

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



# **NORTHMINSTER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2450 East Fort Lowell Road**

**Tucson, Arizona 85719**

**(520)327-2321**

**[school@npctucson.org](mailto:school@npctucson.org)**

**Accredited By:**



# CONTENTS

<b>Mission Statement</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Philosophy and Purpose</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Statement of Faith</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>Hours of Operation</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Admission and Release Requirements</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Discipline Policy</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Transportation and Field Trip Policies</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Tuition and Financial Information</b>	<b>6-7</b>
<b>Before Care, After Care and Enrichment</b>	<b>7-8</b>
<b>Parent Responsibility and Participation</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>General Schedule</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Medical and Emergency Policies</b>	<b>8-9</b>
<b>Child Abuse, Inspection Reports and Insurance</b>	<b>9-10</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Arrival and Departure Times</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Elementary Attendance Policy</b>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>Dress and Appearance Code</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Special School Rules</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<b>Lunch and Snack</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Birthdays</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Screening, Testing and Parent Teacher Conferences</b>	<b>12-13</b>
<b>Safety Gates</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>What to Bring on Your First Day of School</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Empower Policies</b>	<b>13-15</b>

## **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. Each elementary teacher is state certified and/or ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International) certified.

## **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 the elementary grades 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 board. Curriculum maps are available per request for each grade level.

## **ACCREDITATION**

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

## **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 7:30am until 5:30pm Monday through Friday. We are closed for all holidays and breaks noted in our academic calendar. 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.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Age Required</b>	<b>On or Before Date Below</b>
Dragonflies	2	August 31, 2017
Ladybugs	3	August 31, 2017
Butterflies	4	August 31, 2017
Kindergarten	5	August 31, 2017
First Grade	6	August 31, 2017
Second Grade	7	August 31, 2017
Third Grade	8	August 31, 2017

## 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 board 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 Dragonfly (2 year old) and Ladybug (3 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 staff is skilled in helping children make appropriate choices. When conflicts do arise we take this opportunity to help children develop their own problem solving skills. We work with the children during the time of the dispute. Our emphasis is on communication between the children as well as logical consequences. It is often necessary that direct intervention of an adult is required; children are then offered support to settle the dispute. Sometimes a child may be redirected to another area or classroom to help him/her work on making better choices. However, repetitive behavioral problems may indicate a need to establish a consistent, individual plan for a particular child. 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 Parenting with Love and Logic 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 2017- 2018: Prices effective August 2017			
For children age 2, or 3 by August 31st			
# of days	Full Day Tuition 7:30am-5:30pm	Partial Day & Enrichment Tuition 9am-2pm	Partial Day 9am-12pm
5	\$595	\$520	\$370
4	\$585	\$510	\$320
3	\$575	\$500	\$270
2	\$565	\$490	\$220
For Children age 4 by August 31st			
# of days	Full Day Tuition 7:30am-5:30pm	Partial Day and Enrichment Tuition 9am-2pm	Partial Day 9am-12pm
5	\$570	\$520	\$370
4	\$560	\$510	\$320
3	\$550	\$500	\$270
2	\$540	\$490	\$220
Kindergarten for Children Age 5 by August 31st (M-Th 8:30am-2pm, Friday 8:30-12pm)			
Tuition Only	\$470		
Full Day 7:30am-5:30pm	\$650		
First-Third Grade (M-Th 8:30am-2pm, Friday 8:30-12pm)			
Tuition Only	\$520		
Full Day 7:30am-5:30pm	\$700		
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 Board. 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 \$125 per child is due at the time of registration.
- Tuition payments are due by 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.
- Late pick up fee applies beginning at 12:15pm (Preschool), 2:15pm (Elementary and Enrichment) and 5:30 p.m. (After care), \$1.00 per minute.

## **MAKING PAYMENTS**

Payments are the responsibility of each individual family. We accept cash, checks or online payments through our software system, Renweb. 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 Christian School.

## **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 by the School Board.

Elementary and Kindergarten are eligible to receive Tax Credit Scholarships or other available 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](http://www.ibescholarships.org), [www.acsto.org](http://www.acsto.org), [www.arizonaleader.org](http://www.arizonaleader.org), or [www.aaascholarships.org](http://www.aaascholarships.org). Application deadlines are posted on each individual websites.

## **BEFORE CARE, AFTER CARE and ENRICHMENT**

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.

### **BEFORE CARE**

Our Before Care Program runs from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. five days a week.

### **PRESCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM**

Our Enrichment Program runs from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. each day. Drop-ins are available if space allows. Children are required to be toilet trained to stay for Enrichment. Children are required to bring lunch. This program continues to build and enhance skills taught in the morning in the areas of music, movement, science and technology.

### **AFTER CARE**

#### **PRESCHOOL AFTER CARE NAPPERS**

Our Preschool After Care program runs from 12:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m for children ages 2-4 who nap. Drop-ins are available if space allows. Children 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 and must be taken home and washed each week.

#### **PRESCHOOL AFTER CARE NON-NAPPERS**

Preschool students who do not nap first go to Enrichment from 12-2pm. They then begin After Care which goes from 2pm until 5:30pm.

#### **ELEMENTARY (K through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade) AFTER CARE**

Our Elementary After Care program runs from 2:00 p.m. until 5:30 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 elementary students .

#### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION**

We encourage all parents to get involved in classroom activities and school events. Teachers and administration will notify parents when there are opportunities for parents to volunteer their time.

#### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS**

Each class has a set curriculum for the year and lesson plans for each day. Lesson plans and schedules are posted in each classroom. Lesson plans and curriculum are available upon request at any time.

#### **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 Accident Report, which describes the incident in detail. If a serious accident 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.

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

## **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.

## **ILLNESSES**

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. Please keep your child home if they are sick. A child will be asked to stay home from school if he or she presents with symptoms of a contagious illnesses. If a child becomes ill at school, a member of the staff will notify the parents by phone to pick them up immediately. If a child is absent or sent home from school due to illness, they may not return until he/she is symptom and fever free (without Tylenol) for 24 hours, and not having vomited for 24 hours after eating a meal.

## **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. 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**

NCSI will provide to parents, upon request, written pesticide information at least 48 hours before a pesticide application occurs on facility premises.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **COMMUNICATION**

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

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES**

- First through Third Grade classes start at 8:30am. Teachers are ready to greet the children at 8:25 a.m. each school morning.
- Preschool and Kindergarten classes start at 9am. Teachers are ready to greet the children at 8:55 a.m. each school morning.
- 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.

### **ELEMENTARY ATTENDANCE POLICY**

- Each student will be allowed up to eight absences per quarter. 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 the school office by 10:00 a.m. that day.
- Assignments must be requested at this time. 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.
- Recurring unexcused absences will result in a letter home and a parent conference.
- A student with an excused absence will have two days to make up work for each day missed. Students will be expected to make up the assignments they miss if unexcused, but they will not receive credit for the work. 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. Any unfinished work will be considered incomplete for the grading period.
- 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 8:30 a.m. Any student leaving school during the school day must be signed out by an authorized, responsible adult.
- The NCS elementary school day begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. Each student is expected to be seated at his/her desk with the materials needed for class by 8:30 a.m. 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 AND APPEARANCE CODE**

### **PRESCHOOL**

Northminster Christian School Preschool does not have a dress code, however, there are a few guidelines that will help your clothing to not be a distraction to your child’s day.

- 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 our best supervision is not always sufficient to keep children spotless.
- 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.

### **ELEMENTARY**

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

- Clothing should be neat, clean, modest and in good repair. Children should wear clothing that fits properly. Shorts or skirts must be arms length. For boys muscle or cropped shirts are not allowed. For girls shirts and dresses must have a one inch strap.
- Clothing containing offensive slogans and other suggestive or controversial designs is not allowed.
- No flip flops. Children can wear sandals, crocks and tennis shoes. All shoes must have a heel strap.
- Earrings, watches, necklaces, bracelets are allowed. Hoop or dangling earrings are not permitted, due to safety concerns.

The final analysis belongs to the Head of School 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**

- 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.
- 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.
- Only two people in the bathroom at any time.
- No playing in the bathroom.
- No destruction of the landscaping, equipment or toys.

## **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 or juice box. 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 class snack which must be store bought per licensing. We invite each child to celebrate with his or her friends at school, provided arrangements are made ahead of time with the teacher.

## **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, TESTING AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

The preschool and elementary school have two scheduled Parent-Teacher Conferences per year, or as needed or requested.

## **PRESCHOOL**

Preschool parents will be required to complete an Ages and Stages Questionnaire 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 Ages and Stages Questionnaire. 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 the local school district for further evaluation (ages 3 and up).

## KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADE

For our Kindergarten through Third Grade 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. Reports cards will be distributed at the end of each quarter.

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

As a private school, NCS is given a choice about what standardized testing method is used. NCS uses the Scholastic standard test for its students in Kindergarten through Third Grade. The Scholastic assessment is a nationally recognized test used by both public and private schools. Our purpose of using a standardized test is to provide information which will strengthen our program, inform parents and better student success. To protect confidentiality, parents are mailed a copy of their child's test scores along with an interpretation of the results.

## 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.