



Family Handbook

Dear Families,

Welcome to Northwood Christian Preschool! We are thrilled you chose us to care for and educate your child this school year! We look forward to learning more about your family.

Northwood Christian Preschool (NCP) is committed to providing the highest quality programming for children 3 to 5 years of age. The heart of our program lies in our desire to see all children and families know and accept the love of Jesus Christ. Our goal is to provide an environment where childhood is honored and families are supported; where nurturing relationships foster children's confidence; where teachers, materials and activities support children's learning, and where a sense of community is shared by all.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at:
naomi.passarelli@ncp.school

Thank you,

Naomi Passarelli, Director NCP

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Where We Began

Northwood Christian Preschool started in 2000 by Christi Keefer and Robben Lyons. They had a strong desire to share God's love with young children and their families. Christi Keefer faithfully taught and directed the preschool for 15 years.

Who We Are

Our school is a place where children are told they are valued, loved, important, respected, free and forgiven. In every aspect of our school from snack time, to learning circles, to playground adventures, to waiting in line, we want to reflect and share God's love with the children and their families.

We believe all children have the innate curiosity to ask questions, search for answers, test boundaries, and learn from their choices. We continually scaffold children's interests into age appropriate math, science, and literacy activities.

What We Believe

Our teaching philosophy is grounded in the belief that all children are natural learners. Every experience is an opportunity to grow, discover, and make new connections. As educators we purposefully set up activities, environments, and provocations that lead children to do what they do best. Play. A child's work is their play. It is serious. Through play they are learning social skills, team work, problem solving skills, and communication strategies. They are free to explore cause and effect, make comparisons, observe patterns, test theories, make judgments, move in big ways, and

take space to rest and reflect. When children have space to learn at their own pace, their knowledge is more meaningful. Because they weren't just told a fact, but they were given the opportunity to discover and find what is valuable in their own eyes.

Our curriculum is child-initiated and teacher framed. We draw inspiration from the children's expressed and observed interests. Our program offers a balance of child-initiated and teacher-guided activities.

Program

Objectives

- To share God's love with every individual involved in our program.
- To foster a close knit community of learners.
- To create partnerships with families through weekly communications and opportunities for families to participate.
- To promote a love of learning through exploration & discovery
- To provide children with a variety of challenges and opportunities for daily success.
- To help children develop social skills and empower them to use problem-solving skills to resolve conflict.
- To facilitate pre-literacy skills through daily exposure to books, reading and an environment rich in print.
- To promote math and science skills through activities such as counting, sorting, measuring, sequencing, mixing, experimenting, exploring, investigating and sensing.

Curriculum

By telling a child how to do something, we remove the opportunity for them to discover it on their own. We are surrounded by a world of shapes, colors, letters, sounds, and numbers. We provide a rich environment full of math and literacy components and allow children to learn at their own

pace. We read books, play games, sing songs, and give children access to many experiences that foster their unique intelligence.

Our Big Idea Curriculum is designed to be open ended, foster creativity, and allow teachers and children to be co-learners. Big Ideas are overarching themes that allow children to explore concepts at their own interest and pace. We believe children learn best when their subject matter is relevant to what they care about. Each class develops a similar curriculum focusing on math, science, art, writing, and literacy skills. Our purpose is to cultivate creative thinking skills, develop ownership, independence, and give children power over what they are learning.

Teachers guide learning circles by listening to children's ideas, asking open ended questions, and searching for unifying themes. Teachers observe children during play to help develop activities.

Learning God's Word

Sharing God's Word and stories of love is the most important thing we do at NCP. Each week your child will learn valuable lessons such as trusting God, depending on God to provide, obeying, sharing, memorizing the Word, worship, and how to be a light to the world. These lessons will be through weekly Bible stories, but also throughout the day. We want to reflect God's Word in everything we do so children learn that what we believe is who we are.

Bathroom Skills

All children must be potty trained before attending NCP. However, we understand that accidents happen and there are differing levels of bathroom skills. We encourage parents to help their children learn to wipe themselves and practice buttoning, zipping and pulling up and down their pants before school starts. Teachers can assist children in the bathroom but the more confident and capable your child is, the smoother transition times will flow. If your child begins to regress in their bathroom skills during the school year, please talk with your child's teachers and director about ways we can help.

Clothing

Please make sure that your child is dressed in comfortable clothes that are appropriate for a play environment including hands-on, messy/dirty activities. While aprons/smocks can be provided for many messy activities, they don't always protect clothing completely. All footwear should allow children to walk, run, and climb with ease. We suggest closed toe athletic shoes, please don't send your child in flip flops or in sandals without a back strap. These types of shoes make it difficult for children to play safely. Also during rain season if children wear heavy rain/snow boots it makes it difficult for them to sit at circle time.

Outdoor Play

We believe regular outdoor play is a very important part of a child's growth and development. In addition to providing opportunities for physical activity, it also gives children rich opportunities to explore, discover, learn and play. It is our hope that we are able to venture outside every day, even if it is just for a short amount of time. We are blessed with a large gym that most days we will have access to if the weather is too extreme.

Your child should come to school prepared to spend 30-45 minutes outside, so in the winter please bring hats, warm coats, gloves, boots or warm shoes. In the warmer months we suggest dressing in layers, as it can be cooler in the morning but warmer by the end of the school day. Parents will be notified for special occasions when it would be appropriate to wear swimsuits for water days, or rain boots and umbrellas for puddle jumping!

Art Files

Outside each classroom there is a crate with hanging folders. Each child has a folder with their name on it, and it will be a place to send home their school work. Teachers also use these files to send home notes to parents, or information about upcoming events. Parents can use these folders to communicate with other families about special events, such as birthday

party invitations. Parents should check their child's art file regularly and take home their child's work.

Celebrations

We love to celebrate special occasions and holidays in our classrooms and as a whole school. We want to make these celebrations special and meaningful to all families. During our school year we will celebrate fall, thanksgiving, Christmas, friendship (Valentine's Day), Easter, graduation, and birthdays. Families are welcome to attend all class parties throughout the year. Our parties usually take place at the end of the school day (around 11:30). If there is another holiday or special event you would like to celebrate at school please talk with your child's teacher or the director. We welcome families to share their ideas, traditions, and unique ways they celebrate with us, but if you need help thinking of a way to celebrate just ask.

Parents are welcome to:

- Bring in a special snack
- Read their child's favorite book to the class
- Lead a special craft
- Play a game
- Bring in their child's baby book
- Sing songs
- Have a dance party

Or any other way they like to celebrate their child's birthday.

Operational Information

School Calendar

Our school calendar closely follows the Springfield school district calendar.

If the Springfield school district cancels or delays due to weather preschool will be canceled for the day.

We do not add on or make up canceled days. Some dates are not yet confirmed, new activities may be added throughout the year. You will be informed of any changes to the calendar at least 2 weeks in advance.

AUGUST

August 27th 5:30pm-6:15pm 3 year old
open House
August 27th 6:15pm-7pm 4 year old
Open House

SEPTEMBER

September 4th & 5th First days of School

OCTOBER

October 1st Lunch Bunch Starts
October 3rd & 4th Picture days
October T.B.D Pumpkin Patch Field
Trips
October 30th & 31st Pumpkin Parties

NOVEMBER

November 1st No School-Teacher
Prep./Parent Conferences
November 11th- Veteran's Day, NO
SCHOOL
November 26th & 27th Blessings Bash
November 28th & 29th closed for
Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

December T.B.D Christmas tree farm
field trip
December 13th Last Lunch Bunch
December 19th & 20th Christmas Parties
December 20th- Christmas Program(?)
December 23rd-January 6th Closed for
Christmas Vacation

JANUARY

January 7th- First Day Back
January 20th Closed for MLK Jr. Day
January 23rd & 24th PJ Party (wear PJs to
school)

FEBRUARY

February 13th & 14th Friendship Parties
February 17th Closed for Presidents Day

MARCH

March 6th- No SCHOOL

March 23rd -27th Closed for Spring Break

APRIL

April 9th & 10th Easter Parties

April 24th Last day for Lunch bunch

MAY

May 7th & 8th Mother's Day Celebrations

May 19th 4yr old Graduation Celebration

May 21st&22nd Last Days of School

Arrivals & Departures

Classroom doors open at 8am and drop-off should happen as close to that time as possible so children are set up for a successful start to their day. When you drop off your child you will sign them in on a clipboard handed to you by our child's teacher. Please initial next your child's name on the correct day. You will do the same thing for pick up at 12pm. If you are going to be late picking up your child please call the church office **(541-746-2790)** and expect a \$10 late fee.

Your child will have a hook with their name on it outside the classroom where they can leave their backpack, which should always have a change of clothes in it. When your child enters the classroom they will wash their hands; then they will be invited to participate in one of the activities happening in the classroom.

Saying goodbye can be a tricky thing for young children, we encourage you to work out a plan with your child's teacher of how to create a "goodbye routine." This routine will help your child feel safe and trust his/her teachers.

Attendance

If your child is out sick or will be absent, please email the director to notify them of the absence. We worry if we don't see those cute little faces.

Access to the Building/Parking

Families should park in the main front parking lot of Northwood Christian Church and walk their children into the building. Interior doors open at 8:00AM and remain open until 8:30AM. If a parent/guardian arrives late or is at school to pick up their child early, they must use the parent key code (received at enrollment) to access the interior doors. The

exterior doors are open during the church office hours and the parent code does not work on those doors.

Please do not leave children and infants unattended in your vehicles. If drop off or pick up is challenging for you because you have lots of littles please let a staff member know and we will work out reasonable accommodations.

Daily rhythm

8:00-8:30 Drop offs, free choice, parent communication

8:30-9:00- Morning circle

9:00-10:00-Small group activities

10:00-10:30 Prayer & Snack, Bathroom Break

10:30-11:15 Outside time/Gym/Walk

11:15-11:45 Large Group Activity, Bible Story, Music, or Show & Tell

11:45-12:00 Closing Circle

*Depending on which class your child is in, small groups and playground time may be flip-flopped.

School Lunch

From October to April we offer a lunch program from 12-1pm. This program is optional, space will be limited (16 students), and there is an additional cost of \$3 per lunch day. If you would like your child to participate you will need to sign them up online using a google doc sent out. You will also need to pack a lunch that can be stored in their backpack outside the classroom.

Children love the lunch program because they get to stay and eat with their friends as well as get extra play time. Parents love the lunch program because they can get an extra hour to get things done, and prepare their child for a longer school day.

If there are less than 5 children signed up for lunch by 9AM, we will cancel for that day because it costs the school money. Teachers will let you know as soon as possible if there won't be lunch that day. Lunch bills will be sent home at the end of every month and are to be paid along with tuition the following month.

Items from home

Please check with your child's teacher regarding what items you should bring from home. We ask that every child have a change of clothes in their backpack at all times. We ask that you not bring toys from home, unless it is a show & tell day. It is often difficult for children to share these items and it is easy for them to be lost or damaged. It is always a good idea to check with your child's teacher first before bringing objects to the school and always label your child's belongings.

In each classroom there is a place for your child to bring and store a water bottle from home. They can take their water bottle home at the end of the day.

Tuition and Billing

By enrolling your child in Northwood Christian Preschool, you agree to pay tuition and registration set forth in the current fee schedule noted below. Full tuition is required at the beginning of each month unless other arrangements are set up with the director or bookkeepers. **Please note that despite observed holidays, teacher in-service days, seasonal recesses, or other school closures, our tuition fee have been calculated according to a yearly tuition and will remain the same each month.**

If tuition is paid after the 10th a \$10 late fee will be applied to your statement, unless arrangements are made with the director. A \$20 charge will be assigned for all returned checks. *If full tuition is not paid by the end of the month, your child could be dropped from the preschool program until your account is current.*

Tuition payments may be mailed in or dropped off in your child's classroom. Tuition can also be paid through Push Pay, an app you can download to your smartphone, or you may text "Pushpay" to 77977.

NCP does not send invoices or reminders for tuition payments. Receipts can be given for cash payments, however, check payments are considered a receipt.

If it is necessary to withdraw your child from preschool, you must give the director 30 days notice and pay tuition through those 30 days.

- Registration fee (one-time fee) \$100 due with registration form
 - Tuition for the 3 day class is \$180 every month.
 - Tuition for the 2 day class is \$135 every month.

We give a 5% discount to families with more than one child enrolled and if families pay the year in full they will receive a 5% discount.

3s Full Year Tuition is \$1154

4s Full Year Tuition is \$1539

Our bookkeeper is Valerie Bowling (valbowling@gmail.com)

Family Involvement

Volunteering

We believe family is the first educator and want to honor your role as a parent, grandparent, or close relative by inviting you into the classroom. Parents are welcome to observe in a classroom anytime so long as they are not a distraction to the children, especially their own. If you would like to take on a more active role in the classroom, talk with your child's teacher or director of ways you can help.

Field trips

We love to take the children out for special field trips and always invite parents, grandparents or other family members to join in the fun. Most of the time it is okay for siblings to attend as well, but talk with your child's teacher or the director first. We are blessed to have access to a bus which takes us to and from our field trips, however space is usually limited so we need some parents to sign-up to drive. If you feel more comfortable driving your child in your own car, you can do that too. All parents must sign a field trip permission slip before their child can go on field trips.

If you have suggestions about other places we could attend on a field trip please let your child's teacher or the director know. We want to

provide a rich diverse learning environment for children and we would love to hear your ideas about places we can visit to make that possible.

Parent Communication

Weekly updates of the classroom activities are emailed out to all parents/guardians. It is helpful for parents to review these updates since they often contain important information about what occurred during the week as well as major upcoming events. This is also a great way to talk with your child about his/her day.

This year we are trying a new communication system called Classtag. You will be getting notifications through it as well as an invitation to join it. Pictures of your student can be found weekly on the site as well as upcoming events. It's also a great way to communicate to teachers, check it out ;). You can also "like" us on FaceBook or follow us on Twitter @NorthwoodChris to stay in the loop on all events and communications.

Parent and Teacher Conferences(4s only)

Individual parent-teacher conferences are offered at least twice during each school year. Parent conferences for the school year will be held in Fall and Spring. During the conference, you will review and receive a copy of the developmental summary on your child.

Ongoing, informal communication of parent or teacher concerns and the sharing of special joys, sorrows, and accomplishments in the child's life are important. Please feel free to speak with your child's teacher during arrival/departure, or schedule a time to talk privately.

Parent Resources

Parenting is challenging, and no one should do it alone. If you need resources such as: educational materials, counseling, special needs services or assessments, please contact our director and we will help you in any way we can.

Birthdays

If you would like your child's birthday to be celebrated, you are welcome to bring a snack to share. Please check with your child's teacher prior to

bringing a snack since some students have allergies. Make arrangements with your child's teacher at least two days prior to the birthday.

Safety and Health

Discipline Policy

Proverbs 10:17 tells us "He who heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray."

A very important part of the preschool experience is helping children learn how to get along in the world, enjoy being with other children, and follow the direction of an adult other than their parent. A caring positive approach will be taken regarding behavior management and discipline. Our goal is to help all children develop self-control and responsibility for their actions.

Children need to be encouraged to make good choices and to be prevented from harming themselves and others. This is best accomplished through close supervision, gentle guidance, and most importantly, redirection.

Children need to learn to identify and express their feelings. However, often this requires the teacher/parent or guardian to acknowledge the child's response to the situation, and help him/her to use appropriate strategies. For example, if we see a child about to hit another child for taking a toy away, we will prevent that child from hitting the other and say, "it looks like you want to keep the truck," and provide an alternative to hitting. We will also help the child understand the other child's point of view. "I see that Tommy is playing with the truck you had. It looks like he wants it too. Can you tell him that you are playing with it?" Through this method, children can begin to learn about the intentions of others and in this way, we hope to prevent one child from hurting another and at the

same time help that child to learn to identify feelings and verbalize expectations.

As every parent knows, caring for young children requires a lot of patience. Children require ongoing guidance and support as they learn about themselves and others. Dealing with challenging behaviors is a process of teaching rather than punishment and control. Children are reminded what TO DO, rather than what NOT TO DO. For example, instead of “DON’T run”, children are told, “Please walk to the door”. Through this strategy: (1) children know what you expect, (2) a more positive classroom climate is promoted, and (3) children and adults form supportive relationships.

An additional strategy used with older preschoolers is to help them learn how to solve their own problems and resolve conflicts. Teachers provide support and guidance as children develop and practice these skills. The staff at NCP recognizes that similarities in principles at home and at school make children more successful in their experiences.

Use of Corporal Punishment and Harsh Language

The use of corporal punishment is forbidden in the school. The discipline philosophy of our school is to help children develop a positive self-image. We encourage children to be self-directed, exhibit self-control, and become problem-solvers. A philosophy based on providing a positive, supportive environment that focuses on prevention and the teaching of appropriate behaviors guides the staff in their interactions with children. Children are redirected and given choices to encourage appropriate behaviors. The use of threats and derogatory language by staff is not accepted in handling children that misbehave.

Discipline Strategies Used by NCP Staff:

- Maintaining realistic expectations of children based on knowledge of child development.
- Providing clear and simple limits.
- Creating an environment that facilitates a caring atmosphere.
- Providing appropriate activities that keep children engaged to prevent challenging behaviors.

- Modeling appropriate and respectful behaviors.
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviors toward desired outcomes.
- Giving children choices between two appropriate alternatives.
- Providing logical and natural consequences for children's actions.
- Guiding children away from the situation until they are able to calm down and address the problem. (Classrooms have a quiet spot for such times, and if necessary the child may be removed from the classroom to have a break in the director's office if their behavior is disrupting other student's learning).

When there is an ongoing behavior concern:

1. Teachers will contact the child's parents. Communication may be in the form of informal or formal parent-teacher conferences or written behavioral reports. After more than two written communications home, a conference will be scheduled.
 - If a conference is scheduled, the parent and teachers will discuss strategies to promote appropriate behavior, and develop a specific plan for change. Teachers and parents will also set a time period in which they will work for the change in behavior using agreed upon strategies. After this period of time (1 week up to 1 month) the teachers and parents will meet and determine if the strategies were successful.
2. If the behavior concern continues -or escalates- after implementation of the plan, a child may be asked to leave the program for a short period of time (1-5 days).
 - It is at the discretion of the teacher, director, and our school ministry team to determine if the child needs to take a break from the program.
3. If the problem is not resolved, the child may be removed from the program. This will be determined by our school ministry team on a case by case basis.

It is our intent to work together with families to promote a positive experience for their child. However, we do realize that there may be circumstances that keep a child from being capable of fully participating in

a group program, and recognize that the program may not be equipped to deal with all circumstances underlying certain behavioral issues, therefore the child may be removed. If this is the case, we will work with the family and help them find alternative resources to support their child's development.

Disruptive behaviors distract from the full benefit of the preschool program and will result in consequences.

The following behaviors are considered disruptive:

- Requires constant attention from staff (more than one or two reminders for a specific behavior or poor choice).
- Inflicts physical harm to other children, adults, or self
 - o hitting, pushing, biting, pulling, spitting etc.
- Disrespects people and materials provided in the program.
 - o destruction of materials, using materials in a way not intended, hiding or taking materials from the classroom, throwing.
- Consistently disobeys the rules of the classroom (despite reminders, child makes the same poor choice repeatedly).
- Verbally threatens other students and or staff.
 - o threatens physical harm, is emotionally mean, teases, or uses inappropriate language.
- Uses verbal or physical actions that divert attention away from the other children in a manner that makes the room feel unsafe, chaotic, or takes the teacher's attention away from teaching.
 - o running around the classroom, screaming and yelling during quiet times, jumping off tables/stools, pulling objects down off of walls.

Health & Wellness

Safety is a serious concern and all reasonable safety precautions will be taken at all times by the NCP and its agents during preschool events and activities. Please understand the possibility of risk. In the event that

medical intervention is needed, every attempt will be made to contact immediately the persons listed on the emergency contact form.

Family health insurance coverage will be the primary coverage in the event medical intervention is needed during preschool hours. Coverage by Northwood Christian Church, through its accident policy, will be used as secondary coverage for what family insurance does not cover.

NCP will not administer any medication to children. If children need medication during preschool hours, parents are responsible for administering it, unless it is life threatening, such as an epi pin, or inhaler. Please understand that children will be excluded from NCP if he/she presents with a fever over 100.5, vomits, has 2 or more loose stools, has discharge from their eyes, head lice/nits, a rash, or is unable to participate in school. If children experience any of these symptoms at home, they need to be free of them without medication before returning to school.

