and number of days attending. Drop-ins will be permitted on a space available only basis for a daily rate of \$25. Payment for Enrichment is due by the first day of the month as a part of packaged tuition/enrichment or full day payment. **There are no refunds for absences.**

AFTER CARE

PRESCHOOL – JR. BASE CAMP (2's through 4's)

Our Preschool After Care program runs from 12:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Children who nap are required to bring a crib sheet and blanket with his/her name clearly marked. These items may be left at school for one week at a time. See fee schedule for pricing according to age and number of days attending. **Nap-room space may be limited due to teacher-student ratio requirements for two year olds, so priority will be given to the youngest participants.** Drop-ins will be permitted on a space available only basis for a daily rate of \$35. Payment for after care is due by the first day of the month along with packaged full day payment. **There are no refunds for absences.**

ELEMENTARY (K through 3rd Grade)

Our Elementary After Care program runs from 2:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Programming and Curriculum varies according to enrollment. See fee schedule for Kindergarten and Elementary full day fees. Drop-ins will be permitted on a space available only basis for a daily rate of \$35. Payment for after care is due by the first day of the month along with packaged full day payment. **There are no refunds for absences.**

LATE PICK-UP FEE

All children should be picked up promptly at 12:00 p.m. (Preschool), 2:00 p.m. (Enrichment, Elementary) or 5:30pm (Aftercare). If a parent does not arrive and sign out a child before 12:10 p.m., 2:10 p.m., and 5:40pm, a late fee will be applied to the family's account. The late fee is \$20.00 for each ten minute period of time. Our staff is not contracted to stay beyond closing time.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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.

REASONS FOR DENIAL OF ADMISSION OR REFUSAL OF SERVICES

- 1) NCS will deny admission to a child when the family fails to submit documented proof that the child has been immunized, or has laboratory evidence of immunity for preventable diseases, including Rubella, as required by the State Department of Health Services. Non-immunized children pose a threat to the well-being of any pregnant women who use our facility, and we wish to protect them and their unborn children.
- 2) NCS will refuse services to enrolled families who fail to follow state regulations and school policies.
- 3) Certain circumstances or conditions may exist under which NCS may be unable to adequately and safely provide services to families and/or children with various types of behavioral, physical, or social needs. In these situations, admission to or continuation in our program will be considered on an individual, case-by-case basis. Special situations may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - A. A child who has AIDS or the HIV virus. The following factors will be considered in determining admission or continuation in the program of a child with AIDS or the HIV virus:
 - 1) The child's age;
 - 2) The child's ability to control bodily functions;
 - 3) The degree of maturity of social interaction;
 - 4) The staff's ability to use universal precautions concerning hand washing and the safe disposal of blood spills and bodily fluid.
 - B. A child with physical or mental disabilities, severe or chronic illness, or a medically fragile condition. The following factors will be considered in determining admission or continuation in the program of a child exhibiting one of these conditions:
 - 1) The requirement of special attention or treatment during school hours which the staff is not trained to administer;
 - 2) The requirement of adaptive facilities or equipment which the church or school does not have or cannot reasonably accommodate.

C. A child or family whose social, psychological, or emotional behaviors pose a threat of emotional or physical harm to others. The following factors will be considered determining admission or continuation in the program of a child or family member exhibiting one of these conditions:

- 1) The presence of appropriate staffing to accommodate the additional services required to safely and adequately handle the situation;
- 2) The requirement of special skills or training by the staff to ensure the safety of the child and others;
- 3) The ability of the family and the school to cooperate and work together to provide a safe and secure environment for all concerned.

D. Our license to change diapers only applies to our younger classes, ages two and three. A toilet trained child means that he or she is able to use the toilet independently; we do, however, understand that children have accidents. This policy is in compliance with State Licensing Policies. This policy is not enforced with children who hold a current IEP (Independent Education Plan) that addresses toilet training.

If NCS determines, after careful assessment of all mitigating factors, that it is unable to admit or continue services to any child, the school will seek to assist the family through referrals to appropriate agencies or special 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. We understand that these age requirements may be in conflict with individual family needs; however, due to our class sizes, staffing, and our age-appropriate curriculum, all students must meet these age requirements for enrollment.

Class	Age Required	On or Before Date Below
Dragonflies	2	August 31, 2016
Ladybugs	3	August 31, 2016
Butterflies	4	August 31, 2016
Kindergarten	5	August 31, 2016
First Grade	6	August 31, 2016
Second Grade	7	August 31, 2016
Third Grade	8	August 31, 2016

DISENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

As stated in the Tuition Fees section of this manual, if you choose to withdraw your child from school, please give **two weeks** advance notice or you are responsible for the entire month's tuition. In the event of withdrawal in the middle of the billing period, for any reason, tuition will not be prorated. If your child has not attended class for one month and tuition has not been paid, your child will be terminated from the program and you must pay the registration fee to re-enroll. Re-enrollment is not guaranteed and will be possible only if space is available. **In the event of withdrawal, please allow three business days for processing requests for transcripts/other records.**

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

The First, Second and Third Grade teachers are ready to greet the children at 8:25 a.m. each school morning. Preschool and Kindergarten teachers are ready to greet the children at 8:55 a.m. each school morning. Parents must **sign their children in** on the attendance sheet at the classroom door prior to leaving the school campus. Please use your **full legal signature**, per state licensing regulations.

Please do **NOT** bring your Elementary student earlier than 8:25 a.m. Please do **NOT** bring your Preschool student earlier than 8:55 a.m. The teacher and associate teacher are very busy planning the school day and setting up activities prior to 8:25 a.m. and 8:55 a.m. They are not free to supervise children during this time.

Departure time is 12:00 p.m. for Preschool and 2:00 p.m. for Kindergarten and Elementary Monday through Thursday & 12:00 p.m. on Friday. The person who picks the child up must **sign out each** child on the daily attendance sheet. Children will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the emergency cards, so be sure these cards are kept up-to-date. We can release your child upon your telephone authorization if you have signed the proper release form. Please remember to **DRIVE SLOWLY** and **WATCH CAREFULLY** for children when entering or leaving the Church Campus.

ELEMENTARY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Consistent, regular attendance is not only essential to the learning process but also required by law. Each student will be allowed **up to eight absences per quarter**. Only absences due to illness, doctors' appointments, death of a family member, or pre-approved "grace days" will be excused. With unexcused absences, a student is still responsible for all assigned work but will not earn credit for it.

If a student is absent because of illness or other emergency, the parent must **call the school office by 10:00 a.m. that day**. Any absence that does not meet the guidelines for excused absences in the paragraph above, or for which the school has not received a phone call or written parental excuse upon the student's return, will be considered truant. Recurring truancy will result in a parental conference with the Director. Students will be expected to make up the assignments

they miss if truant, but they will not receive credit for the work. Any unfinished work will be considered incomplete for the grading period.

ELEMENTARY PLANNED ABSENCES

NCS students are allowed up to five days per year for planned absences. When parents give a week's notice, teachers will prepare assignments for the missed days and will give full credit for the work done. Assignments will be made available on or near the student's last day before the planned absence. If the request is made less than a week in advance, assignments will be available upon return. Assignments must be completed within two weeks of the student's return to school or by the end of the current quarter, whichever is earlier.

ELEMENTARY HALF-DAY ABSENCES POLICY

Students absent in excess of two hours are considered absent for half of that day.

PROCEDURE FOR ABSENCES AND MAKE-UP WORK

1. Parents must notify the school office between 7:30 and 10:00 a.m. each time their student is absent. (It is not necessary to call each day of a known, prolonged absence.) Assignments must be requested at this time.
2. When requested by 10:00 a.m., assignments will be written out by the classroom teacher and sent with the appropriate books to the school office or to a designated person by 2:00 p.m., not before. Please do not interrupt a teacher's class to ask for assignments. A student with an excused absence will have two days to make up work for each day missed. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that all work is completed.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Checking out of school early is disruptive to the flow of classroom instruction. Parents are encouraged to schedule all medical appointments after school hours. However, if it is necessary for a child to be taken from school before dismissal, the procedure below should be followed:

1. 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 8:30 a.m.
2. Any student leaving school during the school day must be signed out by an authorized, responsible adult.

TARDINESS

The NCS school day begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. By being prompt, the student demonstrates discipline and responsibility. Each student is expected to be seated at his/her desk with the materials needed for class by 8:30 a.m.

Although parents are discouraged from scheduling morning doctors' appointments, there are times when this is unavoidable. We do not categorize tardies as "excused" or "unexcused." When a student exceeds six "tardies" in any quarter, he/she will be monitored on the "Chronic Tardiness" list during the following quarter. A pattern of continued or recurring tardies can be addressed in a parent conference to explore reasons for or issues contributing to the problem. The NCS administration can provide encouragement while exploring possible solutions.

PRESCHOOL DRESS AND APPEARANCE CODE

Northminster Christian School does not have a dress code, per se; however, the children will need to wear comfortable clothes which are suitable for sitting on the floor, playing outdoors, and allow plenty of room for movement activities. Paint shirts or smocks are provided for art time and water play, but our best supervision is not always sufficient to keep children spotless. We believe that the children's comfort and fun are much more important than their tidiness and we hope that parents will keep this in mind and dress them accordingly.

A part of each class will be spent outside, weather permitting. During portions of the school year, the playground can be either chilly or very hot so the children should be dressed appropriately. **Please be sure to 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. Bathrooms are located close by and the children are encouraged to use them frequently. However, accidents may occur and our staff will handle these with as little embarrassment to the child as possible. We have a state-licensed changing facility (See *Diaper Changing* under *State Required Policies*) for those children who are still in diapers or who are using "Pull-Ups" during the training process. **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.

It is important that children's shoes be both comfortable and safe. Tennis shoes or other enclosed shoes, with no slippery soles and either laces or Velcro closures are the best choice. Dress shoes or other slick-soled shoes, scuffs, flip-flops and boots are discouraged at school. These tend to cause many trips, slips and falls when playing outdoors.

ELEMENTARY DRESS AND APPEARANCE CODE

Clothing

NCS dress and appearance code is designed to create a learning environment that is conducive to concentration and learning.

1. Clothing should be neat, clean, modest and in good repair. Children should wear clothing that fits properly and covers all areas that a bathing suit would cover. Clothing should cover them even when sitting, or raising their arms.
2. Clothing containing offensive slogans and other suggestive or controversial designs is not allowed.
3. Clothing and other articles that are considered “gang related” are not allowed.
4. No flip flops. Children can wear sandals, crocks and tennis shoes. The important fact is that they need a strap that supports their heel. It is important that children’s shoes be both comfortable and safe. Tennis shoes, or other enclosed shoes, with no slippery soles and either laces or Velcro closures are the best choice. Dress shoes, or other slick-soled shoes, scuffs, flip flops, and boots are discouraged at school. These tend to cause many trips, slips, and falls when playing outdoors.
5. Earrings, watches, necklaces, bracelets are allowed. Hoop or dangling earrings are not permitted, due to safety concerns.

Girls

1. Girls may wear skorts, shorts and skirts but they must be arm length. (Arms length means with arms at your side the length of the skirt is as long as their fingers).
2. When wearing a dress or skirt we ask that girls wear shorts underneath their dresses.
3. No spaghetti straps. Shirts and dresses need to have a one inch strap.
4. No midriff shirts or shirts that show her stomach.
5. Girls may wear pants or shorts, but not short-shorts.

Boys

1. Boys need to wear pants that fit that do not show their underwear.
2. Boys may wear shorts or pants.
3. Boys may not wear muscle shirts or cropped shirts which show his stomach.

The final analysis belongs to the Director and or school board. If the policy is forgotten, the first occasion will result in a gentle reminder sent home. A second violation will result in a call to pick up the child, or bring in a change of clothing.

SPECIAL SCHOOL RULES

- 1) Toys, teddy bears, “blankies”, and other special items, as well as unusual articles of clothing like capes or masks should only come to school on special occasions announced by the teacher. Please do not allow your child to bring toy weapons, money, marbles, gum or small toys to school for any reason.
- 2) Electronic devices, this includes cell phones, music players, video games, video cameras, regular cameras and all other electronic devices are not allowed in class or on campus by students at any time.
- 3) We are not licensed to accommodate child visitors. We are not permitted to accommodate your houseguests or other young visitors, even for part of a morning.
- 4) Please notify us promptly of any change of your address, phone number, or person on your child’s emergency card.
- 5) Please do not bring dogs or pets onto the school campus or playground without the permission of the teacher or Director. Calm, tame pets have been known to bite when stressed or excited; we cannot risk bites or injuries.
- 6) Please call the School Office or the Church Office (327-2321) if you have an emergency while your child is at Northminster Christian School.
- 7) **No weapons of any kind will be allowed on the Church Campus by anyone for any reason.** We do not allow toy guns, knives or any weapons real or homemade on the school campus. Any child who brings a weapon to school will be sent home immediately.
- 8) Please keep playground gates closed at all times. Do not congregate near the gates or become involved in conversations at the gates; we cannot risk children slipping through unattended into the parking lots.
- 9) If you choose to linger “after hours” to allow your child to play on our playground, **please note and enforce our school safety play rules:**
 - Do not leave children unattended on the playground. **PARENTS MUST SUPERVISE THEIR CHILDREN AT ALL TIMES.**
 - **The playground must be cleared 15 minutes after class is dismissed.**
 - One person at a time on the slide.
 - Bathroom - Only two people in the bathroom at a time.
 - Do not throw sand.
 - Do not hang or swing on gates or railings.

SNACKS

Each school day your child will need to bring his/her own snack from home. Please separate your child's snack from his or her lunch. We encourage snacks such as granola bar, fruit and/or cheese. **NO CANDY, PLEASE.** Please include a water bottle or juice box. In the event that a snack is forgotten the school can provide a snack for a fee of \$1.50.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are very special days for our children. We invite each child to celebrate with his or her friends at school, provided arrangements are made ahead of time with the teacher. Parents may provide a special class snack (which must be store bought per licensing. *Please be sure items are not expired – we are not permitted to serve expired items*). We request that birthday party invitations **NOT** be distributed at school unless all children in the room are invited. Children who are not invited feel terribly disappointed even if they do not really know your child well.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

In addition to the general curriculum described above, our classes will also celebrate seasonal holidays with stories, games, art projects, food and special guests. The celebration of traditions, both ethnic and religious, is an important aspect of human development, and the annual cycle of holidays creates a rhythm and focal point for these traditions in the lives of our children. Because NCS allows children of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds to enroll, there can be some occasional friction over whose customs and traditions are going to be shared and celebrated. It should be understood by all parents that we are first-and-foremost a Christian institution, and therefore will celebrate the Christian traditions in regard to Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. This will be done in addition to, not to the exclusion of, the secular side of these holidays. Santa and the Easter Bunny are all a part of the fun.

Secondly, parents should understand that we are an American institution and will introduce and participate in patriotic holidays at an appropriate age level, including Columbus Day, Presidents' Day, Civil Rights Day, and we will teach and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Other seasonal holidays will also be observed and discussed in the course of the school year. Some of these will include Valentine's Day, Rodeo Days and the autumn season. Autumn celebrations will focus on the fun of fall and harvest themes rather than Halloween. Room decorations will be friendly and non-frightening.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are welcome in the classroom. Due to the size of some of our classrooms, we limit each class to two volunteers per day (unless additional help is requested by the teacher). If you want to volunteer on a regular basis (weekly) we need you to have a fingerprint card and background check. If interested in volunteering, please contact the school office to set up a day and time. Please also remember that we cannot accommodate siblings or other children in the classroom. On the day you volunteer, please check in at the school office and pick up your volunteer badge.

- On the morning of your visit, sign in at the school office.
- Any activities, including books read by volunteers, need to be reviewed by the Director and/or School Board.
- Be prepared to interact with the children in their activities.
- Follow all of the teacher's directions and guidance in dealing with the children.
- Allow the teacher and the associate teacher to do all of the disciplining, if it should be required.
- Make other arrangements for siblings. **Do not bring infants, toddlers or older siblings to class with you.** When you are with the class, your undivided attention is needed.
- Avoid introducing competitive games.
- Allow children the freedom to create original art projects. Correcting or directing their efforts stifles creativity.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

The Preschool classes have one scheduled Parent-Teacher Conference each year the last week of January. The Elementary classes have two Parent-Teacher Conferences per year: The first will be in October and the second will be in March.

Your child's teacher will post a schedule of available times and ask parents to sign up for an appointment. If, at any other time during the school year, you wish to speak privately with the teacher, please contact the teacher to arrange a mutually convenient time for an appointment or phone call. If something is concerning you about your child, our program, or a specific incident that has occurred, please let us know so that we can reach a solution together. **We do ask that you not engage the teacher or the associate teacher in lengthy conversations during the times they are with the children.** It is important that the children receive the teachers' undivided attention during school hours.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

As a private school, NCS is given a choice about what standardized testing method is used. NCS uses the **Scholastic Testing Services Educational Development Series (EDS)** standard test for its students in kindergarten through third grade. The **EDS** assessment is a nationally recognized test used by both public and private schools. The main purpose of using a standardized testing program is to provide our school with information which will strengthen programs to help our students learn. The **EDS** results indicate student performance and mastery of specific content objectives as compared to students of their own age and grade level across the nation. Although a standardized test is generally a good indicator of how each student performs, it is not the only means used to assess performance. Each child must be viewed as a *total student* within any learning situation. To protect confidentiality, parents are mailed a copy of their child's test scores along with an interpretation of the results. The **EDS** test allows you to compare how your child is performing within the school and against the national average.

The **EDS** test is a norm-referenced test, published and standardized by Scholastic Testing Services, based on specific criteria/objectives to be mastered by students at particular grade levels.

Parents are urged to consult the school calendar in scheduling vacations and time out of school in order to avoid any absences during this important activity

Tips for **Testing** Week:

- Make sure your child gets a full night of sleep each night.
- Make sure your child gets a good, nutritious breakfast each morning.
- Be early for school so your child does not start the morning off feeling rushed
- Only allow your child to be absent if absolutely necessary.
- Be on time. If late your child will need to wait in the school office until the next logical break.

SCHOOL EVALUATIONS

Parents will be given the opportunity to evaluate the program through an annual evaluation form and survey.

PLAYGROUND RULES

Please note that these rules apply before, during and after school.

- No climbing up the slide. Go down feet first only.
- No climbing on, jumping off or walking on wall.
- No going behind the wall unless you have an adult's permission.
- No name-calling of any kind. Ever.
- Bathroom: only two people in the bathroom at any time.
- No playing in the bathroom.
- No tearing apart the landscaping, equipment or toys.

The playground closes 15 minutes after classes are dismissed so that staff members may prepare for the next day.

Parents, please supervise you child before and after school. Please remind him/her of the playground rules. If you have a problem with another student before or after school, please talk to his or her parents about it before involving a staff member. This is a Biblical model. Thank you!

BREASTFEEDING

NCS campus is breastfeeding-friendly. Parent Room (room 1) is available before and after school as needed.

TOBACCO USE

NCS is a smoke-free campus.

STATE-REQUIRED POLICIES

SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Our Director is Mary Krongaard, and in the event of her absence, our designated Assistant Director, Amy Baum, will make all necessary immediate decisions.

SIGN-IN & SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES

Whoever brings and picks up your child must sign the attendance sheet with his or her **full legal signature** - no initials or nicknames, please - and his or her name and signature must appear on the emergency release card in your child's file. If the person is not the child's parent, then a picture I.D. is required. This is one of the most important legal requirements of our licensing regulations and is there for our protection, your protection, and the safety of your child. Also, it is very important for parents to understand that if in the case of an emergency they would like someone other than one of the individuals listed on their child's emergency card to pick up their child, they must have the phone authorization form filled out and on file in the School Office. Without this form we will be unable to release the child from school except to the parent. The all-school sign in/out books are alphabetical and located centrally on the counter outside Room 4.

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 for DPT, Polio, MMR, HiB, Hepatitis B and Varicella**. While not required, we strongly urge families to have their children tested for TB as has been recommended to us by the Department of Public Health. A positive test will require a doctor's release for the child to continue in school. As children receive their regularly-scheduled booster shots, these must be entered into our records as well. Please bring a copy of booster shot records to the School Office.

ILLNESSES

A child will be excluded from school for the following illnesses:

- **Symptoms of Inflammation**
- **Fever**
- **Rash**
- **Diarrhea**
- **Vomiting**
- **Pinworm**
- **Lice**
- **Chicken Pox** (a child may return to school upon a doctor's release)

Any children suspected of the above conditions must be excluded from class. Any communicable diseases among the class will be listed on the attendance sheet the day following

the reported occurrence. If a child becomes ill at school, a member of the staff will notify the parents by phone.

REPORTABLE ILLNESSES

If your child is diagnosed with any of the following illnesses, please contact the School Office immediately. We are required to notify the Arizona State Health Department of any occurrence of the following:

AIDS	Botulism	Chicken Pox	Cholera
Diphtheria	Encephalitis	Food Poisoning	Giardiasis
HiB	Hepatitis (all forms)	HIV	H1N1 Flu Virus
Lead Poisoning	Lice	Malaria	Measles
Meningitis	Mumps	Pink Eye (conjunctivitis)	Rabies in Humans
Reye Syndrome	Rubella	Salmonellas	Scabies
Shigellosis	Smallpox	Streptococcal Infections	Tetanus
Trichinosis	Tuberculosis	Typhoid Fever	Typhus Fever
Whooping Cough	Yellow Fever		

OTHER INFECTIOUS PROBLEMS

Colds, Coughs, and Ear Infections

Consideration for others is paramount in controlling the spread of colds and flu at school. Please do not bring children who have runny noses with thick, whitish or greenish discharge or those who have frequent or heavy coughs - even if these symptoms appear to be caused by allergies.

Fevers

A child is not to return to school until they have been free of fever for at least 24 hours. A child with an evening temperature above normal may NOT come to school the next day, even if he or she wakes up with a normal temperature - fevers often rise as the day progresses.

Impetigo

This is a **highly contagious** bacterial skin infection, which presents itself as pus-filled sores. Because the bacteria involved may be either “staph” or “strep”, a doctor’s care is required, and any suspected cases will be sent home from school. Oral antibiotics are the best treatment and 48 hours after beginning antibiotics a child may return to school as long as all sores are covered and there is a marked improvement in the rash - no new sores and those present begin drying up. Topical ointments are not as effective a treatment as oral antibiotics. If this method of treatment is used, children must remain at home until all sores have dried.

Ringworm

This is a **highly contagious** fungal skin infection, which presents itself as itchy, scaly, red patches that grow into red round or oval “rings” surrounding a smooth center. It is transmitted by direct contact with infected people or animals, or items handled by infected individuals. A doctor’s care is required for treatment and children may return to school, with the sores covered, after being on medication for at least 48 hours.

MEDICATIONS

A child may not return to school for a full 48 hours after beginning any antibiotic treatment.

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.

Only the Director or her designee may administer doctor prescribed medications. A Medication Consent Form (available in the school office) must be completed in order for this to be done. **All medications must be kept locked in the school office.**

SUNSCREEN & OTHER PERSONAL PRODUCTS

We ask that parents apply any sunscreen, lip balm, or other ointments on their children before they arrive at school. Due to the length of our program and the need for written approval, it is in the child's best interest that the parents administer any of these products at home prior to the school day. We recognize that special circumstances may exist that require one of our staff to administer an item of this kind. In order to do this, we must have written instructions and the item must be in its original container.

ALLERGIES

If your child suffers from any kind of allergy, please notify the office staff in writing and complete the appropriate spaces on all of the enrollment forms.

SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

The school may accept children with special needs. The Director, teacher and School Board will review each situation individually and evaluate the appropriateness of our facilities and staffing in determining which special needs children we are best able to accommodate and serve.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

In the event of an emergency where the school grounds must be evacuated, the children will be brought to St. James Methodist Church. Parents will be notified and will be able to pick their children up at St. James; 3255 N. Campbell Ave. The phone number is (520) 325-7556.

GATE INFORMATION

Growing concern over school safety in the United States schools has led our School Advisory Team to consider more stringent security measures. Even though we have never had a "breach" in security we do not want to wait until we have a problem to address this concern. We want to

be proactive, especially when it comes to safety.

The NPC has a team of people working on new safety procedures and policies. Another team is working on hardware issues. This team recently decided and has plans to upgrade our school fences and gates to include a key code entry system.

Playground fencing promotes student safety and helps separate spaces for different age groups.

Perimeter fencing is a school's first line of defense against intrusion.

Upon registration of your student you will be given an access code. This code will need to be punched into the gate keypad to allow entrance into the school yard. Please help us keep children safe by not giving your code to others including friends and family who pick up your child.

SCHOOL ACCIDENTS

If your child receives a very 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 Accident Report, which describes the incident in detail. Any time a school-related accident requires a doctor's attention; this must be reported to the School Office so that we, in turn, can report it to the Health Department. If a serious accident happens during school hours, a member of the staff will notify the parents by phone.

DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Arizona law prohibits our teachers and staff from using any form of physical, emotional, or verbal abusive disciplinary action to control the students. We prefer to take a proactive stance in regards to discipline. By using such proactive techniques as redirection and setting limits, while establishing and communicating realistic expectations, we hope to prevent discipline problems before they happen. If a problem does occur, "time out" may be used to diffuse the situation. Our ultimate goal is to have the children reach a personal level of self-discipline. Proactive discipline, and the various techniques it employs, provides children with a safe, comfortable place to learn in an atmosphere of trust and fairness. Elementary classes will use a card system.

Students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible individuals on the way to and from school, during school hours and in all activities and programs supervised by the school, including field trips and clubs and other extracurricular activities.

Most students willingly cooperate with their instructors and exhibit maturity and self-control commensurate with their chronological development.

Occasionally, students violate classroom or school regulations. When this occurs the teacher has the right, responsibility and authority to inform and/or discipline the offender. Depending upon the seriousness of the infraction, the teacher may use one or more of the options open to him/her such as discussing the situation with the child and determining and implementing logical consequences, after school or lunch detention, parent notification when necessary.

When a teacher has utilized all reasonable measures at his/her command without achieving the desired modification of the child's behavior, a referral to the school office may become necessary.

Discipline procedures for inappropriate behavior may include the following:

1. Time out
2. Lunch time detention
3. After school detention
4. Conference with parents
5. Out of school suspension (Applied only in severe incidents or after an accumulation of incidents.)

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

The preschool classes do not regularly go on field trips off the property, but should one be planned, written permission from a parent needs to be obtained. Elementary school children at NCS go on three to four field trips throughout the academic year. 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. The school is responsible for complying with the Arizona Health Department on these requirements and any others listed in the licensing handbook.

DIAPER CHANGING POLICY

Though we encourage students to be toilet trained before attending Preschool, we realize that sometimes this just isn't possible. We are authorized by the state to change diapers for our younger classes. Children are allowed to be in diapers or "Pull-Ups" in rooms where Dragonfly or Ladybug classes are held. However, parents should be aware that state regulations prohibit us from providing diaper wipes for diaper changing. If your child is still in diapers or "Pull-Ups," please send wipes with your child's name written on the outside of the container. Children in diapers or Pull-Ups will not be able to enroll/attend the four year old class. Our diaper changing license only applies to the two and three year old classrooms.

TIPS FOR A POSITIVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

- Your attitude is contagious! Be positive and confident about your decision to enroll your child in school. You have made a wise decision. Your child will reflect your confidence and positive attitude.
- When dropping off your child in the morning, don't linger, but be sure to tell your child good-bye and remind them that you will be there to pick them up in a little while. A quick, clean, confident break will be best for both you and your child. As soon as you are gone, your child will quickly become absorbed in the activities of the day.
- Be sure your child gets plenty of sleep and eats a good breakfast before coming to school.
- Encourage your child to tell you about his or her day at school. Look for the positives and avoid dwelling on any negative experience. Remember not to press the issue if your child doesn't seem to have much to say. Some kids just don't keep their parents informed as well as others.
- Talk with your child's teacher about activities you can do at home to carry through on the things done in school. Let your child teach you finger plays and songs. If special recipes are used in school, try making them at home. Your interest and involvement will give your child a great sense of achievement and importance.
- Please read all papers and newsletters, which are sent home with your child. Watch for notes and announcements posted outside your child's class. Stay informed so your child won't miss out on any of the fun!