

WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

Northside Church of Christ Preschool

2023-2024

Parent Handbook

Parent Handbook 2023-2024

Dear Preschool Parents,

Welcome to Northside Church of Christ Preschool! We are honored that you would partner with us on this very important journey of showing God's Love to others while learning about the world around us through play.

This handbook is being provided to assure each parent is aware of the Northside Church of Christ Preschool Policies and Procedures. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU READ THIS HANDBOOK! There are some new changes we are implementing this year. It is very important that you read, understand, and familiarize yourself with the information so our school day will run smoothly.

Please notify the Preschool Staff if you have any questions or concerns throughout the school year. Both the Preschool Director and Children's Minister are available to answer questions. Any communication during the school day should be made through the Director, Kristin Hickman. The Preschool office number is 210-494-1907 ext 211. If you need immediate assistance, please call or text Kristin at (832)790-8049.

We are very excited and ready to start the school year!

Kristin Hickman, Preschool Director

2 Timothy 3:14-15

¹⁴ But you must keep on believing the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know that you can trust those who have taught you. ¹⁵ You know how, when you were a small child, you were taught the holy Scriptures; and it is these that make you wise to accept God's salvation by trusting in Christ Jesus.

2023-2024 NSPS STAFF

Preschool Director

Kristin Hickman

kristin.hickman@nscoc.org

832-790-8049

Children's Minister

Nicole Largent

nicole.largent@nscoc.org

903-245-7014

Two Year Old Teachers

Kirby Antwine

Jennifer Hassmann

Three Year Old Teachers

Ashley Ebrom

Jennifer Hassmann

Heather Swartz

Four Year Old Teachers

Tamra Blankinship

Roberta Giles

Tarin Whittington

Gift of Time Teacher

Karen Grimshaw

Teacher Helpers

Melanie Sanders (2's)

Sara Boyd (3's)

Brianne Heywood (4's)

Specials Teacher

Brianne Heywood

Sara Boyd

Check-in/Special Day Helper

Tina Wharton

NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST PRESCHOOL

The goal of the Northside Church of Christ Preschool is to provide an early childhood learning program for ages 2-5 in a loving, Christian environment. We offer an age-appropriate, theme-based curriculum for each class and encourage learning through play.

Hours of Operations

The first day of school for the 2023-2024 school year is August 28, 2023. The last class day is May 15, 2024. School is held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00am – 1:00pm. All children are expected to arrive promptly and attend classes regularly.

Extended Care

Extended Care will begin September 11th. This year, parents choosing Extended Care will be asked to do so by SEMESTER; anyone adding Extended Care for the Fall must let the director know by Wednesday, September 6th. Extended Care for the Spring must be decided by December 13th. Extended Care will be \$50/month. Drop-in Extended Care will still be available for \$10 a day as staffing allows. This change was made to help us with staffing and signing up by the semester is a considerable savings from dropping in by the day. Anyone who wishes to add Extended Care after the semester has begun should contact the Director.

Extended care is not offered on some Party Days or the first day of the month, which is reserved for teacher planning and staff meeting. During Extended Care we read books, have a light snack (provided by the preschool), watch a short video, and play on the playground. If you need to add or remove your child from the Extended Care list during the day of, you must contact the Director **BEFORE 12:00pm**. Please be advised, ANY changes after this time will be subject to an additional \$5 fee.

A strict pickup time of 2:15 pm will be enforced to allow our teachers ample time to pick up their own school-age children. Late pickup is discouraged and will result in a \$5.00 late fee for the first 5 minutes and \$1.00 per minute thereafter. The time will be verified by the Preschool Director's clock.

Tuition and Fees

A non-refundable Registration Fee of \$100 and a non-refundable Supply Fee of \$100 will both be due at the time of registration.

Regular tuition (\$165) is due on the 1st class day of each month. After the 2nd preschool day of the month a \$10.00 late fee will be charged. (For example, the tuition for October 2023 will be due by October 4th, and the tuition for December 2023 will be due by December 6th). There are no credits for vacation or sick days. Each child will receive a monthly statement on the last preschool day of

the month with the total amount. If for some reason you do not receive your statement, tuition is still due on time. Please ask the Preschool Director if you are unsure of the amount.

Tuition payments may be paid in one of three ways:

1. Online using the link or QR code below. Extended Care (when in session) and other fees will be added to the Monthly Statement. If you have more than one child enrolled at Northside Preschool, you will use the Discount Code “sibling” for \$20 off the second child’s tuition. Following the 2nd preschool day of each month, this link will close and you must contact the director to arrange payment.

<https://nscoc.elexiochms.com/external/form/45956962-9e0f-4595-b477-4522eccec0cc>



2. Using a check – please place your check in the box near the check-in desk. Make checks payable to Northside Church of Christ, making sure to add your child’s name in the memo line.
3. Cash placed in an envelope in the box near the check-in tables. Envelopes are available if needed. Please label envelope with your child’s name.

Limited Access to the Building

In order to minimize the exposure of infectious diseases, Northside Preschool will be limiting the number of people allowed into the school, although this is subject to change. Only the following will be allowed to enter the school space:

- NSPS Teachers and Administrators
- Persons with legal authority to enter (public servants such as law enforcement, protective services, etc)
- Professionals providing services to children
- Enrolled children (non-enrolled siblings or other children are not allowed)
- Parents only in the event of an emergency or by special arrangement with the Director

Holidays/Closures

Northside Preschool follows the NEISD calendar of holidays. Attached is a list of School Holidays and special activities. When inclement weather or environmental emergencies require special precautions, the preschool may be forced to close. If NEISD closes due to these conditions, Northside Church of Christ Preschool will also close. Listen to local TV and radio stations for

additional information about school closings. You will receive a notification in Remind (our app-based communication system) and via email.

Arrival/Dismissal

Preschool Drop-off times are as follows:

Morning Drop off - 8:50am-9:10am

Regular Afternoon Pickup – 1:00pm-1:10pm

Extended Care Pickup – 2:10pm – 2:15 pm

Outside of these times, if you need entrance into the building, you will need to contact the Director (Kristin Hickman) by text at (832) 790-8049. As we prepare for dismissal, it is necessary that **there will be NO pickup between 12:30-12:50**. If you need to pick up your child early, please make arrangements with the director to do so prior to 12:30.

Drop off Procedures

- Parents will park in the North parking lot. This lot is nearest the playground, and you will enter under the covered walkway.
- Parents will bring students to the Sparkler's desk upon arrival. As you enter the Children's department, you will sign your child in on the clipboard designated for their class.
- Once the child is checked in, preschool staff will escort the students to their rooms.
- Parents will be asked not to enter the department except in the case of an emergency or by special arrangement with the Director.
- Please make every effort do drop off children during your time slot and no later than 9:10.

Pick up Procedures

- Parents will enter through the North doors, under the covered walkway, and proceed directly to their child's classroom for pickup. Children will be signed out by their authorized pickup on the clipboard in the classroom. The authorized pickup can either give their family password or show their ID to their child's teacher to prove their identity.
- Preschool staff will only release students to the person/persons who have been authorized in writing to pick up your child. The authorized persons are listed on your child's Registration Form. Please indicate to the Director if someone other than the person signing your child in will be picking them up.
- Parents should exit the department promptly to allow teachers to clean and prepare for the next preschool day.
- Written word must be given to the Director by email or text if someone other than the authorized persons listed on your Registration Form will be picking up your child. Verification of ID may be conducted to ensure the safety of the child.

- Children should be picked up promptly during their designated times to ensure a smooth pickup process. Late pickup is discouraged and will result in a \$5.00 late fee for the first 5 minutes after 1:10pm and \$1.00 per minute thereafter. The time will be verified by the Preschool Director's clock.

Lunch

Lunch is not provided by Northside Church of Christ Preschool. Please provide a snack-type lunch, including a drink, each day. As your Child's SAFETY is our top priority, please review the following guidelines for lunches:

- We ask parents to provide a light lunch (2-3 items) with finger foods or items that your child can manage easily with minimal packaging that are ready to be eaten. Please practice with your child on opening packages and containers.
- Please send your child's drink in a spill-proof cup – *no juice boxes or pouches*. Please label drink cups and lunchboxes.
- Please take note of these common foods that pose the most significant choking hazard to children 5 and under are: hot dogs, grapes, raw carrots, apples with the peel, string cheese, cheese cubes and nuts. **Please eliminate these foods or cut into small portion sizes.** Hot dogs must be sliced horizontally, then cut in half. Grapes must be cut in $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$, depending on their size. Raw carrots must be julienned and apples cut into thin slices with peels removed for 2 year olds. We will not allow these foods to be eaten unless cut according to these specifications.

All of the Preschool Staff have been trained in CPR and First Aid.

Clothing

Each class will go out to the playground every day unless it is raining or extremely cold. Our playground has mulch, so children should wear close-toed shoes. **This is especially important with the construction on 281 causing insects and spiders to migrate toward our building.**

Only children being potty trained may wear pull-ups to preschool. Children must wear clothing that allows for easy diaper changing and bathroom breaks (no overalls or leggings, please). If your child is in diapers, please keep 2-3 diapers (labeled with their name) in the tote bucket. We provide wipes.

****We ask that every child provide an extra change of clothes (socks included) in a labeled gallon Ziploc bag to be kept at preschool. Even older kids (4's & 5's) need a change of clothes in case of spills or other accidents.****

Tote Buckets

Northside Church of Christ Preschool will provide each student with a blue or red plastic tote bucket. The plastic tote bucket has your child's name and a picture, which helps them easily identify which bucket is theirs. This should be brought to/from school daily. Please make sure and check the tote buckets daily for any notes, newsletters, art projects, etc. **These will be returned to the Preschool at the end of the year.**

Daily Schedule

Each classroom has a Daily Schedule posted as well as sent home. The schedule has been designed to alternate between large group, small group, independent play activities, active and listening activities, and outdoor playtime. As they explore and discover, using all five senses in a secure and stimulating environment, children will build self-confidence and self-esteem. Changes to the schedule will be sent home with your child.

Curriculum

Each Preschool Teacher has carefully planned age-appropriate curriculum for your child. Our teachers are dedicated to educating our kids, while at the same time making learning FUN! Our curriculum is theme-based, and the children learn through play (hands-on experience to enhance what they are learning). All age levels will learn the basics including The Pledge of Allegiance, letters, numbers, colors, and shapes. We also offer a Movement Class to help develop the children's large motor skills (hopping on one foot, following sequences, etc.), and a Science class where the monthly themes will be reinforced through science activities.

Community Helpers

Community Helper guests may be invited to our school to speak and help the children understand their jobs. These guests will be invited only if a safe, socially distant learning environment can be established. Classroom activities for that day will be about the special job that helper performs.

Bible/Chapel

Northside Church of Christ is a body of believers who are convicted that the heart of our existence as a church must always be Jesus – His life, His death and His resurrection from the grave. All of our activities, both as a congregation and as individuals, should be designed to allow God to transform us into the image of His Son (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

The children will learn a Bible Story in their classroom on Mondays and then will experience the Bible story through an activity or craft. Chapel consists of praying, watching puppet shows, children acting out stories, object lessons, and learning Memory Verses. The Preschool students will be learning one memory verse per month.

Classroom Parties

Party Days are marked on the Important Dates calendar, as well as in your class Monthly Newsletter, however these are subject to change. There are several party days throughout the school year which will require varying degrees of parent involvement. The parents of that classroom may be asked to provide refreshments, games, crafts, or other activities. Please look at the teachers' newsletters for more information as party days approach.

The Christmas Program is scheduled for December 11th, 2023. The End of Year/Graduation program is scheduled for May 15th. More information will be given closer to the dates scheduled.

Penny Paths/Birthdays

We celebrate each of our student's birthdays with a "penny path". On their special day, they follow a trail of pennies to a box of birthday surprises. They choose a gift to take home along with their baggy of 10 pennies. Parents may send a birthday treat to share with their child's class. We ask that the treat be easy to handle, store-bought and be PEANUT FREE. Cookies, rice krispie treats, or small bags of candy/party favors are types of treats that work well with this age group. Summer birthdays are also celebrated with a penny path during the school year.

School Pictures/Snapshots

Fall Pictures will be taken September 25th. Graduation pictures (for 4's and 5's) and class pictures will be taken on March 18th. Information regarding the date, pricing, and ordering of pictures will be sent home prior to Picture Day.

Snapshots of your child are also taken throughout the school year. These pictures may be displayed on bulletin boards, End of Year slideshows, church printed materials, website, or used for classroom activities. *If you do not want your child photographed you will need to fill out a photograph denial form.* This form will be placed in your child's file and your classroom teacher will be notified of your request. Please see Director for this form. Northside Preschool is not responsible for third party postings on social media.

Illness/Medication/Injury

Illness

Only well children will be accepted into preschool. Any student with vomiting and/or diarrhea must be symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Also, please report to the Preschool Director any contagious diseases your child contracts (ex: chickenpox). You will be notified if a contagious disease is present in your child's classroom. You are required to provide immunization records and they will be evaluated by a trained medical professional. It is

our goal at Northside Church of Christ Preschool to have all children up to date on their immunizations.

Temperatures will be checked upon arrival to school prior to child being signed in. Any child with fever over 100.0 will be sent home. Any child presenting the following COVID symptoms will not be allowed to stay at school:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fever
- Chills
- Respiratory difficulties
- Fatigue
- Muscle Pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Loss of taste or smell

COVID Illness Policy

If your child, a member of your child's household or person your child has close contact with is confirmed with COVID-19, you are required to inform Northside Preschool via email (preschool@nscoc.org) immediately and no later than 24 hours after the diagnosis.

If a child or staff member are diagnosed, NSPS will notify the Bexar County Health Department for guidance on how to respond.

Children or staff with new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19 (see list above) may not return to school until the following criteria have been met:

- At least 24 hours have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without use of medications)
- Improved respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath)
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- Received a doctor's note of clearance to resume participation at NSPS

These guidelines are subject to change according to mandates by the CDC as well as state and local health ordinances.

Medication

Only medication prescribed by a physician will be given to your child. You will need to fill out a Medication Form, including clear written dispensing instructions, regarding the medication. The Medication Form will be kept with your child's medication.

Injury

If any accident occurs while at school, parents will be notified by phone and a signed Accident Report (teacher, parent, director) will be kept on file. In case of emergency, the person(s) indicated on the Registration Form will be contacted. If required, the preschool will arrange for emergency medical care and transport to the nearest medical facility. It is the parent's responsibility to keep emergency contact names/numbers up to date.

Emergency Action Plan

Northside Church of Christ Preschool (NSPS) has an emergency action plan that provides safety procedures and guidelines in the event of unlikely situations which would endanger the lives of our students. The types of emergencies NSPS prepares for include fire and explosions, severe storms, flooding, unexpected utility failures, hazardous materials, potentially violent situations, and medical emergencies. A copy of the plan is available from the Director upon request.

Communication

Northside Preschool utilizes the app 'Remind' as its primary form of communication throughout the year. Parents will receive text messages and/or app notifications when their child's teacher or the director send a message. Messages can consist of daily updates or emergency school situations. Please contact your child's teacher for details on how to connect through this avenue of communication.

Discipline

Our number one goal is to Love the Children as Jesus did! The Preschool staff uses positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. Children are given opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperating, negotiating, and talking with the person involved to solve interpersonal problems. Children are taught to express their feelings in a socially accepted manner. In cases of extreme behavior problems, parents will be notified. Cooperative plans for resolution will be developed. In the event that serious behavior problems cannot be resolved, the student will be dismissed from Northside Church of Christ Preschool.

Formation of Classes

Careful planning, involving many factors, goes into each child's classroom placement. Classes are created with the goal of students collaborating together in a nurturing environment to further the

learning process. Classes are formed using birth dates as the main deciding factor, unless extenuating circumstances prevail. At the Director's discretion, some classes may be formed based on the mixing of birthdates, size of class, gender ratios, assimilation of new students, and parent requests. Parent requests for specific teachers are accepted, but are never guaranteed. The preschool staff has input into how the classes are formed based on the above mentioned factors. Once the school year has begun, new students will be placed in the immediate classroom opening. There will be no switching of students between classes unless there are other extenuating circumstances that have been previously discussed with the Director.

Northside Church of Christ

The Northside Church of Christ would love to have you join us! We offer services on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am. Various Life Groups are held on Sundays throughout the city. A Tuesday Morning Ladies' Bible Class is offered at 10:00 am beginning September 7, 2021 and FREE childcare is provided for class attendees. A Wednesday Morning Men's Bible Class is offered at 10:00 am. The Children's Ministry & Youth group offers many fun activities throughout the year. Look for these in your monthly newsletter or at the Children's Ministry desk! For more information about our church and programs or to speak to a minister, please call 210-494-1907 or visit our website at www.nscoc.org.

PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read the following policies of the Parent Handbook and I understand that I must abide by all aspects of the Preschool Program.

_____ (initials) Hours of Operation, Extended Care, Tuition and Fees, Holidays/Closures, Arrival/Dismissal, Child Release, Lunch, Clothing, Tote Buckets, Daily Schedule, Curriculum, Bible/Chapel, Community Helpers, Classroom Parties, Penny Path/Birthdays, School Pictures/Snapshots, Illness/Medication/Injury, Discipline, Northside Church of Christ Information

I, _____, the Parent/Guardian of _____ understand and agree that the Director and staff of Northside Church of Christ Preschool, while acting in the scope of their employment, are not individually and or personally liable for any claims arising from Northside Church of Christ Preschool provision of care or education to children.

Signature: _____ Date: _____