

# Northwest Christian School

## Early Childhood Education Center Handbook

*“Educating for Today: Training for Eternity”*

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### **Mission Statement**

Northwest Christian School – educating for today, training for eternity

- ✓ by seeing and treating each child as God’s gift
- ✓ by showing each child the keys to a personal friendship with Jesus Christ.
- ✓ by preparing individuals mentally, physically, and spiritually for a place in His service today and tomorrow.
- ✓ by challenging individuals and groups to academic excellence and a lifelong habit of learning.

### **Philosophy of Education in Action**

Christian education is based on the belief that each student is unique and valuable and needs development as a whole person. Students are educated to accept service as a way of life, to be sensitive to the needs of people at home and within society, and to become active members in the Body of Christ. Faculty members are committed to keeping Jesus first in their lives and modeling the Christian life-style.

NCS provides a safe and enriched environment in which students can thrive and discover the joy of being life-long learners, active thinkers, develop positive attitudes, and learn to work together as a community. Students are given the opportunity to explore, discover, and apply concepts in the real world. We embrace the philosophy that all students can learn, and together with teachers can strive for academic excellence.

### **Character Development**

As sons and daughters of God, students and staff at NCS will work to develop admirable character traits and practice life skills. These skills are the core of developing a Christian character and working together as a community.

## **Nondiscrimination Policy**

At NCS we embrace a nondiscrimination approach to our children. Regardless of race, color, sex, religious persuasion, political belief, disability or national origin we recognize that each child is unique and special- a gift to be cherished. We ask that all who enter our facility, whether as employees, parents, or children, please treat all with the respect we deserve.

NCS welcomes any young person who desires a character building education. As a Seventh-day Adventist Christian school, high moral principles and respect for God and others are expected from all who attend. Students should realize that when they present themselves for admission to NCS, they thereby willingly pledge to observe the regulations and uphold the Christian principles upon which the school is founded. Behavior contrary to this may forfeit the student's privilege to attend.

## **Introduction**

We thank you for your interest in Northwest Christian School Preschool. It is our desire to provide top quality services to you and your child. These are characterized by:

- ✓ Teachers' role model Christian behavior in a positive and supportive environment.
- ✓ Professional Staff
- ✓ Christian character and conduct
- ✓ Instructional programs designed to enhance your child's growth and development.

As a result, your child receives the very best in care and instruction. At NCS we consider ourselves to be a team with the parents of our children. We are here to HELP you with the growth, education, security, and safety of your child.

## **Licensing**

Northwest Christian School Preschool is licensed by the Washington State Department of Early Learning and operates within the requirements set by that department. Our Preschool is licensed for children ages 2.5-5 years of age who are fully toilet trained before beginning school.

## **Background Checks**

To increase safety for our students, all employees working with or around children must pass through a reference check and Washington State and National criminal background check. As a further measure, any volunteer who regularly interacts with our students is also required to have a background check and a TB test. All staff, including substitutes, must meet state requirements and go through an orientation process before starting work.

## **School Hours**

8:15am-3:15pm School Day Monday-Friday

7:00am-8:15am 3:30-6:00pm Extended Care Monday-Thursday (3:30pm-4:00pm Friday)

8:15am-12:15pm ½ day Preschool and PreK Half-Days Monday-Friday

## Enrollment

We invite parents and guardians to visit and inspect our preschool before enrolling their child. We cannot guarantee a place for your child until registration is completed and the fee is paid.

Ages: NCS Preschool is designed for children ages 3-5 years of age.

Enrollment Forms: Each form needs to be filled out and signed upon enrollment:

- |                                |                         |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ✓ Registration                 | ✓ Emergency Treatment   |
| ✓ Immunization                 | ✓ Child Information     |
| ✓ Consent to treat and Allergy | ✓ Emergency Consent and |
| ✓ Policy Agreement             | Escort Authorization    |

There will be a one-month probation period for all children. This is to help the child adjust and become comfortable at NCS. At the end of this time, the director may decide, at his/her discretion, whether or not to allow continued enrollment.

Registration Fee: There is a \$175 non-refundable registration fee per child, per school year and is required for enrollment to be complete. Children withdrawn and re-enrolled will be required to re-register.

Tuition: A tuition schedule is published as a separate document for each school year. Tuition does not fluctuate with holiday seasons, student absenteeism, or emergency school closures.

Payment: All tuition is paid in advance on a monthly basis. Payments are due by the due date you choose upon enrollment of each month. A \$20 fee will be added to tuition paid after the 10 days past the due date, unless prior arrangements are made with the director. Failure to make monthly payments will be grounds for termination of enrollment.

Returned Checks: There is a \$25 charge for all NSF checks. Two returned checks in one year will result in the requirement that payment be made by either cash or money order. After one year with no payment difficulties you may ask for a review and may be able to pay by check again.

Accounting Fee: An accounting fee of \$25 will be charged anytime a parent makes a change of enrollment status.

## Late Pick Up

When after school care is available, students must be picked up before 6:00 pm Monday-Thursday and before 4:00pm on Fridays. At the time of closing, every effort will be made to contact the parents. Next, we will call authorized emergency contacts. If we cannot reach any of these contacts by 7:00 pm Monday-Thursday and 5:00pm on Fridays we will contact CPS or Puyallup Police Department to report an abandoned child.

If you are going to be late, call 253-209-7299 to inform staff of your situation and make other arrangements for your child to be picked up.

**\*\*\*For Children picked up after 6:00 p.m. or 4:00 p.m. on Fridays, a fee of \$1 per minute will be charged.**

## **Holidays**

NCS is closed on the following days but not limited to:

- ✓ Presidents Day -3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in February
- ✓ Spring Break- 1 week in March
- ✓ Memorial Day
- ✓ Independence Day- July 4
- ✓ Labor Day- 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of September
- ✓ Thanksgiving-the day(s) before and the day after
- ✓ Christmas vacation-two weeks including Christmas and New Year's Day

## **Attendance**

Please inform the Preschool by 8:30am if your child will not be in attendance that day.

## **Sign In/Out Requirements**

Parents are responsible for escorting the child into and out of the building. For NCS to accept responsibility for your child, you must sign him/her in and out each day. When signing in and out you must use your full signature as it appears on your driver's license and record the current time. Children may not sign themselves in or out! We will only release children to adults authorized on the Emergency Consent and Escort Authorization Form. You may occasionally give verbal or written consent for adults not on the form. We will ask for picture ID before releasing your child to anyone we do not recognize.

## **Northwest Christian School Preschool Rules**

- ✓ Use gentle and kind words
- ✓ Use walking feet
- ✓ Love one another
- ✓ Use gentle touches
- ✓ Use quiet voices inside
- ✓ Only put teeth into food
- ✓ Always tell the truth
- ✓ Take turns
- ✓ Put things away before going to the next activity or leaving the room
- ✓ Everyone helps with cleanup

## **Nap/Rest Period**

There is up to a 1-hour rest period in Pre K and 2-hour rest period in Preschool each day. Your child may bring one quiet toy from home to rest with as well as their own blanket if desired. We provide cots with a sheet and blanket for each child as well. If your child does not sleep during the rest period, we will give them quiet activities to work on after all children have had the opportunity to fall asleep.

## **Dress Code**

Clothing will be modest at all times. Shirts need to have sleeves that cover the shoulders and have no offensive words, graphics, or advertisements. Shorts, skirts, and dresses need to be fingertip length (the same length as the child's fingertips with arm hanging down at the child's side). Shorts must be worn under skirts and dresses. Please mark ALL of your child's clothing; NCS is not responsible for lost clothing or other items.

For safety reasons, we ask that children do not wear necklaces and reserve the right to ask students to remove jewelry if it becomes a distraction.

Each child is required to have a complete change of clothes and a coat or sweater for outside play at the school when in attendance.

## **Transitions**

In an effort to ease each child and their family during transition to a new classroom we will take the following steps:

- 1) Introduce family and child to new teacher(s)
- 2) Provide families with information on the new schedule, teachers, and expectations.
- 3) Provide 1 or more days to visit the new class and teacher prior to moving to the new class.

## **Progress**

There will be an invitation to meet with your child's teacher and the director of the program to review your child's progress, development, and plan of action based on the needs of your child. A note and email will be sent to each family to sign up for a date and time they would like to schedule the Parent/Teacher Conference.

## **General behavior policy**

Some behaviors, such as tantrums, refusal to participate, and those that require individualized attention can be typical behaviors at various developmental stages. At Northwest Christian School, we know that children will have these behaviors at some point in their development and it usually corresponds with times of stress. Typical stressful events can be:

Life changes ~Times of parental absence~Disruption of normal routine~Over stimulation~  
Illness~Home environment stress~Lack of Sleep

At Northwest Christian School Preschool we create an environment that is developmentally appropriate, predictable, and stable. We make every effort to provide extra support to children facing these times of stress. In a normal development process these behaviors will cease when the stressor is no longer there or they have learned effective coping strategies.

In the event that a child is exhibiting these behaviors over a prolonged period of time in a day and/or the intensity becomes excessive, the following behavior plan will be implemented.

If at any time:

- A child repeatedly refuses to participate in necessary programs activities (hand washing, resting/napping, toileting, meals, or staying within sight and sound of the group) and they require one to one teacher assistance.
- A child becomes dependent on direct teacher assistance in order to cope with their typical emotional needs or to prevent unacceptable behaviors.
- A child displays age inappropriate tantrums that last longer than twenty-minutes and/or occurs more than three times in one day.
- A child needs to be separated from the group more than two times in one day.
- Consistent hurtful behavior.

The parents/caregivers will be contacted to remove (**within one hour**) the child from the Preschool for the remainder of the day. This is not a discipline measure and will not be conveyed that way to the child. The child obviously is having difficulty that day in our program and to remain in the program would be a negative experience for them. This would be communicated to the child by stressing we are trying to help them be successful in school, have a positive and safe experience, and that it is important to us that they enjoy being here. We can tell that being at school today isn't working and so a parent/caregiver is going to come and get them to give them the space they need.

The child also needs to leave to ensure that our quality of care for the other children is not compromised by continual one to one care that we are not staffed for. Within 48 business hours of being sent home, a meeting must be held with the parent/caregivers and teacher to discuss the circumstances surrounding the behavior. A child may not return until this meeting has been set up.

### **CHALLENGING / HURTFUL BEHAVIOR POLICY**

Physically harming behaviors such as biting, hitting, kicking, pinching, scratching, and hair pulling are normal behaviors for young children, especially toddlers. There are many reasons why young children hurt, including:

Frustration ~ Teething ~ Anger ~ Needing attention ~ Anxiety/stress ~ Impulsivity ~ Tiredness/fatigue ~ Exploration ~ Defending property or space ~ Lack of motor control ~ Overcrowding ~ Lack of social skills ~ Over stimulation ~ Lack of verbal skills ~ Boredom ~ Peer interaction ~ Not feeling well ~ Cause and Effect ~ Lowered coping ability ~ Hunger

At Northwest Christian School Preschool we have a specific way of handling hurtful incidents. We acknowledge the feelings of the child who is hurting, while emphasizing that hurting is not an acceptable behavior, for example: "It looks like you are very angry with Jared, but it is never okay to hit another person. That hurt Jared's body. That made him very sad!" We then try to help the child find a more appropriate way of expressing her/his anger: "If you are mad you can use your words to tell Jared, 'I'm mad!' Or you could stomp your foot if you are mad." The child who was hurting is then redirected to an area away from the area where the hurting occurred. The child who was hurt is given the appropriate first aid when necessary and given more attention than the child who did the hurting. This process varies slightly between individual children and individual circumstances.

Because of confidentiality issues, no information about the child who did the hurting is given to anyone other than the parents of that child and the staff working with the child. If at any time a child is requiring continual teacher intervention to prevent hurting the parent/caregiver will be

contacted to remove the child from the center for the remainder of the day. This is not a discipline measure and will be not be conveyed that way to the child. Through hurtful behaviors, the child is communicating that this environment is not working for him/her today. Continual and/or serious hurtful behaviors are not compatible with group care for a number of reasons. First, the safety and well-being of the other children needs to be protected. Second, this behavior requires a significant amount of one-on-one attention from the classroom's primary teachers, and therefore effectively puts the classroom out of ratio. This puts a stress on the whole classroom, as teachers are not able to provide the other children with the attention that is essential for quality care.

Our goal is to help children develop safe and appropriate ways of interacting with others and the environment; while children develop tools to solve problems. In order to help prevent hurtful behaviors from accruing the classrooms do many things. Some examples are: positive redirection; modeling behavior; limit setting; and structuring activities that promote positive interactions, problem solving, and peer cooperation, as well as health and safety. If hurtful behaviors are identified by teachers as a recurring or ongoing pattern of behavior the classroom Teachers begin our Individual Child Assessment Procedures, which includes a great deal of communication between staff members and parents, while completing the needed observations and interventions. In the event we need to notify you of a non-emergency incident that occurs during our program hours of 7:00am-6:00pm we will first leave a report in a sealed envelope attached to the sign in and out sheet. If after reading the report you would like more details or you would like to further discuss the incident please contact the classroom teacher, program supervisor, the principal, or the director to set up a time to meet, specifying the incident and with whom you would like to meet with.

## **Discipline**

All discipline is designed to be corrective and to give the child training in Christian values and self-control. Our goal is to teach your child(ren) to use self-control in their dealings with other children and adults. We will do this by redirecting the child to a more acceptable behavior. Helping them to realize that they may express their frustrations by using their verbal ability. If someone or something upsets them, they may say so and we will discuss the problem and show them some things they can do that are acceptable in order to solve their problem.

Limited time-outs from regular activities will be given for continued unacceptable behavior. Time out is given in the vicinity of the other children and activities. Corrections will be done in love and will end in prayer and forgiveness.

Any habitual problems will be discussed with the parents. Parents will first be given verbal description of the problem. If the behavior is not corrected, there will be a conference with the teacher and director. If this does not correct the behavior your child may be asked to withdraw.

Any child whose behavior is a danger to the other children or staff will be asked to withdraw from the program.

Corporal punishment will NOT be used, which, in addition to spanking, includes any kind of hitting, slapping, or any action which inflicts physical, emotional, spiritual or psychological pain or bodily harm. There are no humiliating, frightening, shaming, or harmful language or tones used with the children.

In emergency situations, a staff member (who is competent in the use of physical restraint methods) will use limited physical restraint to protect a person or property from physical injury, to obtain possession of a weapon or dangerous object, or to prevent a child from injuring him/herself or others.

### **Child Abuse**

By Washington State Law, Child Care professionals are required to report any and all suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect. This is to ensure compliance with Washington State Law (WAC 170-295-6040). We document any bruises or injuries that happen in the center and any that the child has when coming into the center. We may ask the parent to sign the form that explains how the child received the bruise or injury. This is for the protection of all concerned.

### **Confidentiality**

Be assured that your personal information is kept confidential at NCS. Only information that is pertinent to the care and education of your child will be shared with staff or teachers. Confidential and personal information, including but not limited to, addresses, phone numbers, or employment will not be shared with other parents without your permission.

### **Incident Reports**

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident while in our care, a staff member will fill out an Incident/Accident Report. The classroom teacher will be able to review the report with you and have it available for your signature where it will then be placed in your child's file. Should you feel it necessary to have a more in-depth discussion regarding the incident/accident, it would be better to schedule a meeting for a later date as the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the class and would not be able to devote the appropriate time for you. If convenient, a telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the following day during rest time if you are unavailable to meet at the center during the day.

### **Free Access**

Parents have permission to be in any part of the center that YOUR child is allowed in during the time the child is in care at NCS. Please feel free to visit or walk in whenever your child(ren) are in our care.

This policy allows all parent/legal guardians access. If one parent decides to deny or restrict access to another parent, we cannot enforce the request without proper court documentation (i.e. divorce decree stating specific days, restraining order, etc.)

### **Field Trips and Transportation**



Transportation of students to and from school is the responsibility of the individual parents. If a field trip is planned, a note will be sent home at least a week ahead of time to allow parents to arrange transportation to and from field trip. We cannot transport your child(ren) at this time.

### **Sick Children**

If your child is sick/ill, please keep him/her home. If your child is well enough to come to school, he/she is well enough to participate in all activities inside and outside. Staff members will observe the health of each child arriving at school and throughout the day as needed.

Children must be kept home if they show signs of any of the following symptoms and must remain at home until they have shown no symptoms for 24 hours without medication:

- ✓ Temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- ✓ Vomiting- 2 or more occasions within the past 24 hours
- ✓ Diarrhea (watery stool)- 3 or more in the past 24 hours
- ✓ Draining Rash
- ✓ Too tired (listless) or ill to participate in daily activities
- ✓ Head lice or nits
- ✓ Sore or discharge from eyes (pink eye) or ears
- ✓ Profuse nasal discharge

If your child becomes ill while in our care we will:

- ✓ Isolate them until you pick them up
- ✓ Call you to come pick them up (we expect you to do so within 30 minutes of the call)
- ✓ If we cannot reach you we will call an alternate on your list

We will report all communicable diseases to the local Health Department and notify all parents so they can take appropriate precautions to protect their children.

### **Medication**

Over the counter medication will be given IF the parents have signed a Medication/Treatment Authorization Slip and as long as the parent instructions do not deviate from the manufacturer's label. Medication from a physician will also need the aforementioned slip and medication will come in original container and have the following information on the label:

- ✓ Child's full name
- ✓ Date prescription was filled
- ✓ Date of expiration
- ✓ Legible instructions for administering

All medications will be placed in a zip lock plastic bag with the child's name on it.

### **Medical Emergencies**

If a child is hurt, a teacher will stay with that child and administer First Aid while another teacher goes to call for aid if needed. The teacher will also call the parents. If the injury is life threatening

- ✓ We will use First Aid and CPR to stabilize the child
- ✓ 911 will be called immediately, then the parents
- ✓ The child will be taken to the nearest hospital
- ✓ A staff member will stay with the child until the parent or an authorized person arrives
- ✓ A staff member will stay with and calm the remaining children.

Any injury requiring treatment will be reported to Office of Child Care Licensing.

### **Meals/Menus**

NCS provides 2 snacks, one am and one pm. Parents are required to provide breakfast if child arrives before 7:30 am.

The meal must include:

- ✓ (1) dairy = ½ cup
- ✓ (1) fruit or vegetable
- ✓ (1) grain = 1/3 cup

Parents are also required to provide lunch. This meal must contain the following components to meet state requirements and guidelines. If your child's lunch is missing a component we will provide the element missing and apply a fee to your tuition. The components necessary for lunch are:

- ✓ (1) dairy=1/2 cup
- ✓ (2) fruit and/or vegetable = 1/3 cup
- ✓ (1) protein = 1 oz
- ✓ (1) grain = 1/3 cup

The snack menu will be posted at the beginning of each month.

For special occasions and birthday celebrations, you may bring in a store bought and packaged treat or food in original manufacturers container or uncut fruits and vegetables.

### **Food Allergies/Preferences**

We are required to have a doctor's written list of what your child is allergic to and what can be substituted for it. If we do not have an acceptable substitute, we will ask you to provide an acceptable substitute to be kept on hand. If your family has a food preference, we need this documented in the child's file and have an acceptable substitute on hand to use as needed.

### **Emergency Procedures**

In each of the parent packets and posted in each classroom are the procedures that would be followed in case of natural disaster. Also posted are the emergency evacuation routes that would be followed in case of a fire. We encourage you to look at these and become familiar with the procedures we would follow.

There is an out of area contact established in the event of a large scale incident to increase the likelihood that phone systems will be intact. You will be notified of the condition and location of your child as soon as possible.

Shaw Elementary School just south of NCS has been established as the meeting place in the event we have to evacuate the NCS building.

Fire drills and earthquake drills are performed at random times at least once per month. The dates and times are then kept on record in each classroom.

We ask that you provide an Earthquake Kit for each child enrolled at NCS by the first week of school or one will be provided to you for a fee. They can be purchased from the school for a small fee . We ask that you include a family photo in the kit as well. All items should be in a plastic zip lock bag with your child's name clearly marked. These items listed below are for you to make your own kit:

- 3 – 8 oz. Juices (canned are better since cans do not break)
- 3 – 4 oz. Cans of fruit with pop tops OR three snack size packs of dried fruit
- 3 – Peanut butter or cheese & cracker type snack packs OR 3 granola bars
- 3 – Plastic spoons or forks, wrapped in napkins
- 3 – Individually wrapped moist towelettes (sealed)
- 1 – Solar blanket
- A note and family picture
- A note with your child's name, address, phone, parent/guardian's name, phone numbers, doctor's phone number

### **Pesticides**

We do apply pesticides inside or outside our facilities. Written notice will be posted for review.

### **Pet Policy**

All our pets will be examined by a vet for health and vaccines (if needed). Documentation of all visits are filed in the office. Children who do have contact with pets will wash their hands immediately after handling any pets.

### **School Closure Information**

NCS follows the decision of the Puyallup School District for school closure or late start days. When starting late, there is no early morning care. Additional information may also be released to local news outlets. If the Puyallup School District runs two hours late, school will open at 10:30am with no before school care or half day preschool. If Puyallup School District runs one hour late, school will open at 9:30 am with no before school care.

If Puyallup School District announces a “mid-day weather closure” after school has begun for the day, NCS will follow the Puyallup School District. No extended care will be provided after school. You will need to make arrangements to pick up your child as soon as possible.

Check on-line at [www.nwchristianschool.org](http://www.nwchristianschool.org) for school delays or closures, also on King 5 news, KOMO AM1000, KIRO AM710. Additionally, a message will be sent via RenWeb Parent Alert, this message will be in the form of an email, text, and/or phone call according to your RenWeb preferences.

### **Exclusion Policy**

Conditions for exclusion from attendance include but are not limited to:

- Irreconcilable policy differences
- Failure to pay fees
- Child is a danger to other children
- Child cannot conform to acceptable behavior patterns

Exclusion from attendance may be immediate if deemed necessary by the preschool director and/or school principal, or there will be a conference with the director to work out differences and concerns. A two-week exclusion notice will be given if possible.

### **School Board and Meetings**

The School Board is the official governing body of NCS. The school board plans, selects staff, develops policies, promotes the school, implements conference policies, and supports staff (all under the direction and guidance from the Washington Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists). Constituent Adventist churches select board members. Meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:15pm unless otherwise advised and are open to visitors. If a visitor has an item for the agenda, contact the principal or chairperson 2 weeks in advance. Due to the sensitive nature of some agenda items, an executive session may be scheduled. At these times, meetings are closed to visitors.

### **Other**

NCS employs CCTVs in the Preschool room and hallways as well as the K-8 playground and the parking lot. These cameras are recording video only, no audio. We will not use the footage acquired for advertising nor will we distribute it.

NCS reserves the right to change the fees and policies at any time.

We do our best to provide your child with a safe physical environment and atmosphere where he/she can feel both secure and free to grow at his/her own pace. You can help us achieve these goals by giving us your comments, suggestions, and daily involvement.

Please feel free to consult the director or your child’s teacher should any problems arise concerning your child whether at home or at school; or concerns you have about NCS and its policies. We value your input.

### Northwest Christian School Traffic Flow Chart

Morning and afternoon rush at NCS can be eased if everyone respects the school traffic procedures. The following flow map shows how the flow of traffic needs to operate to make everyone’s drop-off and pick-up experiences easier. Also, please follow and respect all posted traffic signs.

